



The REYKJAVÍK GRAPEVINE

www.grapevine.is

YOUR FREE COPY

THE ESSENTIAL GUIDE TO LIFE, TRAVEL & ENTERTAINMENT IN ICELAND

IN THE ISSUE Issue 8 • 2011 • June 17 - 30

+ COMPLETE CITY LISTINGS - INSIDE!

▶ POLITICS

Why is everybody always picking on Geir?

▶ ICELAND

"Today we celebrate our Independence Day!" (for real)

▶ CULTURE

Skjaldborg is an hour behind

▶ MUSIC

Tunng & Tango

▶ TRAVEL

A fancy pullout dedicated to...

TWIN PEAKS

GusGus & FM Belfast Rise Above The Rest



FM Belfast just released an awesome new record that's already being hailed as one of the year's best. As did GusGus. Listening to their awesome new records one must conclude that they surely are some sort of 'Twin Peaks' of Icelandic electronic music. One might even ask them to dress for the occasion... Starring Árni Rúnar as 'The Giant', Lóa Hlín as 'The Log Lady', Earth as 'Nadine Hurley', Högni Egilsson as 'Bob', President Bongo as 'The Ghost of Bob', Árni Vilhjálmsson as 'Sheriff Harry S. Truman', Veiran as 'Special Agent Dale Cooper', Örvar Þ.S. as 'Laura Palmer' and introducing Daníel Ágúst as 'The Man From Another Place'. **Page 20**

CONTRIBUTING WRITERS:

Bob Cluness
 Emily Burton
 Paul Fontaine
 Magnús Sveinn Helgason
 Valur Gunnarsson
 Asgeir H. Ingólfsson
 Hilmar Magnússon
 Stacy Steinberg
 Sindri Eldon
 Egill Helgason
 Eimear Fitzgerald
 Kári Tulinius
 Nadja Sayej
 Ragnar Egilsson
 Madeleine T.
 Marc Vincenz
 Snorri Páll Úlfhildarson Jónsson
 Haukur Már Helgason
 Irina Domurath

EDITORIAL INTERNS:

Felix Jimenez Gonzalez / felix@grapevine.is
 Maroesjka Lavigne / maroesjka@grapevine.is
 Marta Bardón Moreno / marta@grapevine.is
 José Angel Hernández García / jose@grapevine.is
 S. Alessio Tummolillo / alessio@grapevine.is

ON-LINE NEWS EDITOR

Paul Fontaine / paul@grapevine.is

ART DIRECTOR:

Hörður Kristbjörnsson / hoddi@grapevine.is

DESIGN:

Páll Hilmarsson / pallih@kaninka.net

PHOTOGRAPHER:

Hörður Sveinsson / hordurveinsson.com

SALES DIRECTOR:

Aðalsteinn Jörundsson / adalsteinn@grapevine.is

Guðmundur Rúnar Svansson / grs@grapevine.is

Helgi Þór Harðarson / helgi@grapevine.is

DISTRIBUTION MANAGER:

Þóroddur Guðmundur Hermannsson
distribution@grapevine.is

PROOFREADER:

Jim Rice

PRESS RELEASES:

listings@grapevine.is

SUBMISSIONS INQUIRIES:

editor@grapevine.is

SUBSCRIPTION INQUIRIES:

+354 540 3605 / subscribe@grapevine.is

GENERAL INQUIRIES:

grapevine@grapevine.is

FOUNDERS:

Hilmar Steinn Grétarsson,

Hörður Kristbjörnsson,

Jón Trausti Sigurðarson,

Oddur Óskar Kjartansson,

Valur Gunnarsson

The Reykjavík Grapevine is published 18 times a year by Fróken Ltd. Monthly from November through April, and fortnightly from May til October. Nothing in this magazine may be reproduced in whole or in part without the written permission of the publishers. The Reykjavík Grapevine is distributed around Reykjavík, Akureyri, Egilsstaðir, Seyðisfjörður, Borgarnes, Keflavík, Ísafjörður and at key locations along road #1, and all major tourist attractions and tourist information centres in the country. You may not like it, but at least it's not sponsored (no articles in the Reykjavík Grapevine are pay-for articles. The opinions expressed are the writers' own, not the advertisers').



Photography: Hörður Sveinsson
 Styling: Guðmundur Jörundsson
 Special thanks to:
 Herrafataverzlun Kormáks og
 Skjaldar and Þjóðleikhúsið



Editorial | Haukur S. Magnússon

MILLIONS OF TIPS ON 'ENJOYING YOUR STAY IN ICELAND'

Haukur's 42nd Editorial

Hi,

I thought I would write down some handy tips on how you can 'make the most of your stay in Reykjavík and Iceland'. Why? Well, I imagine some of you reading this are tourists (this seems logical enough) and those guys often need help with stöff. It is only natural, quit feeling so ashamed, no one starts off knowing everything about everything (except maybe god if he exists, but, then, when he started knocking about (i.e. somehow came into existence) there was nothing to know everything about so he must have started off by knowing everything about nothing, which seems easy, and then had to make everything up. Thus it is quite natural that he would know everything about everything, since he made it all up. You probably know everything about most of what goes on in your house, especially if you built it. So quit giving yourself a hard time about not knowing everything. It's not like you're some sort of god or anything).

At least I know that whenever I assume the role of tourist I often end up furiously scratching my head in bewilderment and looking all confused on some dark street corner in the type of neighbourhood where you really should strive to look like you know what you're doing because if you don't people will notice and they'll probably want to forcefully take all of your stuff, including your passport and your new iPod that your mom got you for your 27th birthday (Reykjavík has a couple of such neighbourhoods, but I thought it would be fun to not tell you which ones they are, so you can enjoy finding out for yourself (hint: Laugardalur is not one of them)).

OK. What were we talking about? Yes, 'some tips and tricks on enjoying your stay in Iceland'. Those ought to come in handy. Here's the first tip:

Venture outside of Reykjavík, if only for a day

Reykjavík is an alright town, for sure. There's music, nightlife, museums, gyms, tanning salons, shopping malls, weird road construction, crime, puffin stores, the pond and its seagulls, 'The Pearl', where you can probably still get ice cream and look at waxy Vikings, as well as a bunch of video stores (the best ones are Aðalvídeileigan in 101 Reykjavík and Laugarásvídeó in 104 Reykjavík).

But what's probably best about Reykjavík is how close it is to things that aren't Reykjavík. Like Mosfellsbær, for instance. That is a nice town that's only a 20-minute bus ride (give or take) away from downtown Reykjavík. It has a really nice bakery, some nice views to look at and the biggest KFC in all of Europe (no kidding!). The band Sigur Rós like it enough to have recorded a bunch of their music there.



And there are horses.

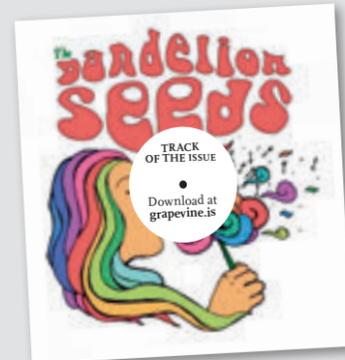
But Mosfellsbær isn't the only thing in Iceland that's not Reykjavík. Hveragerði, for instance, is a quaint little town that's a very manageable distance from Reykjavík (it'll take you around thirty minutes to drive there, you can also take a bus). On the way there you'll see some stunning sights (like, Bláfjöll and Hellisheiði and that crazy power plant that's absolutely not spewing sulphur and weird fumes into the air and thus potentially harming folks that live in its vicinity).

From Hveragerði you can hike up some nice mountains towards some natural hot springs that are really nice to bathe in. You can also continue a little ways and venture to Selfoss (legendary birthplace of the 'hnakki' and 'skinka' cultural phenomenon) or to Eyrarbakki, where you can sample some really nice lobster at Dave Grohl's alleged 'favourite Icelandic hangout'.

And, you know. There's a whole country beyond that. Ísafjörður, Akureyri, Hella, Arnarstapi, Látrabjarg, Grenivík, Seyðisfjörður, Þórshöfn, Kópasker, Reyðarfjörður, Ásbjrgi, Landmannalaugar, Súðavík, Patreksfjörður, Lots Of Pure And Unspoilt Nature™, Kárahnjúkavirkjun and Bolungarvík.

So get out of Reykjavík for a while, if you have the chance. For ideas and inspiration, you can for instance check out our fancy 'OUTSIDE REYKJAVÍK' supplement. If you're into it.

Wait. That's only one tip? That's pretty lame. Oh, whatever.



TRACK OF THE ISSUE

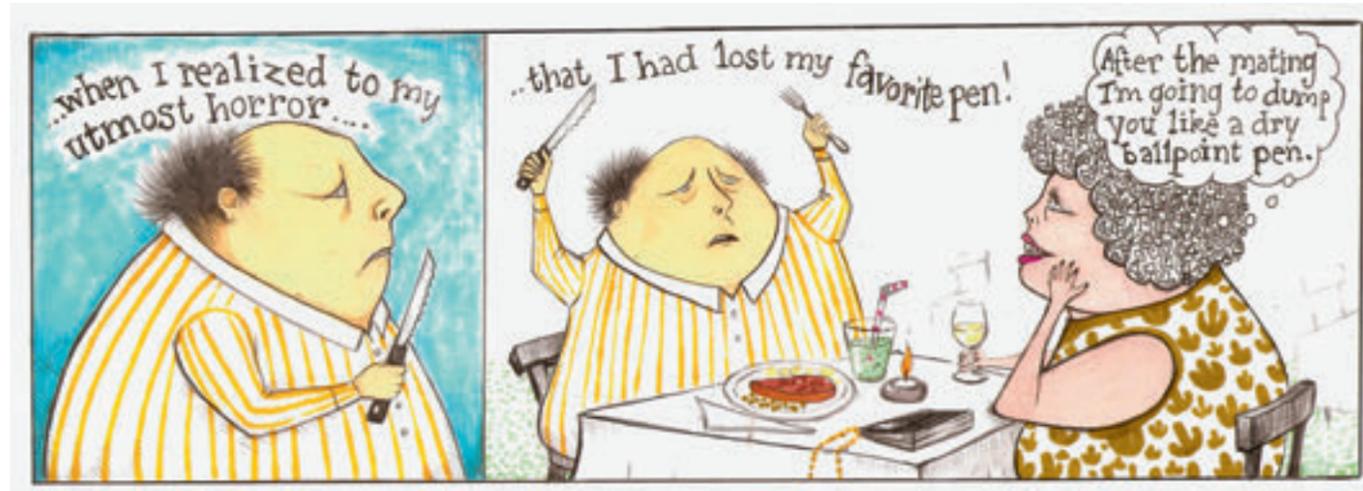
The Dandelion Seeds Love And Sweet Dreams

Download at www.grapevine.is

Man, if there's one band out there that's getting us somewhat excited about Icelandic rock again, it's the goddamn Dandelion Seeds. Those psych-rockin' bastards have been lurking on the edge of (what passes for) the local rock scene for a while now, playing some rather promising live shows and releasing an EP (that we're still unsure of where we can purchase, if it can be purchased at all—those guys are so deep underground we can hardly tell if they're a figment of our imagination or not) that left us begging for more.

Now, more is here, in the form of 'Love And Sweet Dreams'. It is psychedelic, understated, overtly druggy and friggin'... great. So that's our track of the issue. Go download it now if you want to experience what GV reviewer Anna Margrét Björnsson said would come out if you mixed "[...] the British blues invasion, the psych of UFO and Middle Earth with the eighties feedback world of Spacemen 3 and Loop, and [stirred] in a hefty dose of darkwave".

Comic | Lóa Hjálmtýsdóttir



BE SQUARE AND BE THERE

Gullfoss and Geysir are surely a must-see in Iceland, but neither is something you eat. That's why we have 13 brilliant and creative hamburgers at Hamborgarafabrikkan (The Icelandic Hamburger Factory).

Hamborgarafabrikkan would eat Hard Rock Café for breakfast, but since there is no Hard Rock Café in Iceland we eat our original Lamburger with the wonderful Icelandic lamb.

The Reykjavík Grapevine awarded Hamborgarafabrikkan the "Best Specialty Burger 2010". It made us happy. Because we aim to please. That's why we only use 100% fresh high-quality ingredients, directly from the Icelandic nature.

Attention: Our hamburger buns are not round. They are square. Does it taste better? You tell us. Be square and be there.

Turninn Höfðatorgi
 105 Reykjavík
 Tel: 575 7575

fabrikkan@fabrikkan.is
www.fabrikkan.is

Opening hours:
 Sun-Wed. 11.00-22.00
 Thu-Sat. 11.00-24.00



THE LAMBURGER

120 g Lamburger (lamb), garlic grilled mushrooms, cheese, lettuce, tomatoes, red onion, sauce Béarnaise and french fries.

Those who taste The Lamburger will hardly be able to believe their taste buds.

SUPER JEEP ADVENTURES

AND OTHER EXCITING DAY TOURS

SUPER JEEP TOURS THROUGH
MAGNIFICENT LANDSCAPE



MAKE EVERY MOMENT AN EXPERIENCE

ICELANDROVERS.IS - icelandrovers@icelandrovers.is - Tel: +354 587 9999
or visit the ITM INFORMATION AND BOOKING CENTER,
Bankastræti 2 - Downtown, Reykjavík



Spór ehf.

GLACIER WALKS



AND OTHER EXCITING DAY TOURS

EASY AND ACCESSIBLE FOR EVERYONE
From 6.300 ISK.
Check out our new tour
Golden Circle and Glacier Walk



MAKE SURE IT'S MOUNTAIN GUIDES
MOUNTAINGUIDES.IS

mountainguides@mountainguides.is
Tel: +354 587 9999

or visit the ITM INFORMATION AND BOOKING CENTER,
Bankastræti 2 - Downtown, Reykjavík

Scan QR code to locate ITM



Icelandair Pioneer
Award 2006
For designing and
developing Glacier Walks.



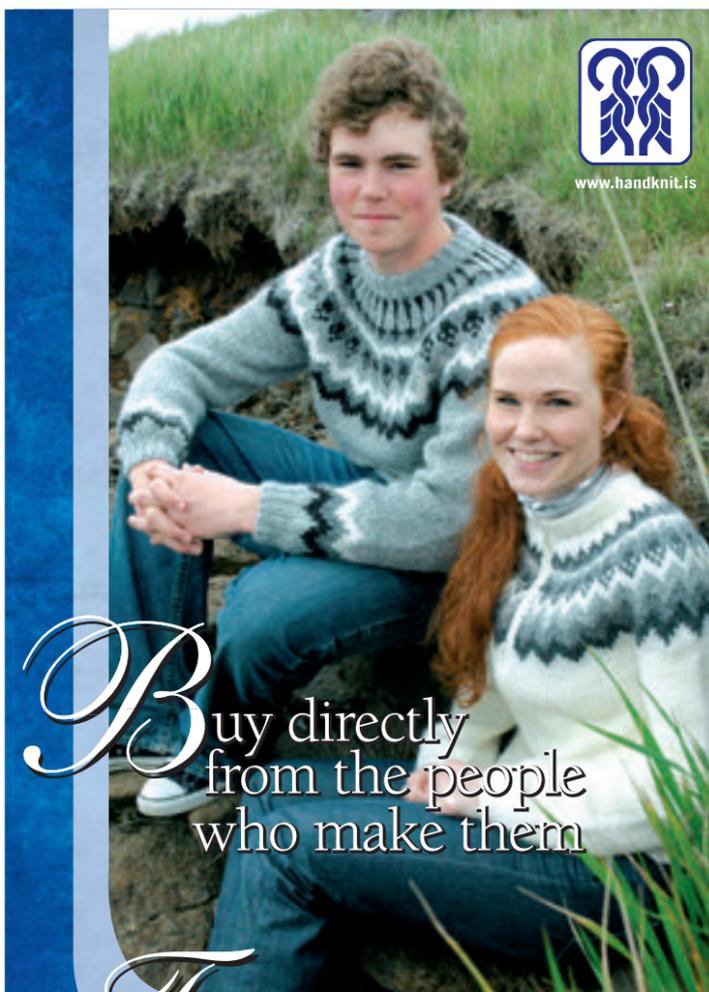
For environmental policy
and awareness.



For education and continuous
training of guides.



For innovation and
development of Glacier Walks.



www.handknit.is

Buy directly from the people who make them

The Handknitting Association of Iceland

TAX FREE

- Skólavörðustígur 19 tel.: 552 1890
- Radisson SAS, Hótel SAGA tel.: 562 4788
- Laugavegur 64 tel.: 562 1890

PURE NEW WOOL

Sour grapes and stuff

Say your piece, voice your opinion, send your letters to: letters@grapevine.is

4 Letters

MOST AWESOME LETTER:

Here's a story for you.

I have taken three vacations to Iceland over the past several years and enjoyed my experiences, until last night.

I was detained by security for three hours prior to the boarding of my Icelandair flight to the US. I am a mid-30s professional, blond hair, blue eyed woman. I have never had any infractions and did not set off any metal detectors at the airport. All of that said, the boarding pass I was given yesterday in Keflavik-after a week vacation in Reykjavik with my husband who has a similar background-had a special security code on it. This code alerted the airport personnel to perform a secondary screening of me. I asked repeatedly why was I being held aside, and I was told: "any number of reasons or possibly just a random computer drawing." I was handed a typed piece of ripped paper, which stated: "You have been selected for additional security screening due to requirements set by the US TSA. The process requires your cooperation for the duration of time until departure."

I was taken to a holding room, without windows or flight monitors. They searched my purse-which contained nothing more than my travel papers, gum, airborne, and a couple of Ipods. They patted me down and ran the gloves they used to determine if there were any bomb materials on me. It was immediately determined that I did not have anything, but I was forced to stay in this locked security room-against my will- until boarding. I was treated like a criminal.

They provided bottled water. About 18 other people were pulled aside during the time I was there. All were on planes going to the US, most were American citizens. Two others were on my plane to Boston-both blond women-though they were European citizens. One woman in her 20s was crying the entire time-not surprising, given how stressful this experience was.

The Icelanders were very kind; though, they were speaking Icelandic during the pro-

MOST AWESOME LETTER

FREE GRAPEVINE TEE HEE HEE!

There's prize for all your MOST AWESOME LETTERS. And it's a scorcher! Whoever sends us THE MOST AWESOME LETTER each issue will receive a cool new Reykjavik 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, Hörður 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



cess. They would then ask you targeted questions in English, but there was a lot going on that I did not understand. They wrote down my passport number, name, and details. Finally, five minutes before our plane was set to take off, I was escorted by the airline to the plane and not allowed to purchase any food or drink prior to boarding.

For three hours, I was imprisoned in a room without windows. It is difficult to remember any good details of my trip to Iceland after all of this.

I have contacted my US Senator, US Homeland Security, and the airline. In the US, with random selection, if you are determined free of explosives or other dangerous materials, you are let go into the airport. They do not detain you like a prisoner. I have never even so much as been issued a parking ticket, so this type of treatment is very difficult for me to understand. It was like I had entered another world-one where you are guilty without any proof or reasoning.

I have never acted like a criminal; thus, before yesterday, I had never been treated like one.

Thank you.

Victoria Harnish
American Citizen

Dear Victoria,

thank you for your letter. Your story sounds horrible! Seriously! We had no idea that the Keflavik airport had such intimidating rooms and procedures (although the whole of the Reykjanes peninsula is sort of intimidating, really). We thought those terror rooms were restricted to U.S. airports, where they are used to fight terror on a daily basis. Then again, CIA planes full of detainees have 'allegedly' been touching down in Iceland every now and again, and who knows what kind of relationship US Homeland Security has with The Leifur Eiríksson International Airport (indeed, it was built and funded by the US Army and everything).

But back to your horrible story. It's horrible! We wouldn't wish that kind of treatment on our worst enemies, no matter the colour of their hair and eyes or level of professionalism (OK maybe a couple, but both those writers are blondes).

We must say that we did find it slightly odd of you to be outraged that a "mid-30s professional, blond hair, blue eyed woman" would be nabbed by TSA agents for what a supposedly random screening. Quite frankly it would have made more sense to get a letter from a North African Muslim who was tired of being detained for 'looking like a criminal' every time he goes through security ("DO I LOOK LIKE A TERRORIST MR. BROWN?" HA HA HA).

Imagine, if we let this go on we might some day reach the point where regular blond-haired-blue-eyed-thirtysomethings could be detained at random before being locked up indefinitely in maximum security facilities on questionable grounds-no one telling them why they're there or what they've done wrong-with the occasional waterboarding, genital torture or religion-based humiliation session as their only source of amusement.

That would be horrible.

But again, your story sounds really awful! And we wouldn't wish it upon anybody, whether they were blond or brunette, professional or non-professional, green eyed or brown eyed, spiffy or frumpy (whatever that means).

So, we would like to apologise on behalf of our relatives working at the Keflavik airport (surely we have some relatives working there) as well as the Icelandic nation as a whole. Sorry. Hope the free t-shirt makes up for some of your suffering.

(Lastly, we really are sorry. This sucks, and we would be totally furious if it happened to us. But, you know, if we wish to subject people to this sort of treatment 'at random' to ensure our safety whilst flying, then this is surely part of the bargain. Right?)

This country is in dire straits, people are losing their jobs and others are migrating, while the future seems dark for us. If you look through demonstration photos, among flags of Greece and Spain, you might see one Icelandic. That would be me. Takk for you time reading this letter.

Yours sincerely
Alexander Cyberian

Dear Alexander,

thank you for your letter. It's reassuring to hear people are protesting BS all over the world, although at the same time it is sorta disconcerting to learn that the need to do so prevails all over.

We wish you good fortune in your struggle. Thanks again for writing.

Licensing and registration of travel-related services

The Icelandic Tourist Board issues licences to tour operators and travel agents, as well as issuing registration to booking services and information centres.

Tour operators and travel agents are required to use a special logo approved by the Icelandic Tourist Board on all their advertisements and on their Internet website.

Booking services and information centres are entitled to use a Tourist Board logo on all their material. The logos below are recognised by the Icelandic Tourist Board.



List of licenced Tour Operators and Travel Agencies on: visiticeland.com

Hey guys,

I follow your feed on twitter, and it's good to be kept up-to-date throughout the day, but it looks like you're posting every story twice, once manually from twitter, then automatically whenever you make a facebook post. Maybe most twitter users have such a busy stream that they don't notice, but my stream is pretty quiet and this sticks out.

Could you restrict story posts to one or the other?

Cheers,
Gary

Dear Gary,

thank you for your letter. No.

Re: Demonstrations in Spain
Dear Grapevine,

My name is Alexander and I am writing to you from Thessaloniki, Greece. Although my country is pretty far from Iceland, I believe that financial matters lately have brought the people of our countries close.

I'd like to congratulate all of you for your very interesting articles. The one about Spaniards and their way of protesting was really informing. Though, I'd like to add Athens, the capital of Greece, to the list of cities where demonstrations of the "Outraged" are occurring. There's been 15 days since the first demonstration of the "Greek Outraged". Please note that 400.000 people congregated last Sunday in Syntagma Square, Athens, to protest about the last austerity measures discussed by the Government.

Reykjavik WELCOME CARD

See more and save more when visiting Reykjavik.

Free admissions and discounts off tours, shopping and services for 24, 48 or 72 hours. Great value for money.

The Welcome Card can be purchased at:
The Centre, major hotels, museums, tourist information centres and Hlemmur and BSÍ bus stations.



INCLUDING: CITY BUS TRANSPORT, FREE ADMISSIONS, DISCOUNTS OFF TOURS, SHOPPING, AND SERVICES AVAILABLE FOR 24, 48 AND 72 HOURS.

THE CENTRE
The Official Tourist Information Centre in Reykjavik

Adalstræti 2 • 101 Reykjavik • Tel +354 590 1550 • info@visitreykjavik.is
www.visitreykjavik.is

Hressingarskálinn

Hressingarskálinn (Hressó) is a Classical Bistro, located in the heart of the city at Austurstræti 20.

Food is served from 10 until 22 every day. On Thursday, Friday and Saturday nights, after the kitchen closes Hressó heats up with live music. Weekends, DJs keep the party going until morning, with no cover charge.






66°NORTH wows New York

Collection impresses fashion critics



“66°NORTH outerwear is a practical, smart, and good-looking alternative to unnecessary bulk.”
(www.hercampus.com)



“Awesome stuff, great looking functional gear. Can't wait to receive it at our store!”
([Altitudeblog](#))



“One of the most fashionable tech outerwear brands...cutting edge performance... Characteristics of smart apparel.”
(www.lyramag.blogspot.com)



“The looks in this collection are sleeker and more stylish than your average outerwear crop.”
(www.tineey.com)



Scan the code

www.66north.com



Words Mean Things

Why One Icelander Wants To Change How We Refer To Foreigners



Words

Paul Fontaine

Photo

Hörður Sveinsson

of attitudes that are either changing or are no longer prevalent?

We must stop looking at 'immigrants' as an example of how other people are. We must actually begin to understand them as a part of our identity. They are Icelanders. All those who live in Iceland (have a permanent address and intend to stay on) are Icelanders. But those who have moved from abroad are also something else. They are, from a certain perspective, richer than those who have just one country. So you should not think of Icelanders and immigrants or Icelanders and newcomers. We are all Icelanders, but some of us are also something else. To become Icelandic is not to speak the language or this or that. It is, or should be, a term over those who are here and intend to stay and are willing to see themselves as Icelanders. It is not even necessary they like the country or other people.

Another reason that we shouldn't use these general terms is that all generalisation is dangerous. Immigrants are not bad or good. Immigrants are all kinds of people, just as those who have never immigrated. They come from different parts of the world—some have been here for a long time, others for shorter time, some are with their families, others not. Some intend to stay forever—others for short period of time. These are not the same people that travel between countries to commit crimes. They have nothing in common except that they are not born in Iceland (some are of course born in Iceland). But language generalisations tend to put everyone who are not homemade under the same hat and many Icelanders suffer because of that, suffer from prejudice and discrimination.

Because those who come here from abroad tend to keep their culture and their old identity we should accept this fact, accept their origin, accept their way of life, but also accept that they are Icelanders and not foreigners or immigrants or newcomers—accept all this and call them Thai-Icelanders and

Polish-Icelanders and so on. It should be clear that Icelanders new or old should have the freedom to behave as they wish (of course everyone has to obey the Constitution and the law and therefore the values these build upon but that goes for everyone living in this country). We should, if anything, encourage people to keep their language, culture, belief, and habits. That way they make Icelandic society richer and we don't have to worry they will not learn Icelandic.

How do you think the average Icelander would respond to your proposed terminology?

The average Icelanders would respond negatively to my proposed terminology. It takes the average Icelander many years to accept new ideas.

What are your thoughts on the evolution of terminology about foreigners in general? It wasn't too long ago that certain terms, which today are considered offensive, were once considered acceptable terminology. While other cultures, such as in the US (note the change from 'coloured' to 'negro' to 'black' to 'African-American'), have experienced a similar evolution, do you think Iceland's relationship with its own language had an influence on how the language referred to foreigners?

The idea has been that people assimilate gradually. Even the term 'integration' has meant 'assimilation' ("aðlögun") where the immigrant has a just a little bit of influence on his new culture, e.g., bringing with him a new soup or a dress to use on International Days.

The reality is that you have parallel societies. It has always been like that, and in the world as it has become it will become much more so, where you can watch television stations from your home country and talk to your friend and mother on Skype and fly cheap, people will more and more be part of their old culture and their old language.

So we have to accept and value this new point of view. We in Iceland are going to have Thai-Icelanders, Vietnamese-Icelanders, Polish-Icelanders and so on as part of our society and we should therefore have them as part of our identity and call them what they are. Stop this language hiding. 🇮🇸

Opinion | Eimear Fitzgerald

Clean Up Your Act!

Getting deep down and dirty with Reykjavík's Dumpster Divers



When thinking of things to do on a late summer evening, I have to say that rummaging around in a giant rubbish bin of expired fruit and vegetables would not be top of my list. The quality of vegetables on supermarket shelves is questionable enough when within its shelf life, let alone when about to implode on itself. However, followers of the increasingly popular practice of 'dumpster diving' would argue differently.

Saving the planet one potato at a time

Initially it's somewhat important to note that dumpster diving is illegal as you're pretty much trespassing on a company's private property and stealing its products. However for those who do choose to neatly sidestep this issue and get involved, the basic premise is to search for useable food items in the large dumpsters generally used by supermarkets, bakeries and food outlets, without getting caught. People generally dumpster dive at night, alone or in small groups and with the aid of non-motorized, eco-friendly transport, i.e. bicycles are common. Supporters of the movement argue its not stealing but more about utilizing unused resources.

According to a regular Reykjavík dumpster diver, "Penny," who first started when living in a housing cooperative in the USA, the practice makes sense both morally and financially. "It's unbelievable that we live in a world where people are starving but, at the same time, literally tons of food is going to waste". Every few days Penny and a small group of friends jump on their bicycles, locate their nearest dumpster and load up their backpacks with fresh veggies that they then sort at home. Fellow dumpster diver "Sam" found it astonishing that such "perfectly good food" would otherwise be thrown away. "Especially," he added, "in Iceland where food is more expensive due to import costs." Penny argued that by dumpster diving, they were also contributing to the environment in making more productive use of waste that would otherwise go to landfill. When quizzed as to the risks involved, the overriding attitude was that most dumpster divers felt the benefits outweighed the risks of getting caught.

Waiter, Waiter! There's a fly in my soup

So let's review. Generic supermarket with accessible dumpster? Check. Clothes rolled up past elbow to guard against staining (unwanted evidence that could, at a later date, be used against you in a court of law)? Check. Backpack filled with four bags of potatoes, two bags of carrots, one pack of melon slices, and some cooking apples? Check. Getaway bike? Definite check. All that remains now is to get cooking.

While trying to suppress the recurring mental image of stinky carrots and lettuces rotting in their own juices, I was informed that a lot of food thrown out by supermarkets and stores is barely past its expiration date and often still in its wrapping. It seems there's some good eats to be had from them there dumpsters, and three course meal extravaganzas are all part of the course following a success outing. So while trash cuisine mightn't be making it to downtown menu's anytime soon, Reykjavík's dumpster divers seem set to blaze culinary trails of their own for some time to come. All I can say is keep some toothpicks handy.

*Real names not used in this article 🇮🇸

Baldur Kristjánsson, a parish priest with a Masters in theology from Harvard University, is also a blogger on the popular news website Eyjan. Recently, he put forward the idea in an article that Icelanders need to change the terms they have for foreigners. His recommendation: drop 'nýbúi' ("someone newly living here") and 'innflytjendur' ("someone who has moved in") and replace them with their nationalities (e.g., Thai-Icelanders). The Grapevine caught up with Baldur to ask him about this idea, and why he thinks it's important.

In your article, you say that you consider it important to move away from terms such as "nýkomna, nýbúa og innflytjendur" and move towards saying e.g. Thai-Icelandic or Polish-Icelandic. Why do you consider this change in terminology to be important?

It is obvious that the Icelandic language, as other parts of the Icelandic culture, was not well prepared to deal

with the development towards multicultural society. The word 'nýbúi' as a term involving those who are of foreign origin is a shining example of this. The word 'innflytjendur' is not good either. That refers to those who are moving but are not settled. These are not proper Icelanders in our minds. Our mindset was and is that being an Icelander is not something you can have partly or buy cheaply. These words exclude, rather than include. And the notion of an Icelander, and also something else, does not exist. You are either an Icelander or not. Therefore we don't really have words for those who are gradually becoming Icelanders but are also children of other cultures and other countries.

As the terms we use to refer to foreigners are often a reflection of current attitudes towards them, what do you think terms like 'nýbúi' and 'útlendingur' say about Icelandic attitudes towards foreigners? Are these terms in sync with current attitudes, or rather a reflection

TAKE THE TOUR WITH ALVAR AALTO

The Nordic house offers a tour with world famous architect Alvar Aalto (portrayed by an actor), where guests are taken through the history of the Nordic House, introduced to the designs and history of the master himself, along with sampling culinary delights from Dill restaurant, the top kitchen in Iceland. Come and experience an architectural gem right in the heart of the city...

Price 8 €

Please feel free to drop by monday to saturday at 11 am and 13 pm.

WE'LL TAKE YOU THERE!

DAY TOURS TO ALL THE MOST EXCITING PLACES IN ICELAND

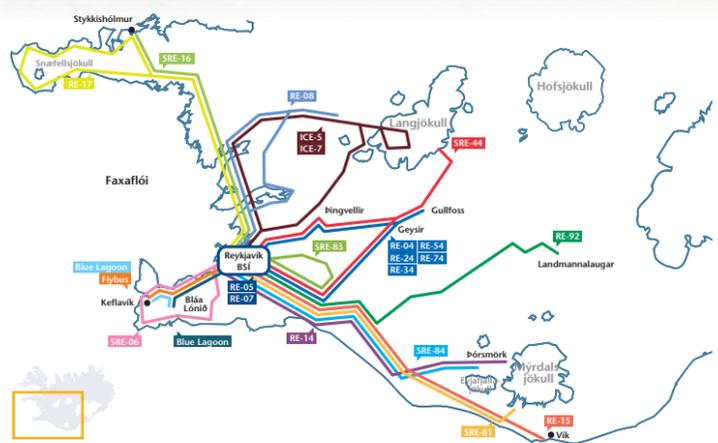
Book now on www.re.is

Book now at your reception

Book now by calling 580 5450



EXPERIENCE A GREAT DAY WITH US!



Relax at the Blue Lagoon

Reykjavik Excursions offer great flexibility in Blue Lagoon tours.

You can either board the bus at BSÍ Bus Terminal in Reykjavík or at Keflavík Airport.

The drive takes about 40 min. from Reykjavík and 20 min. from Keflavík Airport.



MORE DETAILS ON TOURS IN OUR BROCHURES

flybus

Reykjavik Excursions
KYNNISFERÐIR



Scan the QR code



Up In The Air

No more smoking in Smokey Bay?



Imagine if cigarettes were sold exclusively at pharmacies as a prescription drug. If Alþingi approves a proposal for a ten-year plan on tobacco control, Iceland could become the first country to take this anti-tobacco measure.

Spearheading the proposal is Progressive Party MP Siv Friðleifsdóttir, the former Minister of Welfare who successfully worked to ban smoking in restaurants and bars three years ago. "It was very controversial when that step was taken in 2007", Siv recalls, "but today people think it's simply natural that employees are not be subject to second-hand smoke at their workplace".

Now she is working with MPs from every political party to protect young adults, two of whom become addicted to tobacco every day, according to the proposal. Furthermore, half of the 700+ young adults who become addicted to tobacco every year will die from a tobacco-related disease. This is 30 times the number of traffic accident deaths.

"I want to emphasise that the proposal's objective is to protect kids and young adults", Siv says. "It's not a proposal against smokers—not at all—those who smoke can continue to do so, but they will have to go to pharmacies instead of general stores to buy their tobacco. There are greater interests at stake".

As many begin smoking before

"Should smokers decide to flee the country in any case, they should avoid Finland, which has made it an official policy to eliminate smoking altogether"

they are considered capable of making an informed decision, the idea is to decrease access to and visibility of tobacco products to reduce the number of new smokers and tobacco-related deaths. Furthermore, it will benefit the economy, which according to the proposal takes a 27 billion ISK hit every year due to smoking.

THE PROPOSED ANTI-TOBACCO MEASURES

While Iceland was considered progressive on the tobacco front in 2007, Siv says little has been done since then, and many countries have taken far more revolutionary steps in the meantime. If the proposal is approved, not only will tobacco products be sold exclusively at pharmacies as a prescription drug, but Iceland will also adopt a number of anti-tobacco measures that have already been taken by other countries.

For instance, New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg, who is a smoker himself, banned smoking in public parks, plazas, and beaches last month. The proposal would have Iceland follow suit and go even further by banning smoking on public sidewalks. This would mean fines for the hordes of

smokers huddled up just outside bars on weekend nights.

Similar to California legislation, the proposal would also ban smoking in cars when children under the age of 18 are present. Additionally, smoking in the presence of pregnant women and children would be banned altogether.

In addition to limiting tobacco consumption, the proposal also focuses on reducing visibility of tobacco products. As Australia is slated to do in 2012, the proposal would like all tobacco products to be packaged in nondescript brown paper with a health-warning label.

Citing study results showing that smoking in films normalises the behaviour, the proposal would ban state subsidies to films wherein smoking is depicted. This part of the proposal has been heavily criticised by filmmakers who view the measure as censorship of the arts. "It would be more intelligent to spew smoke than this nonsense", film director Friðrik Þór Friðriksson ('Angels of the Universe', 'Children of Nature') told Fréttablaðið. "Angels of the Universe' would not have been the same if smoking had not been allowed in the film". Whether or not banning state

subsidies to films amounts to censorship will likely be debated in parliament when the time comes to approve the proposal.

In terms of changing economic incentives to smoke, the proposal would like the price of tobacco to increase by 10% every year, which according to the World Health Organisation (WHO) will result in a 4–8% decrease in consumption. However, when cigarettes are finally sold exclusively at pharmacies, the price will be lowered to near cost value.

Lastly, the proposal would like to increase anti-tobacco education. Given that most young people start smoking between 16–20 years old, special emphasis will be on educating this group. This will include working with schools and launching traditional and social media initiatives.

While Siv says that people have criticised the proposal, suggesting that it simply focus on education, she believes that education alone is not enough.

SHOULD SMOKERS FLEE THE COUNTRY NOW?

By no means will cigarettes disappear from stores tomorrow, nor will authorities begin fining hordes of smokers huddled outside of bars next weekend. Not only will these proposed measures be implemented gradually over a ten-year period, but also the proposal itself has a few hoops to jump through before anything happens at all.

When parliament reconvenes in October, Siv will reintroduce the proposal, which will then be open for discussion. If it is approved, likely with some changes, it will then be sent to parliament's standing Health Committee. The Committee will then send it to a long list of consultants and make changes based on feedback. Finally, parliament will send it to the Ministry of Welfare, which will then work on implementing it.

Nonetheless, Siv is optimistic that they will take many of the proposed measures. "It's just a question of time". Though some of the ideas perhaps seem radical, she notes that banning smoking in airplanes, movie theatres, restaurants and bars were also radical ideas of the time.

Should smokers decide to flee the country in any case, they should avoid Finland, which has made it an official policy to eliminate smoking altogether.



ANNA ANDERSEN
ALISA KALYANOVA

The Breakdown: Societal Costs of Smoking in billions

The proposal states that smokers cost the economy roughly 30 billion ISK per year. Here's a breakdown of that cost based on 2007 calculations that were presented at an Icelandic Physician's Association conference in 2009.

Direct Costs:

Direct Health Costs:	
Time spent at hospital	5.750
Ambulance transportation	46
Medication	1.637
Nurse visits	46
Time spent at nursing home	2.020
Future health care savings	750

Other Direct Costs:

Property loss due to fire	47
Tobacco control	74

Indirect Costs:

Productivity Loss Due To:	
Premature deaths	5.707
Disability	1.828
Second-hand smoke	647
Sick days	1.801
Smoking breaks	6.424

Intangible Costs:

Suffering and distress	9.392
------------------------	-------

State Revenue From Tobacco Sales:

Taxes	350
Total markup	3.739
VAT (value added tax)	1.555

Net Societal Costs:

29.024 billion ISK

The largest single cost, 9.392 billion ISK, comes from 'suffering and distress'. Though we're not sure how this was calculated, some smokers in the office think it should at least be counterbalanced by the 'happiness and joy' that also allegedly results from smoking. What do you think?

Adventure tours Scheduled flights Air charter services

Experience excitement in Iceland's pure nature or get a **bird's eye view** of the country's most beautiful places



Activity Adventure

Boat trip on the Glacier lagoon and an ATV excursion in the area of Europe's largest glacier, Vatnajökull.



A Historical Tour of the Westman Islands

This tour takes you from Reykjavík to the island of Heimaey in the Westman Islands archipelago.



Ice and Fire – Glaciers and Volcanoes

A never-to-be-forgotten trip showing the sharply contrasting faces of Iceland's natural features.



Bookings and information
Reykjavík Airport | +354 562 4200
info@eagleair.is | www.eagleair.is



Day Tours, Activities and Airport Express

What do passengers say about Gray Line Iceland?

Since the beginning of this year, Gray Line Iceland has asked its passengers to review their tours. Here you can find some of the testimonials.

Hassan wrote: Monday, June 13, 2011 - AH12 The Golden Circle Classic

★★★★★

"One of the best days of my life!"

Mandel wrote: Monday, June 13, 2011 - AH38 Snæfellsnes National Park

★★★★★

"Hi-This tour was awesome. The driver was very knowledgeable and accompanied us on all stops. He made a special stop for us to taste mineral water. The scenery was fabulous. The guide kept us all moving. The bus was very clean and comfortable. Highly recommended. No complaints!"

Takacs wrote: Sunday, June 12, 2011 - AH36 Vestmannaeyjar - Pompei of the North

★★★★★

"It was a great experience - thank you! Our guides (Ruth, "the Captain" and his son) were kind and knowledgeable + the soup tasted nice :-)+ everything was smoothly organised."

Bates wrote: Saturday, June 11, 2011 - AH23 City Sightseeing & Golden Circle Afternoon

★★★★★

"My husband and I thoroughly enjoyed this combined tour. The City Sightseeing was more extensive than we had imagined and the Golden Circle tour was simply amazing. The tour guide was excellent and we really appreciated her enthusiasm for Icelandic nature and culture."

Fly wrote: Friday, June 10, 2011 - AH30 South Coast & Þórsmörk

★★★★★

"This tour was amazing! I would never have gotten to see the wild, untouched part of Iceland while staying in Reykjavik if it weren't for this tour. The tour group was small, so it felt personal, and our guide was GREAT. He took the time to get to know each of us, and all the information he gave was relevant and interesting. I will never forget the amazing places I saw on this excursion, and I also booked two other great tour packages with Gray Line- the Golden Circle and Blue Lagoon. The service was superb all three times. I would recommend this tour to anyone visiting Iceland!"

Lee wrote: Thursday, June 09, 2011 - AH302 Caving in the cave Búri - NEW!

★★★★★

"Great tour, I am glad I signed up for the caving tour to Buri."

Vegoda wrote: Wednesday, June 08, 2011 - AH12 The Golden Circle Classic

★★★★★

"This is a great tour and we had a wonderful guide who made sure that everyone was well informed and got the best out of it. I couldn't have asked for a better day."

Thomas wrote: Tuesday, June 07, 2011 - AH35 South Coast & Jökulsárlón Glacial Lagoon

★★★★★

"It was a very long trip, but there was plenty to see and regular stops for places of interest and refreshments. We particularly enjoyed the Glacial Lagoon (even though it was very cold and wet) and Seljalandsfoss waterfall. Our guides were excellent and spoke very good English."

Bethune-Leamen wrote: Tuesday, June 07, 2011 - AH12 The Golden Circle Classic

★★★★★

"Solveig was such an incredible guide, and made the tour as fantastic as it was. She was a font of knowledge about all things Icelandic--history, politics, geology, geography, birdlife, and more. Her constant relay of information about where we were headed, and what we were seeing added infinitely to the pleasure of the trip. Thanks, Solveig."

Tsukimori wrote: Monday, June 06, 2011 - AH12 The Golden Circle Classic

★★★★★

"This tour is organized very much so that you don't need to worry about anything. You never miss any sites and have enough time to walk around there. Just sit down in the bus with a brilliant guide;-)"

Tonisson wrote: Monday, June 06, 2011 - AH11 The Golden Circle Afternoon

★★★★★

"I loved this tour. The tour guide was very informative. I think my favourite part of the tour was hearing little facts and about the history of Iceland from the tour guide. The sights were amazing. Take a good coat with you to Gulfoss though, as it's very cold around the waterfall!"

Tonisson wrote: Monday, June 06, 2011 - AH28 The Blue Lagoon from Keflavik Airport

★★★★★

"Simple and well run transportation to the Blue Lagoon and onto my guesthouse. The Blue Lagoon is well worth a visit. I went

Icelandexcursions
GRAY LINE ICELAND



Deildartunguhver hotspring

You can visit Gray Line Iceland downtown at Lækjartorg square (👍 Like-yar-torg), call (+354) 540 1313 or go to www.grayline.is

there both ways to and from the airport!"

Thevoz wrote: Monday, June 06, 2011 - AH18 The Blue Lagoon to Keflavik Airport

★★★★★

"I felt sad having to fly back home, but the stopover at the Blue Lagoon along the way was a wonderful way to end an action packed long weekend. By being so flexible with timings as well as reliable, your company makes a visit to the unique Blue Lagoon trouble-free. I sure will do it again!"

Lee wrote: Monday, June 06, 2011 - AH11 The Golden Circle Afternoon

★★★★★

"It was a wonderful afternoon. thanks. The guide was extremely friendly, pleasant and informative. She make the trip very relaxing and educational. It was an eye opening experience, and the afternoon was an extremely enjoyable one. I am glad i joined the trip with you guys."

Reid wrote: Sunday, June 05, 2011 - AH28 The Blue Lagoon from Keflavik Airport

★★★★★

"The driver was most helpful, we left our camera on the bus before being dropped off at Hotel Borg. The driver made a big effort and found us outside the restaurant where we were going to have

dinner and returned it to us. As to the Blue Lagoon itself, it is fine but too much queuing on the way in and out."

Clarkson wrote: Sunday, June 05, 2011 - AH21 Iceland From Below & The Blue Lagoon

★★★★★

"The tour visited only one lava tube, so there is perhaps less to see than in other cave systems. The novelty lies in clambering through the rough lava tube where the height varies between just under one metre to several metres. Good overalls, hard hats and headlights were provided. Look on this tour as a physical challenge rather than seeing spectacular colours and rock formations. The main experience at the Blue Lagoon is bathing in the warm water, so recommend the standard option where just a towel is provided. We didn't make much use of the bathrobe or the mask/scrub - and silica mud is available free of charge to bathers."

Hale wrote: Sunday, June 05, 2011 - AH71 Deep into the Blue - Fissure Diving

★★★★★

"This was a really enjoyable dive. The guides are very good and make things very smooth and easy even if you've never used a dry suit before. The opportunity to see a landscape that doesn't exist anywhere else in the world is too good to pass up."

Hale wrote: Sunday, June 05, 2011 - AH117 Blue Ice

★★★★★

"An amazing experience out on the ice. The ride is certainly long, but the trip is worth every minute of it. You spend a lot of time out on the glacier, and the ability to try your hand at ice climbing really made the trip awesome. The guides were knowledgeable and helpful and really put everyone at ease."

Thevoz wrote: Sunday, June 05, 2011 - AH35 South Coast & Jökulsárlón Glacial Lagoon

★★★★★

"I had a fantastic day, driving along the stupendous volcanic region which has recently been affecting the rest of Europe, seeing with my own eyes the heroic working farms which regularly have to battle against the elements - before the final stop at Jokulsarlon for the boat trip in an other-worldly environment of white as well as ash-covered icebergs breaking off from the massive glacier above. I still feel immense nostalgia for the places I visited that day, and the 3 jars of volcanic sand and ash from Vik, Eyjafjallajokull and Grimsvotn on my shelves are a proof that it wasn't just a dream. Thank you for a truly amazing day! I know I will be back.."

THE REYKJAVÍK ONE

The trials and tribulations of Geir H. Haarde

A little more than a year ago, several Icelandic bankers were arrested and kept in custody in relation to the Special Prosecutor's investigation into the 2008 economic collapse, its antecedents and causes. Appearing in political TV talk show Silfur Egils shortly afterwards, French-Norwegian magistrate Eva Joly, who at that time served as the Prosecutor's special assistant, talked about how society does not expect—and has problems to deal with politically and economically—powerful people being arrested, interrogated and possibly sentenced.

Eva Joly was right. And the reason? Habit. Whether a journalist, police officer, lawyer, judge or a powerless citizen, in a civilised society based on dualistic ideas of good and evil, one is most likely unable to recognise well-dressed and eloquent people—with possessions and power in their pockets—as anything other than good. During the interview, Eva compared those people with drug users and dealers that are brought to court, who generally are immediately seen by society as criminals deserving to face "justice". Another rightful comparison would be political dissidents.

JURIDICAL MILESTONE OR POLITICAL WITCH-HUNT?

In September of last year, the majority of Alþingi decided to charge former Prime Minister Geir H. Haarde for negligence and mismanagement during the prelude to the 2008 economic collapse. After heavy parliamentary debate on the options to charge either four former ministers, a couple of them or none, the decision, based on the renowned Special Investigation Commission report, was to charge Haarde alone. Crying "political witch-hunt!", was his and his comrades' first reaction, particularly ironic as he himself was one of the main advocates for the investigation leading to this decision.

On June 6, the case was filed in front of Landsdómur, the national high court that now assembles for the first time in Iceland's history. While some consider it a juridical milestone, Geir and his supporters stated that the filing marked the beginning of "Iceland's first political trial". Regardless of one's opinion about the legitimacy of this particular case, it is impossible to overlook the concentrated attempt, embraced in such a statement, to openly deny not only the juridical system's political nature but also the fact of how controversial state policies in Iceland—concerning economic, energy and refugee issues, to name a few—have evoked such fierce opposition that the state's only answer has been to arrest and accuse, threatening people with up to a lifetime in prison.

MORE EQUAL THAN OTHERS

It is remarkably interesting to look at the rhetoric surrounding Geir Haarde's case in comparison with other court cases. On one hand Geir is a "criminal", on the other a victim of "political persecution". The latter definition comes from a team of supporters who up until now have not seen a great deal of reasons to criticise the status quo's greatest watchmen, the courts. But now, as their teammate has got caught in the unimagined, they have shown a com-



"In September of last year, the majority of Alþingi decided to charge former Prime Minister Geir H. Haarde for negligence and mismanagement during the prelude to the 2008 economic collapse"

pletely different side in their criticism towards the system.

Let's be clear from the start: there is a slight difference as Geir's case takes place in front of a particularly rare set of judges whereas all other defendants face their fortune in front of the standard courts. At the same time, Landsdómur is the only platform where the authorities can be brought in front of the court of law, counterbalancing the aforementioned difference. Additionally, the rhetoric around Geir's case is not limited to it alone but was also predominant during the above-mentioned bankers' arrests one year ago. At that point lawyers, judges, politicians and media editors raised their voices, highlighting what in theory is considered to be the maxim of the constitutional state: that everyone is innocent until proven guilty.

And now, when Haarde's case has commenced, we get to hear the same clichés all over again. How his reputation has been damaged and his family and friends been affected by the publicity surrounding his trial. That Iceland's parliament has been misused for a political assault. That the accusations are built on sand, which still does not allow us to underestimate the seriousness of being accused in the first place, regardless of the case's final outcome.

That the law articles concerning Landsdómur are outdated. How hard and expensive it is for a defendant to defend himself against the prosecution—an institution with a bunch of paid workers, and now even an entire website!

Yeah, yeah—this might all be true. But when compared with the discourse surrounding the majority of court cases, where the charges come from above and head hierarchically down the social staircase, the fuss around Geir's case reveals itself as a simple tragicomedy. If one believes that some sort of a universal concept of justice exists, and that a particular institution of politically hired judges is able to reasonably execute this justice, the above-listed arguments must apply to all defendants.

But they don't.

This we know e.g. from recent cases against political dissidents where charges have been in complete contravention of the cases' evidence, investigations, the laws and Iceland's constitution. During one of these cases, against the so-called 'Reykjavík Nine'—who were accused and finally acquitted of "attacking parliament" in December of 2008—media editors, lawyers, police officers, former and current ministers and members of parliament amongst others, did their best to get the defendants sentenced before the actual

court proceedings took place. Another case would be the one against anti-war campaigner Lárus Páll Birgisson, whose civil and constitutional rights have repeatedly been violated by the police by the demand of the U.S. embassy in Reykjavík. Lárus has already once been sentenced for refusing to obey the police who illegally ordered him to leave a public pavement in front of the embassy. Another case is going on right now, based on the exact same nonsense.

Neither of these cases nor most other court procedures in this country have been of any concern to the recently uprisen human rights guards of Geir H. Haarde. In the comparison crystallises George Orwell's ominous saying that all animals are indeed equal, but some animals are more equal than others.

THE BITTER TASTE OF THEIR OWN MEDICINE

In his recent book, titled 'Bankastræti Núll', author Einar Már Guðmundsson, one of Iceland's most critical present time authors, actually compares these two cases—the one against Geir and the one against the Reykjavík Nine—and accuses Geir's supporters, which he calls the upper class elite, of lacking all unity. "Of course all the other ministers from the collapse-government and the bureaucrats around them should demand to undergo the same trial", he says and refers to a petition in support of the Reykjavík Nine where hundreds of people said: "Charge all or none! We all attacked the parliament!".

The argument in that case was that no one had literally attacked parliament, and if those who were charged for it actually attacked then everyone who took part in toppling a government during the winter of 2008-9, would be guilty of that same attack. Haarde and his supporters say the same, that he is not alone responsible for the economic collapse and crisis and should therefore not be on trial. And they are right. Geir H. Haarde is not alone responsible for the sufferings of people living under the über-power of the ruling capitalist civilization. It is the system itself—its structure, values and its definition of "justice"—that bears the responsibility.

But like all other systems, there are people behind this one and Haarde is one of them, not more or less responsible than any other authority figure. Sustaining and maintaining the system's mechanism requires repressive methods, including political persecutions in the form of court procedures. Geir Haarde's case demonstrates an incident that happens extremely rarely—but luckily once in a while—when those people are forced to sample the bitter taste of their own medicine. There is not much to say except: Bon appétit!

Justice Or Revenge?

Last September, the Icelandic parliament took the conclusions of the Special Investigative Commission (SIC) under advisement and voted on whether or not four key political figures of the previous government should be charged with negligence and mismanagement: former Minister of Finance Árni M. Mathiesen, former Minister of Business Björgvin G. Sigurðsson, former Foreign Minister Ingibjörg Sólrún Gísladóttir and former Prime Minister Geir H. Haarde. In the end, all escaped unscathed except for Geir, who parliament decided (by a 33-votes-to-30 majority) to put on trial for his part in the 2008 economic crash.

The vote was an historic one, and marked the first time in Icelandic history that a prime minister had ever been charged with negligence. This also marked the first time the national court would be called together since its inception in the early 20th century.

The reactions from the right and the left were immediate and decisive. Geir has consistently professed his innocence, saying that there was nothing he could have done to prevent the crash, and that he was not the only one who enjoyed the benefits of the over-inflated banks. This is a far cry from the SIC report conclusions, which portrayed Geir as woefully incompetent, unaware of anything that was happening in the Central Bank, and frankly terrified of the then Central Bank chair, current Morgunblaðið editor, and all-around conservative grand poobah Davíð Oddsson.

Support from around the world...

Geir's defenders were also quick to jump to his aid, with many conservative figures stating that the trial is nothing more than political revenge initiated by his long-time opponents. This culminated in the formation of Málsvörn.is, a website that purports the dual purpose of collecting signatures of those who believe Geir is being unjustly punished and raising money for his defence fund. The site boasted hundreds of signatures within its first two weeks, but at least one person—author Arngrímur Vídalín—claims his name was put on the supporters list without his knowledge or consent (the petition also lists Adolf Hitler and Benito Mussolini as supporters).

The outspoken nature of his supporters may explain Geir's breezy attitude about the trial, which began earlier this month. He recently told attendees of a press conference that he has received flowers at his doorstep, and added, "We will win this case". He also said that he often bumps into the MPs who voted in favour of pressing charges, who then—possibly out of politeness—try to greet him in a friendly way, which he takes issue with. "They have demanded a two-year prison term for me. And they think they can just walk up to me and kiss and hug me like it's no thing. 'No, sir', I tell those women who try".

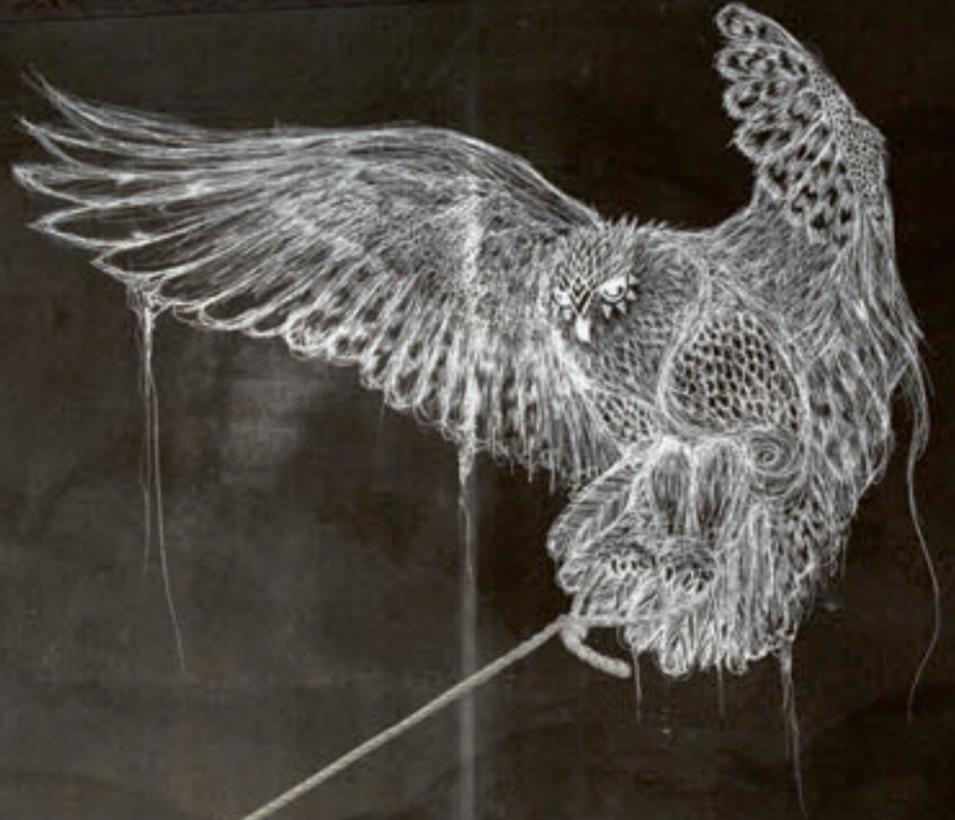
Yeah but is he guilty?

Not everyone is buying it, though. Left-Green MP Björn Valur Gíslason responded to the oft-repeated criticism from Geir's supporters that the trial is baseless, and merely political revenge from political opponents.

"Has it occurred to no one that Geir is guilty of that which he is being charged?", he wrote on his blog. "Is the [Special Investigative Commission report] forgotten? Wasn't it one of the report's conclusions that Haarde showed negligence on the job, and neglected to act, with disastrous consequences?".

By Icelandic law, a government minister found guilty of negligence or mismanagement can face up to two years in prison. Whether or not this trial—which isn't going to be drawing to a close any time soon—will end in a conviction or an acquittal for Geir, the trial does mark a new chapter in Icelandic politics: at least one elected representative is being held accountable for his actions—or lack thereof.

**WE KNOW
THE FEELING**



[SIENSKA SJA.IS CIN 54339 04 2011

CINTAMANI BANKASTRÆTI 7
101 REYKJAVÍK, Tel. 533 3390
OPEN EVERY DAY FROM 8-20

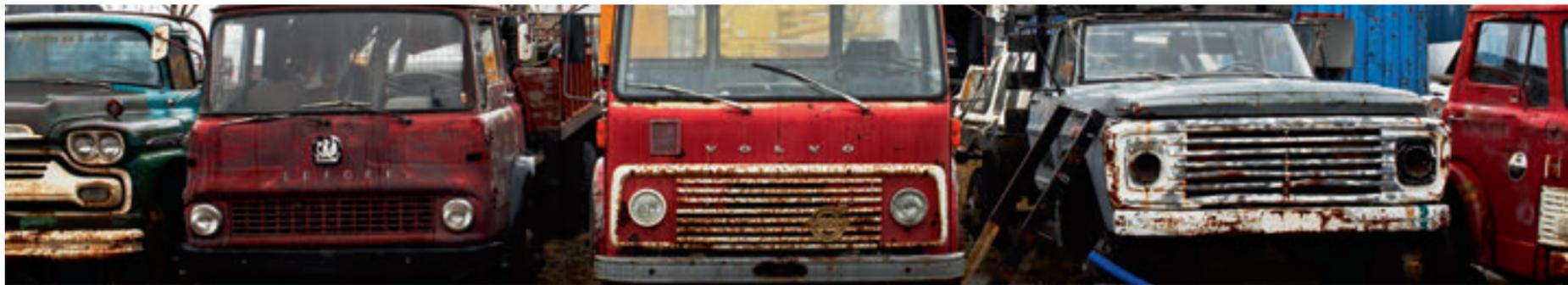
CINTAMANI AUSTURHRAUNI 3
210 GARÐABÆ, Tel. 533 3805
MON-FRI 10-18, SAT 11-14

CINTAMANI KRINGLUNNI
103 REYKJAVÍK, Tel. 533 3003
KRINGLAN'S OPENING HOURS



CINTAMANI
WWW.CINTAMANI.IS

Your Game | Step it up, nation!



Pure Iceland?

Is Iceland as environmentally sound as you like to think?

Words

Irina Domurath

Photography

GAS

Iceland is—against all common notions and expectations—not a very environmentally friendly country. In many ways, the environmental legislation does not go as far as EU rules command. But the problem already starts in the minds of the people.

Every year, thousands of tourists take pictures of the green-painted parking spaces on Laugavegur. After having seen the Geysir, waterfalls, glaciers, volcanoes, beautiful coastlines, highlands, boiling mud pots and cracks in the earth, they probably assume that these parking spaces in Iceland's capital are a mirror of the downright environmentally progressive attitude of this amazing country.

Not long ago, one could see bicycle paths marked in green on Hverfisgata. Even though this was a most welcome contribution to Reykjavik city life (however short-lived it was), we should bear in mind that it was a long overdue action considering that bicycle paths have been common in other capital cities for decades. And after all, Iceland is not as environmentally friendly as it might appear at first glance.

LAGGING BEHIND THE EU

When looking at the Icelandic environmental legislation, it becomes apparent that the environmental protection is substandard; Iceland even lags behind the often-criticised EU environmental legislation in many ways. In February

2010, after Iceland had submitted its answers to the questionnaire concerning EU membership, the European Commission issued its opinion on Iceland's readiness to join the EU. While recommending the opening of accession negotiations, the opinion stated that "serious efforts" are required in several areas—among them environmental policy—in order to meet the accession criteria. This is interesting considering that environmental legislation in the EU often operates with minimum standards and has been subject to very reasonable criticism over the years.

The underlying analytical report of the Commission clarified that in the policy areas that are not covered by the EEA agreement Iceland still needs to work towards achieving the same level of environmental protection as the EU countries.

Some examples from the report:

-It is not required under Icelandic law to draw up ecological maps and work in a structured manner towards building a network of protection zones.

-The protection and conservation of wild flora and fauna and natural habitats demand further efforts.

-National investment in the environment is very low, as well as the level of enforcement of environmental law. Mechanisms for integrating environmental concerns into other policies are not widespread.

-And, unlike other European countries, Iceland has still not ratified the Espoo Convention on Environmental Impact Assessment in a Transboundary Context and the Aarhus Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters.

PROTECTING NATURE?

Nature protection and conservation in Iceland mainly takes place under the Nature Conservation Act 44/1999. Iceland does protect many areas of its environment, including special landscapes such as volcanic craters, waterfalls, hot

"With its small population and abundant natural resources, Iceland could easily and should become an environmental pioneer in international environmental protection"

springs and lava fields. All in all, about 23,461 square kilometres of Iceland are under some kind of protection, as Jón Örvar Geirsson Jónsson from the Environmental Agency of Iceland tells us.

"This includes two large water protection areas around Lake Mývatn and Þingvellir. It also includes Breiðarfjörður", he explains. This number roughly corresponds to the protected areas in the EU, which protects about 20 percent of its nature as habitats of animal species.

However, we should consider that most, if not all, EU countries are more urbanised and more densely populated. In contrast to Iceland, 'natural areas' in the European countries are often fragmented due to high levels of infrastructure. This should make us wonder why the vast areas of pristine nature in Iceland are not comprehensively protected.

ICELANDIC RECYCLING BEHIND EU RESULTS

In its report, the European Commission also detects slight differences in the waste management systems of Iceland and the EU. The EU Waste Framework Directive establishes the so-called waste hierarchy, according to which waste shall first and foremost be prevented and re-used before being recycled or otherwise recovered. The disposal of waste shall be the last resort. At the time, Iceland had not yet transposed the directive into Icelandic law and numbers from Eurostat and the Environmental Agency of Iceland show that this difference in legislation has already had consequences. In the year 2006, Iceland recovered around 43 per cent of its total waste, while the EU countries recovered almost 50 per cent

on average. And in comparison to countries like Denmark and Poland—that recover even more than 80 percent of their waste—it becomes apparent how badly Iceland was lagging behind other parts of the continent.

By the end of last year, Iceland had started to transpose the Waste Framework Directive into national law. However, some provisions of the Directive and of amendments to the Batteries and Mining Waste Directives still need to be addressed.

NO EFFORTS TO REDUCE EMISSIONS

The situation is similar with regard to air pollution policies. According to Statistics Iceland, the total greenhouse gas emissions in Iceland have risen since 1990. By emitting 20 percent more greenhouse gases in 2006 than in 1990, Iceland does not comply with the provisions of the Kyoto Protocol. Under the Kyoto Protocol, Iceland is allowed to emit 10 percent more greenhouse gases until 2012 compared to 1990 levels. In contrast, other industrialised states agreed to reduce their emissions by 5,2 percent.

The EU countries, for example, committed themselves to jointly reduce emissions by 8 percent. And in fact, data from the European Environment Agency show that the emission of many air pollutants in Europe has fallen substantially since 1990.

Even though many countries in the EU had problems complying with their emission reduction targets for 2010, it should be acknowledged that they are at least trying. That is not the case with Iceland. Even though it is completely independent of conventional emission-

intensive energy—unlike the EU countries—Iceland does not seem to undertake big efforts to participate in the global emission reduction endeavours. The Icelandic exception in the Kyoto Protocol illustrates this.

THE PEOPLES' RESPONSIBILITY

Eventually, and despite all common expectations, Iceland is not the environmental pioneer it has every opportunity to become. And the aluminium smelters are not exclusively to blame. It is the Icelandic people who do not seem to have much of an environmental conscience. Where are the electric cars that are supposed to park on those famous parking spaces? How many Icelanders would choose a fuel-efficient car over fancy jeeps? Are there many Icelanders who separate their garbage and go the extra length to SORPA? Is it really necessary to leave the water tap running for minutes to give it enough time to cool down or heat up? And why do so many Icelanders not turn off their cars' engines when they are not actually driving? It cannot be because of the cold, because people leave the engines running in winter- and summertime, while in other countries people do not freeze to death turning them off, even during the cold, continental winters.

It is the little everyday efforts that make a difference in the minds of people, and that can make a difference on the long run influencing politics as well.

With its small population and abundant natural resources, Iceland could easily and should become an environmental pioneer in international environmental protection. There are huge possibilities in Iceland with regard to green energy in particular and green policies in general. Not only would this pay ethical respect to its unique nature, it would present the country with many much needed financial opportunities. ♡

Mountaineers of Iceland

SUPER JEEP & SNOWMOBILE TOURS

Mountaineers of Iceland • Skútuvogur 12E • 104 Reykjavík • Iceland
Telephone: +354 580 9900 Ice@mountaineers.is • www.mountaineers.is • www.activity.is

2011 LungqA

10.-17.

júlí

Seyðisfjörður

www.lunga.is



MENNINGARRÁÐ
AUSTURLANDS



Education and Culture DG
"Youth in Action" Programme



How many newly constructed, empty apartment complexes line the outskirts of Reykjavík? At least nine, although they might be as many as FIVE BILLION. Who knows?

Building Giant ATMs

The Icelandic housing bubble examined



Words

Magnús Sveinn Helgason

Photography

Julia Staples

Real estate prices, which had remained stagnant in real terms between 1988 and 2003—that is, they simply followed inflation—took off. Between 2003 and 2007 however, real estate prices rose by a phenomenal 84%

From Range Rovers to Bang & Olufsen designer electronics, there is no question Iceland went through a massive consumer boom (see GV issue 6, 2011). In fact, as Guðmundur Jónsson, Professor of Economic History at the University of Iceland, has pointed out, the Icelandic consumption boom was one of the largest in all of Western Europe. Taking the entire boom period 1995–2007, private consumption grew by 60% in Iceland—only Ireland (which experienced a similarly spectacular housing and financial bubbles) saw a larger growth in private consumption.

And while this growth in consumption is a characteristic of the entire twelve-year boom, it is striking how much of it took place during the financial bubble of the noughties. Between 2002 and 2007, private consumption grew by around 48%. And, as Guðmundur Jónsson has pointed out, it is impossible to understand this growth in consumption without looking at the growth in household debt. Debt as share of disposable household income, which had been growing since the beginning of the boom at an annually modest rate of 1.8%, really took off after 2003. The annual growth between 2003 and 2008 was a whopping 5.2%.

The great Icelandic consumption boom was fuelled by debt. Just like the Icelandic financial bubble and the real-estate bubble. Which leads one to wonder: How exactly are these phenomena linked?

FROM 'SAVINGS ACCOUNTS' TO 'ATMS'

For most of the 20th century, Icelanders viewed their homes like savings accounts. During the post-war years, interest rates were set by law and bank deposits generally carried interest rates that were below the chronically high inflation rate. Under these circumstances real estate, or 'concrete', was among the only really generally safe investment or savings plan ordinary people had access to. Getting to own your own home, even if it required considerable sacrifices, was therefore something that responsible people were expected to do. Somehow, this idea of real-estate as a savings account transformed into the idea of using your home as a cash machine—a giant ATM.

This transformation of how people viewed the equity they had in their homes—as collateral for easy loans or hard earned savings—lies at the heart of the cultural transformation that explains the Icelandic consumer boom of the years prior to the financial crash of 2008.

During the post-war period, it had generally been pretty hard to get financing for buying a home. Homebuyers were expected to have a significant down payment, at least 10–20%, and nobody expected to start out in a single family home or townhouse. Home equity loans were granted by government authorities. The system changed several times over the period, but since 1989 housing finance funds provided up to 70% of the purchase price of a home. However, these loans were capped at relatively low amounts, in 2004 at less than 10 million ISK. Homebuyers could take out additional "top off" loans at reasonable interest from their pension funds or at higher interest through other channels. In addition, since 1979 all loans were indexed to inflation.

While housing prices generally held up to inflation, homeowners did not expect to build up equity through rising real-estate prices. Equity was built up the old-fashioned way, by paying down loans and by saving up money for a downpayment for a larger home.

ENTER THE BANKS

All of this changed when the newly privatised banks decided they wanted a piece of the real estate action. In August of 2004, the Icelandic banks began, for the first time, offering home equity

loans.

The banks began by offering loans for 80%–90% of the purchase price of homes (later they would even go up to 100%). This move was hailed as revolutionary—the banks claimed in their advertisements that they were offering people "freedom!" and the banks offered new kinds of exotic loans—instead of the boring fixed interest loans offered by the government housing authority, people could get more exciting loans with variable interest rates. And instead of having their loans indexed to consumer prices, people could have them indexed to foreign currencies: Yen, Euros, Dollars or Swiss Francs. As it turned out, it was against the law to index loans to foreign currencies. But that is another story.

Real estate prices, which had remained stagnant in real terms between 1988 and 2003—that is, they simply followed inflation—took off. Between 2003 and 2007 however, real estate prices rose by a phenomenal 84%.

It is wrong to blame the banks for the entire housing bubble—prices had begun to rise in early 2003 as the government declared that the state housing finance authority would begin making 90% loans. But the entry of the banks brought an immediate spike in real estate prices. Between September 2004 and September 2005, prices rose by a staggering 33%.

In the summer of 2004, before the banks entered the mortgage business, a 130 square metre apartment in downtown Reykjavík cost around 17 million ISK. By late 2007 the same apartment went for 33 million ISK.

The banks understandably argued that this rise was a "correction", that prices had been unreasonably low previously. But then again, if you rely on the analysts of investment banks, pretty much all price changes are "corrections", be they bubbles or the inevitable crashes that follow them.

The price "correction", in addition to the ready availability of up to 100% financing on new homes, meant that homeowners calculated they could afford pretty much anything. Rather than saving for a small starter home in need of fixing up, people would now take out a loan for the entire purchase price of a much larger apartment. And then an additional "home loan" for purchasing furniture. Many assumed this was safe, since price appreciation would quickly create equity in their homes. And in any

case, people looked at the monthly payments, not the total debt burden.

The greatest change was that people could for the first time refinance, they could access the equity in their homes without selling. People could now use their homes as ATMs, taking out loans to remodel their kitchen or bathroom, upgrade their furniture or car or simply pay off credit card debts and the overdraft on their checking account. The result was a spending binge of historic proportions

DEBT AS FREEDOM

While the banks claimed they were being awfully responsible in their lending, advising people not to take out more loans than they actually needed or could repay, there is every reason to believe the opposite to be true. There are countless stories of loan officers who pressured people into taking out larger loans, even making house calls to convince people to refinance.

The banks' advertisements paint a similar picture. Rather than discourage potential customers, advising them to take out smaller loans and limit their expectations, banking advertisements presented people images of how the good life could be bought on credit. Home equity loans were consistently advertised as being for either remodelling and maintenance, or for "reorganising" your personal finances, read: refinancing consumption debt and paying up overdrafts. With a clean slate, people could start all over!

The savings banks advertised "Real estate loans" that were intended for "purchasing a new home, refinancing and lowering monthly payments, remodeling or just about anything you can think of". Mortgages and home equity loans were means to actualise dreams, dreams that need not be directly related to housing or real estate: they could literally be anything you could dream of.

The same theme surfaces in a 2007 advertisement by Kaupþing. Advertising 'interest only' loans, the bank boasted that "Kaupþing grows with you after you graduate"—promising recent university graduates 100% total financing on a new home, plus a 3,000,000 ISK "graduation loan" (people who took out those kinds of loans, paying only interest, could probably watch their debt grow, and grow!). The advertisements featured smart young people and Kaupþing's promise that it would assist you in "making

your dreams come true", whether those dreams were "buying your first apartment" or "world travel".

This emphasis on the banks as the primary dream-actualisers of the Icelandic people was a major and reappearing theme in bank advertisements during the boom. Freedom was another. SPRON, the largest savings bank, ran a large advertising campaign with the theme "Freedom", featuring among other things, pictures of 19th Century Icelandic independence movement hero Jón Sigurðsson, and Gay Pride—arguing that just like Icelanders had fought for all kinds of freedoms, SPRON was now fighting for the financial freedom of consumers. In another "freedom" themed SPRON advertisement this freedom was articulated further: You now had the freedom to choose which foreign currencies your 40-year home mortgage was indexed to! Oh the joys and excitement of consumer freedom!

DREAM-ACTUALISERS OF THE ICELANDIC PEOPLE

Sure, not all bank advertisements emphasized frothy financial "freedom" through perpetual debt slavery. A sizable part of the advertisement budgets of Kaupþing, Glitnir and Landsbankinn appears to have been spent on associating the brand names with "Icelandicness" (the national foot- or handball teams, fishermen and the rugged nature), culture and the arts or some other positive attribute. As if the banks were telling the people that they were an inseparable part of the fabric of the nation, its culture and aspirations. Just as they were attempting to convince people that "the good life", in a nice newly remodelled apartment and interest-only, Euro-indexed 100% home equity loan were really inseparable things.

This association of banks and debt with living a fulfilling life provides a necessary link between the housing boom and the explosion of private consumption and household debt. By selling consumers the idea of immediate gratification, your home as an ATM and "debt as freedom", the banks both helped shape the atmosphere of overconsumption that pervaded Iceland and then provided people with the debt needed to finance this binge. ♥

Glacier hiking on Vatnajökull glacier!



Glacier Grand Slam is our best selling combination tour in Skaftafell. This tour combines some of the best sights Vatnajökull National Park has to offer. Glacier hiking on the majestic glacier, Falljökull, followed by a boat ride on the famous Jökulsárlón (Glacier Lagoon). Tour includes pick up from the Skaftafell campsite and lunch. Departs everyday at 9.00 am.



Glacier Hike Ice Climbing Climbing Cycling Sightseeing Boat Trip



www.glaciergeguides.is | info@glaciergeguides.is | + 354-571-2100 | Visit us at Fjallakofinn outdoor shop - Laugavegur 11 - 101 Reykjavik



EXPECT HANG OVERS...



NASA

THE BIGGEST CLUB IN
DOWNTOWN REYKJAVIK.
LIVE MUSIC EVERY WEEKEND.
WWW.NASA.IS

THE PEN WIELDER, THE POET AND THE ROGUE

Jón Sigurðsson and other Icelandic 'heroes of independence'

On June 17, Jón Sigurðsson will be the man of the day. This is Iceland's 'Independence Day' with festivities all around the country, parades and the waving of flags, but this day also marks 200 years since the birth of Jón Sigurðsson—for our national celebrations take place on his birthday. Jón Sigurðsson is Iceland's number one independence hero—however, he is all the same a strangely remote person.

FACING PARLIAMENT

The statue of the stern man standing tall opposite the parliament on Austurvöllur square in downtown Reykjavík, looking at the doings of Alþingi with stern, perhaps indignant eyes—that's Jón Sigurðsson. The sculpture was made by the artist Einar Jónsson—who did much to fashion the nationalistic imagery of early 20th century Iceland—and it also includes a relief where a muscular, prophetic looking man is moving boulders of rock from a mountain road, with a group of people coming behind him, not really helping, just gazing at him in wonder.

But reality is not so dramatic. Jón Sigurðsson worked in an office his whole life. He never lifted a stone in his struggle or wielded a sword—even if his obituary remarked that he was Iceland's pride, sword and shield. It is often said that the pen was his weapon. This can be a bit problematic, for as a national hero he seems distant, difficult to relate to, and most people have a very vague idea about who he was and what he really did. It could even be said that most Icelanders are not particularly interested. His 200 years birthday is not an event that garners much excitement.

PURGING ICELAND OF DANISH INFLUENCE

Most European nations that were under the rule of other countries—Iceland was under Denmark for many centuries, until 1944—have their 19th century nationalist heroes, coming in the wake of the romantic nationalist awakening in the beginning of that century. Iceland basically has two. One of them is very typical; he has his equivalents in many countries: This is Jónas Hallgrímsson, the national poet, a romantic idealist who dreamed of resurrecting the old Alþingi and waking the people and the language from a long period of apathy.

Words

Egill Helgason

Illustration

Lóa Hjálmtýsdóttir

There is a statue of Jónas Hallgrímsson, also by sculptor Einar Jónsson, in the Hljómskálagarður park, just by the pond—statues of such poets exist in cities all around Europe.

Jónas wrote poems, published a magazine called Fjöl-nir with his friends and he was also a naturalist—creating Icelandic names for many natural phenomena. Jónas wanted to revive pride in the nation's cultural heritage and expunge the language of Danish influence. Danish was then becoming the language of towns like Reykjavík and Akureyri. In this he was very much the child of the romantic nationalistic ideals of that period.

THE FAVORITE CHILD OF MISFORTUNE

Jónas, like Jón Sigurðsson, lived in Copenhagen for most of his life—at the time, the city was the real capital of Iceland. Born in a beautiful valley in the north of Iceland in 1807, he had a short, unhappy life. His father drowned when he was a young boy, and even if he wrote many beautiful love poems, he never found love himself. In Copenhagen he became an alcoholic like many of the Icelanders who went there to study, and in 1845, when he was just 37 years of age, he fell down the stairs when drunkenly returning to his home and broke his leg. A few days later he died, presumably from blood poisoning, in a Copenhagen hospital. It is rumoured that his body was in terrible shape when he died—that he had pneumonia, liver damage and perhaps Delirium Tremens. In his last years Jónas had occasionally started to disguise himself as a Danish labourer to be able to move about the city without meeting fellow Icelanders.

Jónas is still a greatly beloved national hero. Many of his poems are extraordinarily pure and beautiful. He always fascinates. He is a poet who wrote beautiful things and then poured beer all over the

words. He has been referred to as the favourite child of misfortune, the good poet, the darling of the nation. In 1946, his bones were even disinterred and moved to Iceland to be buried in a National Graveyard for the greats of Iceland that was being planned in Þingvellir, the site of the old Alþingi. Sadly the National Graveyard soon became a butt of jokes, not least because the presumed bodily remains of Jónas were rumoured to be those of a Danish butcher. But the grave-



yard is still there and it is well worth a visit—the only other grave is that of poet Einar Benediktsson (1864–1940).

"WE ALL PROTEST!"

Jón Sigurðsson was just a few years younger than Jónas Hallgrímsson. He was born in the Westfjords of Iceland on June 17, 1811. He was a philologist by education, working in the Arnarnagæan Foundation, which housed and preserved the manuscripts of the old Icelandic Sagas—the most precious things to come from Iceland. These old books were kept in Denmark for many centuries, but in 1971 the Danes started giving them back. Soon, Jón was devoting more time to political and economical matters and he became the undisputed leader of the nascent independence movement. It was he who fashioned its arguments,

even if he didn't go further than calling for a sovereign country under the Danish king.

But momentous or dramatic events were few in Jón Sigurðsson's life—and thus it is rather difficult to explain his importance to schoolchildren. The most famous was in the summer of 1851, during a conference with the Danish authorities in the large timber house of the Reykjavík Gymnasium on Lækjargata. The Danes proposed that the Icelanders would become citizens of the Danish state with six representatives in the Parliament in Copenhagen—Jón and his followers staged a minor revolt, shouting "we all protest!" and leaving the room.

This is a milestone in the independence movement, and there is a large painting depicting these events in the hallway of Alþingi, but they cannot be construed as being terribly dramatic. Rumours that the Danes planned to murder Jón Sigurðsson also proved to be without foundation—the truth is that as colonial masters go the Danes were rather lenient towards Iceland.

JÓN AGAINST AND FOR THE EU

Jón Sigurðsson's grave is to be found in the old Reykjavík cemetery, just up the hill from the pond. This is well worth a visit, for the garden is old and mysterious, full of history and quite beautiful in its Nordic way. Jón died in 1879. His body was moved from Copenhagen with the remains of his wife, Ingibjörg Einarsdóttir, who passed away only nine days after his death. Their story is a bit strange. Ingibjörg was Jón's cousin, seven years his senior. They met when he was a shop assistant and a scribe in Reykjavík. Then Jón went to Copenhagen to attend university. She waited for many long years, during which time it is said that she lost her teeth, but they finally married in 1845 and set up a rather bourgeois household in Copenhagen. There has been much speculation about this, but in later years it has been discussed openly that Jón probably had syphilis. The couple had no children.

Long before Iceland became a repub-

lic people had started celebrating 17th of June as a day of national festivities. The University of Iceland was founded in 1911 on Jón Sigurðsson's 100th birthday. When Iceland severed its ties with Denmark during World War II—under the auspices of the US military—the date of independence was set on June 17, 1944. Jón Sigurðsson was celebrated as a national icon, his pictures were everywhere, on platters, paper bills and mass-produced prints that were found in many homes. Today antique shops are full of this merchandise, while Jón is still on the 500 ISK bill.

Jón is often referred to as Jón forseti—"President Jón"—but he never was a real president. In fact, he just was a president of the Copenhagen branch of the Icelandic Literary Society, admittedly a very prestigious association, founded in 1816. But in the political debate he gets mentioned a lot, especially when matters of sovereignty and the relationships of Iceland with the world are on the agenda. Those who are against Iceland joining the European Union quote him as their ally as do those who want Iceland to join. Of course this is pure fantasy—simply Jón can be said to have been a follower of 19th century bourgeois ideas of free trade.

THE DOG DAYS KING

It might be said that Jón Sigurðsson is a rather boring independence hero. Basically he was just a well-educated man with an astute legal mind. But then, Iceland has been said to be one of the most peaceful countries in the world. The last real battle fought here was in the 13th century. There have been no Viking heroes here since the time of the sagas. So maybe Jón is the right man. But then we have another, mostly unsung independence hero. This is the Danish rogue and adventurer Jørgen Jørgensen, who occupied the country for a few months in 1809, during the Napoleonic wars. Jørgen, "the Dog Days King", came here with a handful of men, originally to buy fat for soap making, but he took charge of the country with his handful of men and declared it to be free of Denmark. He even designed a new Icelandic flag—it was blue with three dried and flattened codfish in the corner.

However Jørgensen's reign didn't last long, and after he was driven away he ended up in the penal colony in Tasmania where he died in 1840. There is still no statue of Jørgensen in Iceland. ☹



Heavenly pizzas!



Home delivery
See our menu at www.gamlasmidjan.is



From the settlers necessity
to modern man's delicacy.

An unbroken tradition for 1137 years.

The Icelandic Sheep.
Keeping the people alive since 874 AD.



biolour@gmail.com / photo: GAS



OPEN 24 HOURS

in Hagkaup Skeifan & Garðabær

Welcome to the only
24 hour Hypermarket
in Iceland



Hagkaup is the only Hypermarket in Iceland. We offer the widest range of merchandise in Iceland & our locations in Skeifan & Garðabær are open 24 hours.

One stop shop
with:

- Groceries
- Clothing
- Shoes
- Toys
- Homeware
- CD's, DVD's
- Electronics and more...

HAGKAUP
one stop shop

Joining The Queeropean Union



“Icelandic LGBT citizens have long enjoyed more civil rights than many of their neighbours, something that is reflected in a strong legal framework”

economic interests. One can therefore easily understand why other issues have received little or no attention, regrettable as it is. In hope of balancing the debate a little, this article thus deals with other aspects of European co-operation and shifts the focus towards the issue of human rights. It zooms in on the rights of lesbians, gays, bisexuals and transgender people (LGBT) and looks at how the application process is already affecting NGOs like Samtökin '78—the Icelandic Queer Organization.

To join the European Union, a country needs to meet certain economic and political conditions, the so-called Copenhagen criteria. These terms include stability of democratic institutions, the rule of law, human rights and respect for and protection of minorities. The Justice and Home Affairs negotiation team oversees the chapter on judiciary and fundamental rights, which includes human rights. Screening of the chapter was concluded in February this year and no questions were raised about exemptions, specially tailored solutions or adjustments, as the parties did not see any troubles in closing it. In fact, EU praised the protection of human rights in Iceland and indicated that it didn't see any impending problems.

ALARMING RISE OF EXTREMISM IN EUROPE

Compared to Iceland, the state of LGBT rights in many European countries is in a pretty bad shape. This has caused great concerns and provoked reactions within various EU institutions. The European Parliament's Intergroup on LGBT Rights is an example of how members of the parliament have reacted. The group provides parliament members with an informal forum to work for LGBT rights across national borders and party lines and currently engages 115 MEPs out of 735. A group meeting in early April revealed that despite some progress in recent years things have generally been moving in the wrong direction. Growing extremism, accompanied by prejudice and ha-

rope' and called for contributions from its member organisations. Apart from this, ILGA-Europe is currently in dialogue with EU institutions about mutual recognition of same-sex marriages, partnerships or civil unions. Such pan-European recognition would be extremely important for same sex couples and their families, but meets staunch opposition of various groups that lobby against LGBT rights in Brussels.

Iceland's EU application has already affected Samtökin '78 by broadening and deepening the current co-operation with ILGA-Europe and sister organisations throughout the continent. This has created possibilities for a dynamic and interactive participation with the sharing of experiences, mutual support, learning and engagement of local members, and will undoubtedly benefit the organisation in the long run. Icelandic LGBT citizens have long enjoyed more civil rights than many of their neighbours, something that is reflected in a strong legal framework. The situation might not be perfect, and even though prejudices and stereotypes are very much alive and kicking in Iceland, not least of which can be found in the media, we must not forget that things are still much better than in many other European countries. Iceland has a lot to offer in these matters, but can also learn a great deal from others. All things considered, joining the Queeropean Union in order to pursue these goals might not be such a bad idea. ☺

Words

Hilmar Magnússon

Illustration

Lóa Hjálmtýsdóttir

PREREQUISITES FOR AN ENLIGHTENED DEBATE

On Iceland's behalf, the application work is in the hands of a negotiation committee, government officials and ten negotiation teams. A so-called 'screening process' (a comparison of Icelandic and EU law, made to determine what subjects to negotiate on), will soon be concluded. The EU has therefore proposed the beginning of actual negotiations this June 17 (incidentally, Iceland's Independence Day), aiming to start with issues like competition policy, media, research, education and culture. After finishing these chapters, the most difficult issues still await the parties, which means that an enlightened debate on the pros and cons of a membership agreement will have to wait.

HUMAN RIGHTS AND OTHER INVISIBLE MATTERS

Questions about fisheries, agriculture and currency are complex and controversial, as they deal with important

 Three topics—fisheries, agriculture and currency—have been prominent in the Icelandic debate on the European Union since the country applied for EU membership in July of 2009. The discourse has been dominated by big words, and often goes to extremes, but since an accession agreement has yet to be finalised, most statements remain purely speculative.

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

Quality coffee roasted on the premises



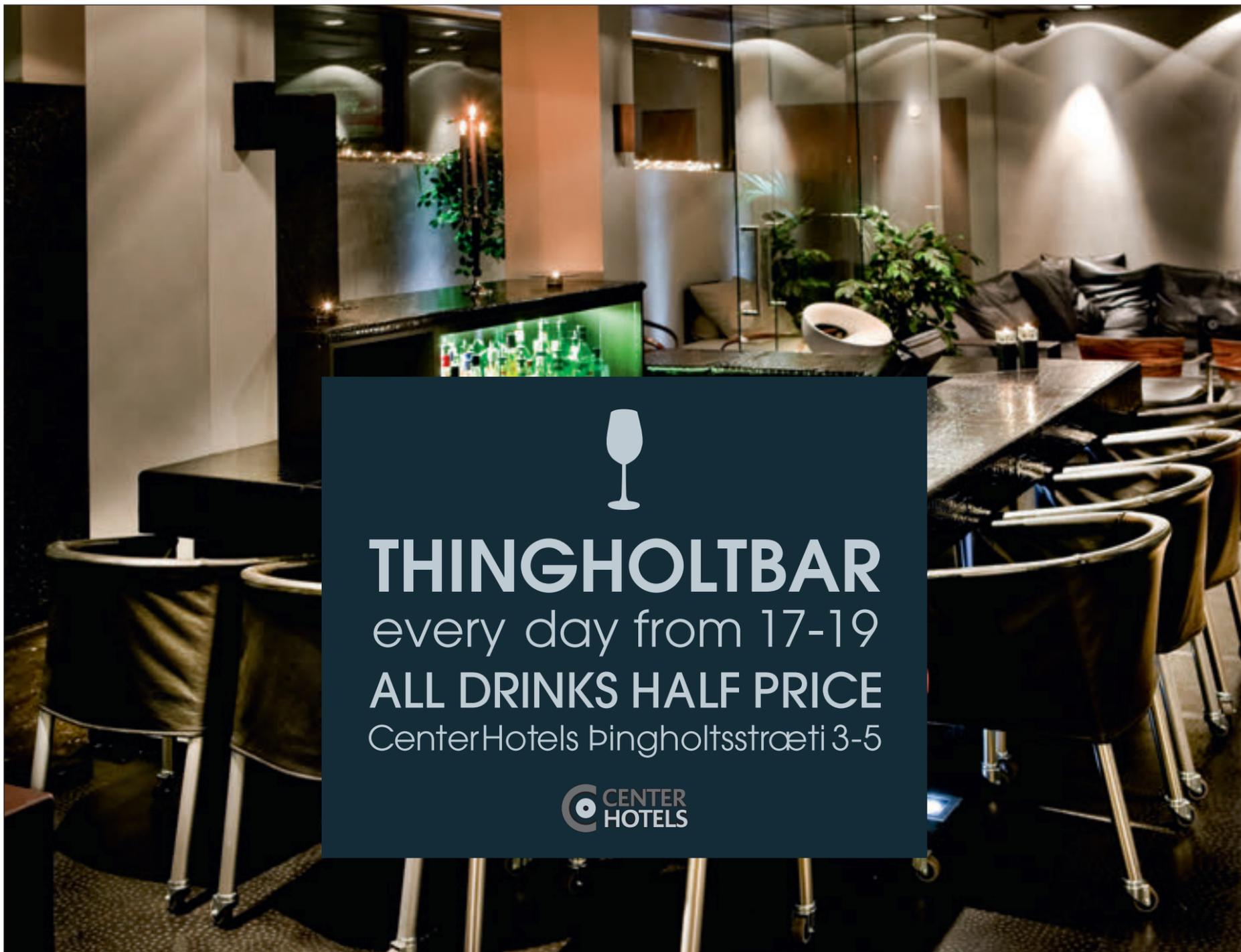
CAFE HAITI by the Old Harbour
Geirgata 7b, 101 Reykjavík
tel: 661 5621 / 588 8484
Opening hours: 8.00 – 23.00

A genuine Nordic 3 course feast
starting from 4.900,-



restaurant **SILFUR**

Nordic Cuisine
Pósthússtræti 11 101 Reykjavík Tel: 578 2008 www.silfur.is



THINGHOLTBAR

every day from 17-19

ALL DRINKS HALF PRICE

CenterHotels Þinghóltsstræti 3-5



Europcar

ENJOY FREEDOM OF MOBILITY

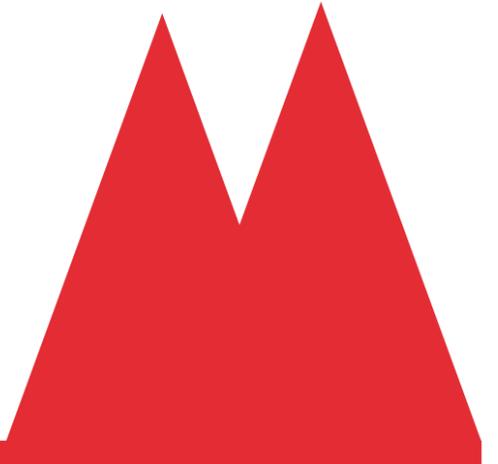
Competitive rates and great choice of makes and models available wherever you're travelling
Europcar Reservations Centre + (354) 461 6000 • holdur@holdur.is • www.holdur.is • 14 Rental locations around Iceland

**BÍLALEIGA
AKUREYRAR**
— Hóldur —



TWIN PEAKS

FM Belfast just released an awesome new album that's already being hailed as one of the year's best. As did **GusGus**. Listening to those great new records one is forced to conclude that the two bands are surely some sort of 'Twin Peaks' of Icelandic electronic music. One might even ask them to dress for the occasion. Because, you know, it's fun. Now go read what they have to say!



The After-After-After Party

GusGus discuss the Arabian Horse

GusGus is the name given to an elite collective of party veterans, a collective that began life as a multi-method art troupe at the height of the gay nineties, and has since evolved into Iceland's very own techno superstars. It's seen founding members come and go, but the core of the band has always remained: Birgir Þórarinnsson, or Biggi Veira, and Stephan Stephensen, or President Bongo. The group is today rounded up by Urður Hákonardóttir, or Earth, who has been an on-and-off member since 2001, and Daníel Ágúst Haraldsson, who was a founding member but took a ten-year hiatus to pursue other projects before returning in 2009. Their eighth studio album, 'Arabian Horse', was recently released to much critical acclaim; we sat down with Biggi Veira and Daníel Ágúst to find out what all the fuss was about.

HUMBLE BEGINNINGS

What was the scene like when you guys were first starting out (in 1995)? How have things changed, for better or for worse?

Biggi Veira: Electronica was different when it began, before the black kids in Detroit and Chicago established it as being something associated with the nightlife, the club, dancing and drugs.

You're talking about the '70s and '80s.

BV: Well, yes, that came first, but come late-eighties and early-nineties (electronic music) starts to become associated with a particular scene. In the late '70s, everything is very arty, made by art-nutjobs, but since then electronica hasn't really had much of a life outside dance music.

Is that something GusGus have been trying to do, now or since the beginning, to take it back to being something arty, something not tied to the club scene?

BV: No, I wouldn't say that. I did arty stuff in the '80s, but then dance music just comes along and takes me over. I'd been doing small indie-type stuff with my friends for a while when I was asked by someone if we knew of an artist he could book for a rave. I said "I can't think of anyone, but I can probably put together a rave if you want". So it was '92, and one night we did something very indie and experimental, and people sat and clapped and were very polite...

Daníel Ágúst: At a rave?

BV: No no, at the indie thing. Then the night after, we showed up at the rave with DAT player and some drums, and that was insane, everybody partying, pretty girls everywhere... I never went back. I just wanted to stay in that party. That's been my input in GusGus, that party atmosphere. It's interesting to see how things have evolved and how the 'party' has risen to dominate electronic music.

DÁ: For me, GusGus was totally arty. I never touched that clubbing-rave-fun-



party culture. I've always been more interested in the obscure, experimental side of it.

BV: Yes, it was the same for Siggí Kinski [founding GusGus member who left in 2000]. A lot of the first songs were his songs that Maggi Lego [founding member who briefly left in 2000, and then permanently left in 2006] and I arranged as electronic songs.

DÁ: GusGus came from a lot of different directions, musically speaking.

BV: Also, there was Maggi Jóns [aka Blake, another founding member who left in 1999], he was big into disco and Gary Numan-type new wave stuff. He wrote almost half the songs on the first album. There was even a new wave song on there... so the first album was this big melting pot, but was assigned the 'trip-hop' label that was in vogue at the time.

DÁ: Because it was chilled-out dance music.

BV: And we used a lot of samples.

DÁ: Then in 2000, you went full-on into the club scene.

BV: Yes. 'This Is Normal' [1999] didn't quite go in the direction I wanted it to go...

DÁ: It had no direction. It just went everywhere.

BV: Well, not to judge it, but yes, that was when everyone left, and the gear



sluts, me Bongo and Maggi Lego were left with the remains of the band. So I took the chance and let my influences shine through, kind of 'pre-eighties', new wave and Soft Cell. I was also fascinated by that period where disco was dead everywhere except gay clubs, and the only new disco was being recorded with sequencers and drum machines. 'Attention' [2002] was very influenced by all that. We've been influenced as well by contemporary stuff, but we haven't ever fit very well in with any kind of dance category.

DÁ: When Urður came along, the party-clubbing atmosphere really took off, and hit its high point in 2007 with 'Forever'.

BV: We'd do gigs at [upscale local venue] NASA four or five times a year, and that gathered around it a pretty decent crowd. We had a very good thing going, and then...

DÁ: ...and then Urður left...

BV: ...and that was the end of that.

ARTY PARTY

When you (Daníel Ágúst) came back to the band, it became arty again. 'Forever' (2007) was such a party album, and then '24/7' (2009) is far more minimal and obscure. The partying took a

backseat to the music.

DÁ: Oh yeah. Everything was turned on its head.

BV: After Urður left, we were forced to make some kind of change.

DÁ: Not try to recreate the party.

BV: We needed to switch parties. It's like if 'Forever' was the warm-up party, with Urður, the 'girl party...'

DÁ: You know, fresh make-up, nice clothes...

BV: Everyone's still bouncy, not too drunk, lipstick isn't smeared yet, but '24/7' was like the after-after party, the 'veteran' after-party. It was the party exclusively for those tough enough to last into the small hours, the guys who pace themselves so they can party 'til noon the next day. They're not going to pass out at 4 AM like some amateur.

It's a perfect description, really. So was 'Arabian Horse' a direct continuation of this kind of thinking?

BV: When working on '24/7' in the spring of 2008, we had the songs but no idea how to finish them. It was almost summer, Urður had just left, so we had almost no songs to perform that summer. We then just crammed the stuff we had into the live setup, updated the effect chain, dub-style, with a tape-delay-pedal and small Kaoss pad,

Words
Sindri Eldon

Photography
Hörður Sveinsson

and headed for the first gig hoping we would “figure it out” at the gig. That summer, ‘24/7’ evolved, live, towards what it came to be. Dark and dubby. That sound, in turn, established the base we built the new album on. The same effect setup is still crucial to the overall feel [on ‘Arabian Horse’]. The main difference was that we focussed a lot more on actual songwriting on this album. Daniél, Stebbi and I took two trips to a cabin and played around with some basic stuff, a kick drum, some synths and some chords. Daniél wanted some more colour, so we asked Urður to contribute some backing vocals. DÁ: ‘24/7’ was kind of black-and-white. I wanted some colour, some reds and stuff. I didn’t want to go back to the girl party, but I wanted to invite a girl to the boys’ party.

GYPSY REVELRY

BV: ‘24/7’ was very introvert. We wanted to find something new, something bigger. We’d constructed a new base...

...and now you wanted to see what you could build on that base.

BV: ...exactly. So Urður came to add a little brilliance to the refrains...

DÁ: ...a little brightness...

BV: ...right. And then Stebbi [Stephan Stephensen] had formed this most advantageous friendship with Högni

[Egilsson, of Hjaltalín]. Daniél, Stebbi and Högni went to the Faeroe Islands together with some of the songs we’d been working on, and came back with those two tracks Högni sings on. Stebbi’s strength is very much his ability to work with others, the arrangements and making stuff happen. He also brought in Davíð Þór [Jónsson, multi-instrumentalist and Ólöf Arnalds collaborator].

DÁ: At that point, the work divided between two places, here in Biggi’s studio, and the studio out in Grandi, where this kind of gypsy revelry got going. People would come by and pick up the banjo, or an accordion, or play the piano or percussion or whatever.

BV: It gave the songs a whole new dimension, really. Sometimes we would rip the entire core out of a song and replace it with something new; sometimes that’s what you need to do to give the song its identity.

That kind of ‘whatever-the-song-needs’ mentality is something that a lot of music could do with, I think. About 98.9% of Icelandic rock, for instance. But that’s just me.

BV: One thing I greatly enjoy about Icelandic punk, something that kind of laid the groundwork for Icelandic pop tradition, but has maybe been thinned out a lot by this ‘krútt’ bullshit, is the idea that every band had to be distinct

from all the others. Sometimes when I’m abroad, I find that there is this general sameness, that everyone’s doing the same thing. If you don’t develop your identity, then you’re nothing. I like it when bands try to find out what it is that gives their music a purpose, a point. The world of electronic music seems to give you a lot more options in this, but in rock it’s all about the attitude.

DÁ: It’s not just rock; there’s crap in every genre. Good music has to have attitude.

BEAT CIRCUIT

Getting back to ‘Arabian Horse,’ would you say there’s a concrete reason that it’s more of a ‘pop’ album than ‘24/7’? You pretty much told me, but I guess I’d like to hear it in so many words, you know, why it’s so well-rounded and all.

DÁ: ...not that ‘24/7’ wasn’t well-rounded, it was just different...

...well, yeah, but you know what I mean. Apples and oranges.

DÁ: (‘Arabian Horse’) is definitely more diverse. Everyone involved in the making of that album left their stamp on it, no question. The final outcome surprised me. It surprised you too, right?

BV: Well... it was sort of slowly building. I can’t say it surprised me much.

“I didn’t want to go back to the girl party, but I wanted to invite a girl to the boys’ party.” – Daniél Ágúst

DÁ: We made the flesh and bones of the Arabian Horse; the guests and contributors clad it in skin, gave it its coat.

BV: Totally. There is a need for one to evolve, forward, and ‘Arabian Horse’ very much fulfilled that need. GusGus have always felt that need strongly. Sometimes the evolution is about finishing ideas from the album before, and sometimes it is about changing directions. ‘24/7’ was a swift turn, with ‘Arabian Horse’ finishing the idea.

So it is a conscious decision for you to evolve, to take that step?

DÁ: Yeah, a little bit. It happens in conversations, “are we gonna keep doing this, are we gonna change it up”, you know.

BV: By now, we’re thinking: “what’s next”.

DÁ: Now there’s a challenge!

BV: I’ve been evolving some beats, a sort of ‘beat circuit,’ if you will, it’s been tickling me...

DÁ: Beat circuit? You mean like a patrol route?

BV: No! Like an electronic circuit. How things connect rhythmically. We

haven’t been too observant of rhythms since ‘Attention’.

It’s been pretty much 4/4 kick drum on the last few albums.

BV: Yes. It’s been basslines and chords we’ve been mainly looking at. I’m a total groove fetishist though and now I feel strong urge to sink deeper on our next dive.

That’s an approach.

DÁ: It has attitude.

BV: I’ve always been very interested in artists who work with the form, the idea of what a song is and can be.

DÁ: Stretching the form.

BV: I’ve got to get out of these tragic chord progressions. Find some beats.

DÁ: Go to Africa, maybe?

BV: No... that’s too cliché.

DÁ: The next album will be called ‘Out Of Africa’.

BV: There are plenty of undiscovered locales in the beat universe for us to visit before we have to retrace our steps all the way back to Africa. 

"It's Incredibly Boring to Be Cool"

FM Belfast find success by listening to their inner loser

Árni Rúnar Hlööversson and Lóa Hlín Hjalmtýsdóttir are surprisingly fresh, considering that the day before they flew into Iceland after a short tour of Europe with their band, FM Belfast. They have spent the day in their backyard, working in their garden and enjoying a warm June afternoon, to get back in touch with the everyday, as Árni Rúnar puts it. When I arrive to interview them, Lóa’s sister and her husband are just leaving.

Soon Árni Vilhjálmsson (Árni Vil for short) arrives. He is the third member of the core group. They are tightly knit, finish each other’s sentences, and know each other’s stories by heart. Örvar Þóreyjarsón Smárasón also takes part in most of the group’s activities, but since he is also member of múm, he is not always able to perform with FM Belfast live. Alas, he could not make it that Sunday, but he would join in at the end via telephone to provide the final sentence of this article.

WHY WON'T THEY SLEEP?!

FM Belfast have been performing in public since 2006, and their first record, ‘How To Make Friends’, was released in 2008. They have just released their second album, ‘Don’t Want To Sleep’. I start by asking them when they started working on the new one. “Some of the songs are old”, says Árni Rúnar, “from around the time the last record came out. Some songs are newer, written maybe a month before the album was completed. A few songs have been kicking around in our live program. We’ve tested them out and changed them a little bit. We often get asked how we create things and there’s no one, simple answer. There are three main kinds of processes. The ones that never leave the studio, never become part of the live set, but end up on the record all the same. They just come into existence, ready-made songs. Some are born in the studio over a long period, some are born quickly, others go into the live set before they’re ready”.

“Some are born after 9 months”, says Árni Vil, “and some are born before”. Lóa says: “Yes, some are premature births and need assistance, need to go into an incubator”. Árni Vil applies the analogy to Árni Rúnar’s three processes: “So we have those who are born at the right time, those who are born prematurely and those who need the incubator”. Árni Rúnar jumps in: “My favourite songs are those that are born instantly”. Árni Vil spins out his metaphor further: “That’s like a baby that’s delivered via a Caesarean. Okay... maybe that’s not the best analogy”.

The three of them, along with Örvar, sing on the new album. I ask them how they go about writing lyrics. Lóa answers first: “I find it hard to write lyrics because I’m stuck on the idea that they have to be really meaningful, which is weird”. Árni Rúnar continues: “I want them to have no direct meaning, for them to be really open for anyone to interpret. For example, if you don’t want to sleep, it isn’t necessarily because your heart is broken. The lyrics never say ‘you can’t sleep because...’. That gives you the choice of so many

different situations you can experience the song in”. Lóa adds: “Yeah, you could be an amphetamine junkie. Or like yesterday when I couldn’t go to sleep because I love the internet”.

GETTING STARTED

‘Don’t Want To Sleep’ brings to mind a lot of early ‘90s techno and also the indie dance of Happy Mondays and similar bands. The songs are constructed using modern tools, however, and never sound dated. What The White Stripes were to delta blues, FM Belfast are to rave music. So it is not surprising to find out that the very first track they did was a cover of Technotronic’s 1989 classic ‘Pump Up The Jam’, back in 2005 (you can hear the cover on their MySpace).

Reykjavík! singer Bóas Hallgrímsson is a long-time friend and fan of the bandmembers. He tells me the story of how FM Belfast started. “The Christmas after Árni Rúnar and Lóa started going out together, they were wondering what to give their friends as Christmas presents. They decided to record their version of ‘Pump Up the Jam’ and sent it out, to me and my girlfriend and a few other couples in our group of friends. Everyone was incredibly happy with it. That maybe led them to continue making music together, in any case they did. Árni Vilhjálmsson was their friend, in fact he operated a band with Árni Rúnar for a while called Cotton +1, and it seemed right to them to bring him into it”.

Árni and Lóa moved to New York, where Lóa studied illustration at Parsons and Árni worked on his music. Bóas says: “They were roped into playing Airwaves that next year and they had barely written enough for a set and were searching for an image and thinking about wearing costumes and what to do and how to behave. Somehow though, they managed, as if by magic, to create one of the best gigs I’ve ever seen. At the now-burnt down venue Pravda, I believe”.

WHY FM BELFAST? WHY?

Early on FM Belfast were trying to fig-



“Yeah, you could be an amphetamine junkie. Or like yesterday when I couldn't go to sleep because I love the internet”

ure out what kind of project they were. Was it sincere expression or were they going to create an image to hide behind? They came up with the name while trying to figure all that out. When I first read about the band I thought, because of the name, that they were a political band. I wonder what the name means to them, so I ask. Árni Vil is first to reply: “When we first went to Belfast, and took the Black Cab Tour, we suddenly felt that the name of the band was a lot more serious. When teenagers in Belfast asked us: ‘Why is the band called FM Belfast?’ We thought: ‘Now we have to give them a deep, meaningful answer, or else we’re insulting them.’ But to us ‘Sunday, Bloody Sunday’ is just a good pop song”.

Árni Rúnar says: “When we saw everything there, we felt like the name carried more responsibility”. Lóa explains: “I felt like I was historically challenged, when I realised how serious the situation there is. Icelanders have no sense of history. We’re like Americans in that”. Árni Rúnar jumps in: “Everything that happens outside of

the country seems like it happened in a movie”. Lóa goes on: “Like Americans are with their Founding Fathers, we are the same with [leader of Icelandic independence movement] Jón Sigurðsson and the rest of them. We think our independence heroes are geniuses who did brilliant things”.

“There was no seriousness behind the name”, Árni Rúnar continues, “but now, that’s what we’re working with today. It’s very weird, and we wouldn’t have selected it if we knew what happened. It was just a joke. We started out making songs that were nonsense, were just supposed to sound cool”. Lóa explains: “Joke cool, you know, wearing sunglasses and staring at your shoes”. “Like we were a real hard group”, says Árni Rúnar. Lóa finishes his thought: “Hard group with a drug problem”.

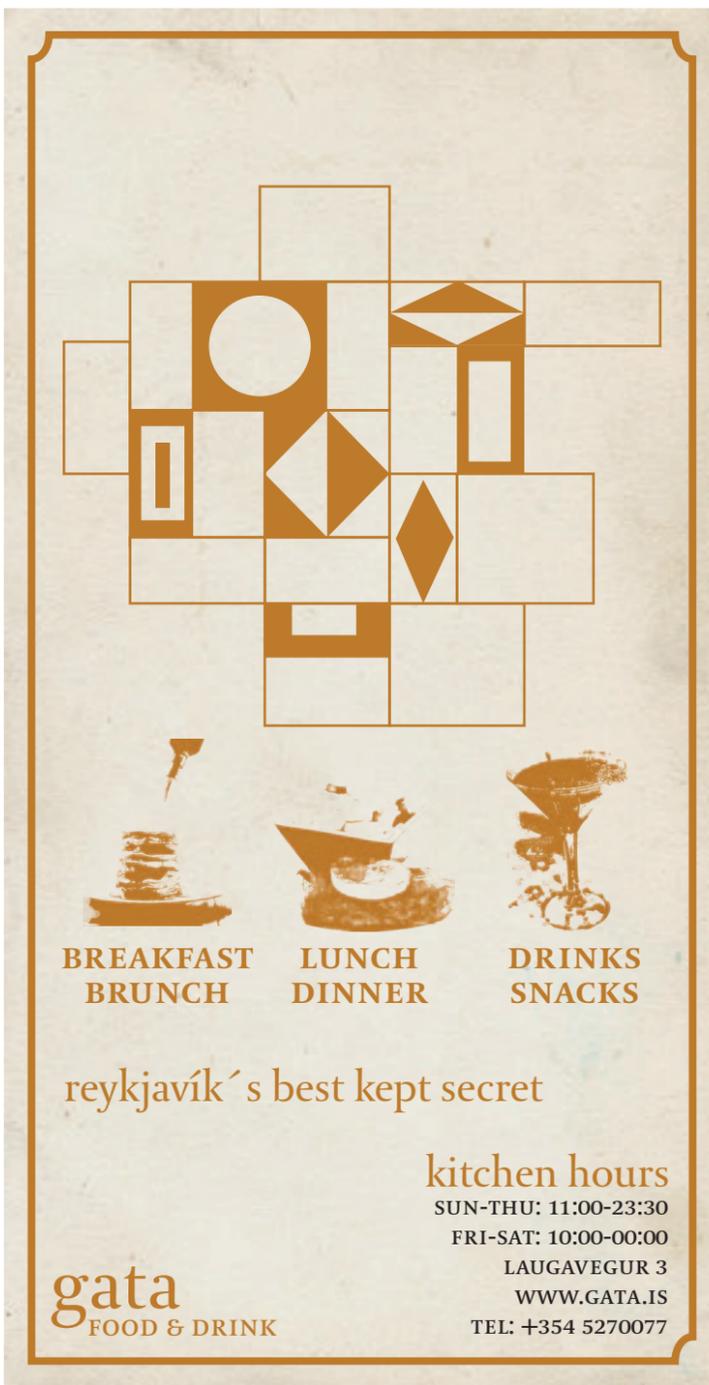
“Which isn’t who we were”, says Árni Rúnar, “but who we joked about being like. People sometimes think we’re really cool at first, but then they figure out that we’re a bunch of losers. If there’s one thing that I’ve found out in recent years, it’s that it’s incredibly

Words

Kári Túliníus

Photography

Hörður Sveinsson



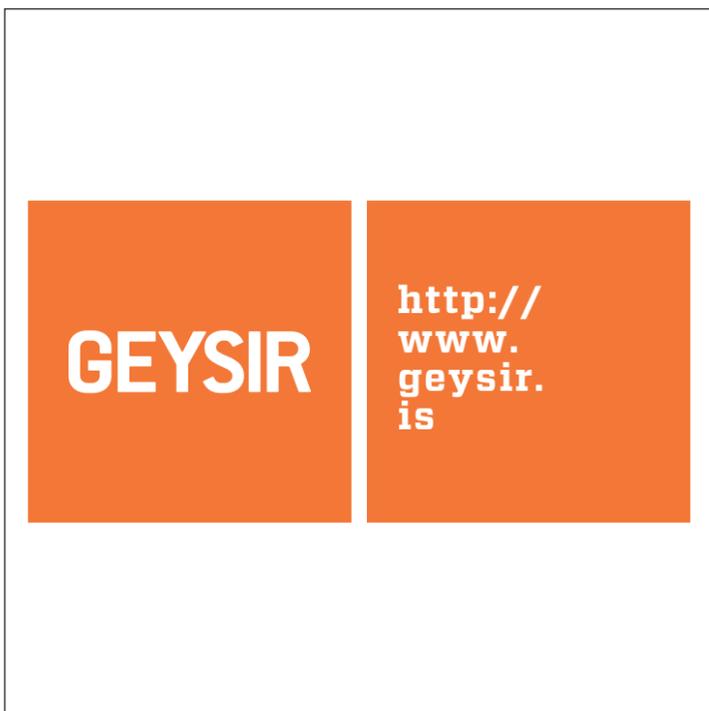
BREAKFAST BRUNCH **LUNCH DINNER** **DRINKS SNACKS**

reykjavík's best kept secret

kitchen hours
SUN-THU: 11:00-23:30
FRI-SAT: 10:00-00:00

LAUGAVEGUR 3
WWW.GATA.IS
TEL: +354 5270077

gata
FOOD & DRINK



GEYSIR

<http://www.geysir.is>



Pioneer in delivering organic products for 25 years

If you want to shop **organic**
Yggdrasill is the place to go

Yggdrasill offers a wide range of premium quality, certified organic products, including a variety of organic fruits and vegetables. We are located down town, next to "Hlemmur", one of the two main bus terminals in Reykjavík.

Yggdrasill | Yggdrasill • Rauðarárstíg 10
Phone: 562 4082 • Fax: 561 9299
e-mail: shop@yggdrasill.is



Photo by Jói Kjartans

boring to be cool. I think it's much more fun to let yourself be a complete loser".

"That's because we can't be any different," says Árni Vilhjálmsson. The band lets all this uncoolness come out during their concerts. Árni Vil names an example: "We want to start each show by getting the audience to sing UB40's 'Red, Red Wine'. Árni Rúnar continues: "If you sing 'Red, Red Wine', scream it out, then you will become incredibly happy. It's impossible to be really cool while singing it".

I ask them if they genuinely loved the song 'Red, Red Wine' or if their appreciation is ironic. Árni Rúnar is first to reply: "I feel it deep in my heart, but I still feel ashamed to say it out loud". Árni Vil was the one to make the song part of the group's identity, as he explains: "I love this song. My friend made me a mix-disc that included it. I would drive around listening to it and when it came on, I'd scream along with the chorus. I picked Árni and Lóa up on Christmas Eve and we drove around listening to the song, screaming the chorus, and we had goosebumps and were filled with happiness and goodwill for all".

GROWING UP IN A BETA TEST

Songs like 'Red, Red Wine' get them in touch with their preadolescent selves. Lóa says: "For me to think that UB40 is a lame band is learned behaviour. When I was a kid their records were played at home without anyone commenting, but then when I was a teenager I found out that they were terrible and no one could know you listened to them. Same with Cat Stevens. I think I know all Cat Stevens songs by heart because they were constantly played at my home, but then I learned from the cool crowd in Breiðholt [the neighbourhood of Reykjavík she grew up in] that you shouldn't mention that. You become so repressed as a teen. This changed later when I met kids from Hlíðar and Vesturbær [Reykjavík neighbourhoods close to downtown] and they'd put on Cat Stevens in parties. I'd shudder. I had to break free of the chains. I spent months of my teenage life repressing that I liked the Bryan Adams song from 'Robin Hood: Prince Of Thieves', 'Everything I Do (I Do It For You)'. Then, years later, I'm driving by myself in the car and it comes on and I start singing along and crying".

"While you were repressing liking it", says Árni Vil, "I was in Vesturbær with all my friends, waiting for it to come on the radio so we could push the record button at just the right moment." Lóa responds: "I wish I had been a teenager in Hlíðar".

"Or 107 Reykjavík [the postcode for Vesturbær]", says Árni Vil. Lóa protests: "No, then I would've gone to Hagaskóli [the school for 12-16 year-olds in Vesturbær] and become damaged. It's incredible how nice you are consid-

"We're always in a hurry to get to the next venue to do a sound check, then sleep before the show, then the concert, then back to sleep, then back to driving"

ering you went to Hagaskóli". Árni Vil replies: "On the other hand, I wanted to kill many of the people I went to school with for many years, but I'm free of that now. I made a mistake before I entered Hagaskóli at 12. I went to Berlin and arrived halfway through the first school year. I just showed up one day wearing green jeans, a blue sweater, red denim jacket, and Harry Potter glasses, which were supposed to look like John Lennon's glasses. I hadn't been there two minutes before someone took my lunch money".

I asked Árni Rúnar where he lived as a kid. "I grew up in Grafarvogur [Reykjavík neighbourhood], so I don't have a connection with any of that. She grew up in a cool semi-ghetto, he in an old, classy neighbourhood. I grew up in a beta test", which Lóa considers "a perfect description of Grafarvogur in the '90s".

"I know", says Árni Rúnar, "what kind of social consequences can result from poor urban planning. If you're building an entire new neighbourhood, do it over a long time. When you open a large school, Rimaskóli, and five hundred kids all start in it the same day, most will be armed, because they all want to conquer the school. Who can be the toughest, you know? Then kids were smoking pot during recess or beating each other up. I transferred out of that school after half a school year".

Árni Vil continues: "In Vesturbær the problem is that there are three schools for 6-12 year-olds which merge to form one, Hagaskóli, and no one knows what will happen". Árni Rúnar replies: "At least there you have cliques of people who fight together, so at least 20 kids will conquer the school. In Rimaskóli everyone fought as an individual, it was like the first past the post system, with only one winner who'd beat up everyone else."

THEY ARE NOT MAKING FUN OF YOU, WHY WOULD THEY?

It is important to FM Belfast to be inclusive when they play, to not try to dominate their audience. Árni Rúnar said: "When we're playing live, we speak directly to the crowd, tell them that all of us together will have a party". Audiences around the world respond differently to this sincerity. All three agree that, for instance, people in Poland understood them right away. "Poles are one of the most fun, thankful audiences you can play for. It's crazy. It's like they infect you with this incredibly positive energy", Árni Vil remarks.

"Usually we have to play a bunch of shows in a country before that happens", adds Lóa. "In France, at first it

was like everyone was concerned with making sure we weren't making fun of them. They regarded us very sceptically. The Swedes were the same. Like they were worried they were the subjects of our practical joke. I can understand that response. If I saw us on stage for the first time, I'd wonder if we were joking or not: 'Why are they covering this song? Is it allowed to like that?' I'd be sceptical".

"One thing that makes the shows fun", says Árni Vil, "both for us and the audience, is that we're open to new craziness, into the structure we've created. For example, we were playing in Austria the other day and just before the concert starts these three dudes in ballerina costumes offer to come on stage to dance. We had them enter the stage during the fifth song and they'd leave and come back during the set. It put an entertainingly crazy spin on the show. They danced very suggestively".

"My jaw hit the floor", says Lóa, "suddenly all these bare-chested, handsome men jogged onto the stage. I think they were all over forty. They were clearly all dancers, very fit, but I could see from their faces that they were no teenagers, which made it much more interesting to me".

"It's open up to a certain point", says Árni Rúnar. "But once in a while we lose control. We played Paris when our record was published on June 3rd. It was a great concert, with everything going great. We had some minor technical issues, but they didn't matter because the energy was so great and the audience was in such a positive mood. We had asked our opening band to join us on stage during the last song. Then one audience member comes onstage. Then another. Then the stage was rushed by the crowd". Lóa chimes in: "The stage was shaking. I tried to find a steady spot, but the whole thing shook".

This is not the first time the structural integrity of a concert hall has been tested during an FM Belfast show. Their friend Bóas remembers when they played at Q-Bar, around the time that their first album was released. "It's the only time I've gone to a concert and been more concerned about the load bearing capacity of the dance floor rather than enjoying myself". According to Bóas, who has seen them play live around sixty times, there has been the same energy onstage from their very first gig. "I don't know what came first. Whether that FM Belfast are what they are today because of that debut gig [at Airwaves 2006] or whether the performance had been worked out beforehand. The main thing was that they were doing this to entertain them-



selves and when you do that people will be carried with you. At that first gig, the audience started singing along, which never happens the first time a band plays. What is so incredible about them, both today and when they first started, is this unbounded happiness and joyous manner they have. I hope it isn't whittled off them by all the work they're doing now."

THE ROAD (IN A NON-CORMAC MCCARTHY SENSE)

From these chaotic beginnings a professional band has emerged. In 2010 they were on tour for ten months out of the year. According to Árni Rúnar: "It looks like this year will be the same. We have a three-week holiday right now and then a short holiday in August, but the rest of 2011 is all booked. That's a lot. Right now the most difficult part is starting, the festivals. They're so far apart that we'll be flying so much that we'll end up rather spent. Though right now we're feeling pretty good. In the fall and winter we drive more, four hundred kilometres per day. That isn't as tiring as flying."

With all that work and all that travelling, things sometimes go wrong. At a recent London gig there was a near disaster that was averted, as Lóa explains: "We were in London and a bag that I

was supposed to take care of went missing. It had a MacBook, recording equipment, lights, an iPhone and an endless amount of stuff. But then, an hour after it had vanished, this happy man in a Bob Marley t-shirt walks in carrying the backpack and asks: 'Is your name Lóa?' He had found the bag, which I had left on the pavement in East London, in some moment of madness. I don't know how I did it."

Árni Rúnar tells her not to beat herself up about it: "We were all sleep-deprived wrecks. Don't worry about it. The guy had seen the bag on the street, walked into the bar it was outside of and asked: 'There's a backpack here, aren't you gonna do something about it?' The bartenders did nothing so he took the bag with him to see if he could find the owner. Half a million krónur's worth of equipment, and he got it to us, this lovely man. Something like that doesn't happen usually". Árni Vilhjálmsson added: "We were walking in circles for twenty minutes like we were having a manic episode".

Every once in a while during their tours they get little breaks. Árni Rúnar mentions a vacation day they had recently: "We were in the Alps eating fondue with donkeys. At the end of one of our tours we were driving to Strasbourg from Neuchatel in Switzerland. Our driver and tour manager had planned

a trip without us knowing. Suddenly we're driving up this mountain, and then we're on a gravel road and we end up far up a mountain, with an amazing view. There's a restaurant in a log cabin and we go in there, eat fondue and look out over the Alps. It's very rare when we're travelling so much that there's any time. We're always in a hurry to get to the next venue to do a sound check, then sleep before the show, then the concert, then back to sleep, then back to driving".

"We're not a band that parties a lot", says Árni Rúnar. "Our party is on stage. We hibernate in between. We try to save up our energy for the shows, like it's a sport". Árni Vilhjálmsson says: "Once a promoter in Denmark was stressed out over how calm we were before the concert, and got even more worried when he saw we weren't drinking". Árni Rúnar adds: "It doesn't suit us to be drunk on stage"

At the end of the interview Örvar, the fourth member, calls Árni Rúnar. The three core members ask him if he wanted to add something to the end of the article. Örvar says: "Fellow countrymen, let our zeal not vanquish beauty". I ask if that was FM Belfast's message to the world. He replies: "Yes, but also I'm really excited to see that sentence translated into English".

Music | Review



FM Belfast

Don't Want To Sleep

fmbelfast

Paint your bowties black—FM Belfast are hung over and loving it!

The album lead-in is a raging '90s keyboard loop with promises of a record best experienced while wearing overalls and watching some ebony mercenary on 'Top of the Pops' grind in front of two nerds from Coventry. That turns out to be a false promise, although there is some shared ground between FM Belfast and the raver pop. For one thing, 'Don't Want To Sleep' is very much the opposite of the latest GusGus album, which focuses on melodramatic electronic anthems and craftsmanship—FMB have always been going for something sloppier and goofier than that. They don't worry too much about musicianship (like the punks) or authenticity (very unlike the punks) or originality (like every bastard musician dating back to the primordial soup). It has some of that carefree day-glo of the Hoover synth days.

FM Belfast are a live band and their live shows bring the house down like clockwork despite having by all appearances been dared on stage 10 minutes earlier as a joke.

This makes it a little tricky to review FM Belfast albums, as it's not the kind of band you should form an opinion on without having seen live. They are a live band to the core (take note bands trying to make a living with plummeting album sales), a travelling circus of sloppiness that spills into every corner of the room, the idea of "stage presence" lost by the time you notice half the audience is on stage and half the band has gone stage-diving in their underwear.

It's the kind of anarchy you normally associate with psych-rock or gypsy punk (think Monotonix, Lightning Bolt or Gogol Bordello) but dressed in

enough bowties and careless grins to please a thousand in-laws.

The dogged refusal to be taken too seriously—understandable when you consider how easily this kind of naive chaos can be corrupted (look at what happened to Cansei de Ser Sexy)—combined with the strong live focus makes 'Don't Want To Sleep' a tricky album to review.

As mentioned, the album opens with the misleading raver keyboard on 'Stripes'. It's fun song but a little samey and without a clear chorus my guilty feet fail to find that rhythm. Could be much worse though.

The second song is called 'American' and sounds like a comment on the relationship between Icelandic and American culture. Unconnected to anything, this reviewer was living in a predominantly Jamaican neighbourhood of New York City while reviewing the album and couldn't help but think what a neighbour might think hearing FM Belfast wafting out the window. I can't say I have high hopes for Americans learning to appreciate FM Belfast on a large scale (let alone Caribbean-Americans). Maybe this is why I find my appreciation for FM Belfast wavering occasionally. One moment I'm sucked in and their music fills me with smiles and sunshine, the next it all seems very slight, jokey in that insular Scandinavian indie way. FM Belfast may want to learn American but they can't help but insist on an accent that sometimes can come off as a little off-putting. 'American' feels more unfinished than charmingly raw. But you're still interested in seeing where this album goes.

In the song titled 'Mondays', things pick up a little but it still sounds more toned down record than their previous effort—maybe this reviewer needs to adjust his perception?

On 'Believe' it's starting to sound almost wistful. Wistful FM Belfast album? Really?

With 'We Fall' it's bordering on the morose, I don't get where they're going with this—does the album come with IKEA directions for assembly? I guess they could be taking the same road as Gorillaz did on 'Plastic Beach', half-poppy ballads about the dangers of modern living.

'Noise' is definitely growing on me. It's cinematic, might work as the soundtrack to an anime show about a young boy learning about the true na-

ture of friendship by piloting a mech into battle. Definitely 'Plastic Beach'. Quite a beautiful song, actually—reminds me a little of Moby's 'Porcelain' (ask your parents).

'Vertigo' is a total charmer—a lovely horn-section that made me think of Belle & Sebastian for no logical reason. Made me feel so warm inside that I was almost able to overlook the silliness of the "Far away! Far away!" falsetto.

'Don't Want To Sleep' reminds me of the shift in Yeah Yeah Yeahs last two albums. Definitely 'I Don't Want To Go To Sleep Either' would have worked great on the 'Where The Wild Things Are' soundtrack—both in terms of melody and lyrics (such as they are). It's by far the catchiest song on the album. Look forward to being sold fruit-themed electronics or affordable compact cars to this tune before the year is over.

'Happy Winter' is a grower not a show-er. Drama, monotonous beat, echoing vocals. The only one still getting plays on my stereo.

All the elements are there though, the two syllable song titles, shout-along lyrics, dirt-simple melodies. Makes one wonder how long they'll get away with it. I guess as long as they can convince us that they're having as much fun as we are, they should be fine for a while. Sure there are wistful lyrics about bringing people pain, falling down, heartbreak, déjà vu, getting lost and driving off into the distance. But at least you're with your friends while you're driving to your far-away place—plus you're learning a foreign language which sounds like sound advice when moving to far-away places.

It's an album that took some figuring out, but with his as so much art it's not about what you do as much as what you don't do, and FM Belfast managed to avoid a lot of easy mistakes. The sound, the lyrics, their appearance, the live shows... it all fits seamlessly together without feeling pre-packaged. They are playing with the feel and texture of the music but the basics have stayed the same. Not everything works and they don't always pull off the sombre kid-ult reflecting on the future, but there's enough charm and interesting ideas to carry on these beautiful shambles. 'Don't Want To Sleep' has a hint of the second album blues, but FM Belfast have managed to avoid the jejune for another season and we're still in love.

✉ -RAGNAR EGILSSON

Icelandic Travel Market - www.itm.is

PLAN YOUR ADVENTURE WITH US



INFORMATION AND BOOKING CENTER Icelandic Travel Market

Bankastræti 2 - Downtown

Scan QR code to locate ITM

Tel: +354 522 4979

itm@itm.is - www.itm.is

Open 9 - 19, Summer 8 - 21



100% Off selected
Super Jeep and Glacier Tours
if you bring this ad to the
ITM.

Stealing Mountains

Mike Lindsey of Tunng reveals his Húsavík project



For three months, Mike Lindsey has lived alone in a cottage in north-east Iceland. Having gained some notoriety as a founding member of British alt-folk gang Tunng, he decided last March that what he really wanted to do was to go to the middle of nowhere and make music with people he didn't know at all.

DOING SOMETHING FOR YOURSELF

"The idea was to basically have nothing written, come here, borrow as much equipment as I could and make a record with people from Húsavík," Mike says of his sojourn. He's an affable sort, bearded, lanky and unassuming as he sips beer in a Reykjavík café. It's his last day in Iceland, and he doesn't want to leave, but a Tunng gig in Minneapolis demands his presence. "I'm going there for one show, it's crazy! I've got to leave Iceland for this, man!"

It's not that he doesn't like his bandmates. But after seven years, four albums and countless shows, Mike needed a change, and saw the perfect opportunity for a solo adventure after the end of Tunng's tour in support of their 2010 album, '...And Then We Saw Land'.

"I haven't done anything for myself for years", he elaborates. "There was a couple of months where I could have just been in London in a dark basement working on a new Tunng record, which is what I'm supposed to be doing, or hanging out in Iceland looking at the mountains".

MASSIVE EPIC EUPHORIA

Mike was somewhat familiar with Iceland, having an Icelandic girlfriend and having played at last year's Iceland Airwaves festival. After spending some time in Húsavík and the surrounding countryside, he became enamoured with the landscape and the people, and began fantasizing about recording music there.

"It was... one of those kind of ideas you have, and you think, 'that's not really possible, is it?' and then it is possible, and then you've booked the flight, and then you're doing it, and then you're like, 'fuck!'"

And did it work? Mike's certainly pleased. In fact, he says it's one of the best things he's ever done, even though it didn't turn out exactly how he planned it. Expecting to channel the isolation of the environment into something approximating "lonely, subtle, desolate electronic folk", he instead drew heavily on local talent, recruiting, among others, marimba and trumpet players from Húsavík's music school, two garage band bassists, a fifteen-year-old accordionist and veteran pop circuit drummer Gunnar Illugi Sigurðsson. "The whole record's kind of

shaped because of these people," he says, going on to describe the results as surprisingly "massive, epic" and "euphoric".

Mike assembled a studio in his cabin, using equipment borrowed from the aforementioned school. He's recorded eleven tracks, and says they're pretty much ready. "Maybe they need a bit of work, here and there, and I'm thinking of maybe coming back to Reykjavík in June and trying to mix the album here", Mike says, hopeful. "It just feels like the whole thing needs to be done here... I think if you sort of fuck with that, it ruins the whole idea".

CHEEK MOUNTAIN THIEF

For the purpose of the project, he has taken the artist name Cheek Mountain Thief, the 'Cheek Mountain' part being a literal translation of the name of the mountains visible from the cabin windows, and the 'Thief' being a self-deprecating reference to Mike's relationship with Húsavík's music scene. "I borrowed the cabin, all the equipment and the people, basically. And (the name) sounds kind of cool".

He lets me hear a track, 'Snook Pattern', describing it as "big and meaty."

It's totally not, at least not to me. On the contrary, it feels folksy, individual and direct, and not at all what to expect after his description of random people coming together, except perhaps for the random drum solo about two minutes in. It is, of course, reminiscent of Tunng, but there's a purity to it, an undiluted mood of resignation and calm that is not quite as immediate in Tunng's work.

"I'd like to get the Cheek Mountain Thief project up and running with all the people from Húsavík and do a few shows with them... get a whole crew together. We'd probably just play a gig in Húsavík for a start," he predicts. "I think it'd be a very strange-looking band".

Words

Sindri Eldon

Photography

ANONYMOUS



Kraum of the crop

A shop dedicated to the best of Icelandic design.



Kraum is in the oldest house in Reykjavík. Aðalstræti 10, p. 517 7797, kraum.is



OPENING HOURS
Week days 9:00 - 20:00
Saturday 10:00 - 17:00
Sunday 12:00 - 17:00

Go dance the group to their thang at Café Rosenberg on June 28 and at a 'barn dance' in Stokkhalækur (www.stokkhalækur.is) on July 1.

It Takes Five To Tango. Ehrm

Icelandic tango group Fimm í tangó brings some passion to the dance floor



Most people's idea of tango music evokes a night-time display of poise and passion in a small cafe in the backstreets of Buenos Aires. But what you may not know is that through travelling musicians, the dance and its music reached Finland in the 1920s and '30s. From there it became so popular that Finnish tango music has become an established variation of the genre in its own right, with often melancholic compositions expressing themes of love, loss and Finns longing for a distant homeland. Now a group of Icelandic musicians called Fimm í tangó (Five In Tango) seek to transpose Finnish tango music to Iceland to create an Icelandic variation on the sound. The Grapevine sat down with their cellist Kristín Lárusdóttir.

How did you first come into contact with Finnish Tango music?

I lived in Finland for five years where I was studying music. While I was there I got to know and learn about Finnish tradition and cultures, and Tango music especially.

It's a big thing in Finland?

You just can't avoid hearing tango music in Finland because it's such as part of the musical culture. I think you need to have a feeling of the Finnish nation and after a while it was something that grew to become a natural to me.

When I moved back to Iceland, I started missing Finland and its music. I was working in the opera with [opera singer] Ágúst Ólafsson, who had also lived in Finland and had gotten acquainted with Finnish tango music as

well. It was then that I got the idea of putting together a group to play tango music. It was like a calling, I somehow knew we should be doing Finnish tango together.

So you started the group then?

Yes. It was spring of 2007 when we started putting this together. I talked to Ágúst and my friend Íris, who was studying in Germany and was playing violin in a tango band there... it all came together rather naturally. I then got Tatu Kantomaa, a Finnish accordion player who was living in Iceland, to play with us. Finally I managed to get hold of Ástríður Alda Sigurðardóttir for the piano. She's one of the best piano players around. However Tatu moved back to Finland so we now have a new accordionist, Vadim Fyodorov, who is from St. Petersburg in Russia and is a very clever accordionist.

When you made your debut album, you collaborated with a diverse group of composers such as Haraldur Vignir Sveinbjörnsson and jazz composer Hafðís Bjarnadóttir. Was it difficult getting these people on board?

At first we spoke to Haraldur Vignir and he worked with Tatu on arrangements of traditional Finnish tango compositions for us, but then he also brought a piece of music especially composed for us and it started from there. In the end, it was easy to get Haraldur and Hafðís involved and they composed most of the tracks on the album for us.

"I feel there is a desire for tango in Iceland. For example there are two dance groups in Reykjavík and one in Akureyri"

Is there something that you could say is inherently Icelandic in these new compositions?

It's hard to say. I know that Haraldur has composed tangos before, and both he and Hafðís are inspired by the Finnish style. But it's still early days.

How do you feel that the public reaction to your music has been?

The audiences have really loved it. After our release show at the Cultural House, we even got an email from a fan thanking us for an unforgettable concert and for such a special experience. That was unexpected. They seem really into it.

Some tango music has already been made in Iceland, but not a lot of it. There have been some groups that have played Argentinean tango, among other forms of tango, but very few groups have specialised just in tangos and played it regularly. Some of them have already quit playing or have taken a long break.

But I feel there is a desire for tango in Iceland. For example there are two dance groups in Reykjavík and one in Akureyri.

So what are your plans for Fimm í tango over the coming year?

Well our album is now available at the Eymundsson bookshops as well as at our website. We do plan to make it available online in the near future through sites like gogoyoko. As for playing concerts, we have a concert scheduled at Cafe Rósenberg in June.

But what we hope to do is to get some support to put together a tango festival that would be held in September, to promote the music in Iceland. We'd be looking to bring artists and bands from Finland as well as promoting tango music and artists from Iceland. My hope is that we can make more out of the tango music groups that already exist, add to them and maybe we can develop some kind of very special Icelandic tango. Who knows if the Icelandic tango could become rich part of the Icelandic culture, like it is in Finnish culture. ♡

BOB CLUNESS

KRUA THAI
RESTAURANT AND TAKEAWAY

AUTHENTIC THAI FOOD SINCE 2001

HOME DELIVERY AVAILABLE!



LIKE THAI FOOD?
YOU'LL LOVE KRUA THAI

TRYGGVAGATA 14
(DOWNTOWN REYKJAVÍK)

PHONE: 561 0039

BAEJARLIND 14-16
(KOPAVOGUR)

DELIVERY: 552 2525

KITCHEN
ELDHÚS

Iceland's First Nepalese Restaurant

Nepalese, Indian and a Healthy cuisine
Unprecedented Quality
Reservations: 517-7795
Laugavegur 60a

facebook Welcome Velkomin

SKOLI.EU

Icelandic in Reykjavík!
Icelandic as a foreign language

SUMMER SCHOOL
STUDY ICELANDIC AND HAVE FUN!

20 JUNE – 4 JULY – 8 AUGUST

COOKING SMALL CLASSES FIELD WORK

READ - WRITE - SPEAK - LISTEN
FIELDWORK - COOKING

11th of JULY
Icelandic and fun for Icelandic kids and teenagers living abroad

www.skoli.eu
information@skoli.eu
tel: 551-7700, 821-7163
Sundlaugavegur 24

SMALL CLASSES
experienced teachers
morning classes
evening classes

Sooth your hunger
...and your soul



GAMLA PÓSTHÚSIÐ
bistro

Pósthússtræti 13
101 Reykjavík
Tel: +354 551 1800
www.gamla.is



BanThai
The best Thai Food
2009, 2010

There are a lot of positive reviews about BanThai that we are the best thai restaurant

Authentic Thai cuisine served in elegant surroundings with Spicy, Very Delicious and reasonable prices. Private rooms on the 2nd floor. Open Hours 18.00-22.00. Every day. Tel: 692-0564, 5522-444

yummi yummi
you have to try
www.yummiyummi.net



Smaralind
5544-633
and
Hverfisgata
123
588-2121

The three great places for Thai food



www.ban thai.name

Lake fishing in Iceland



Access to 35 lakes
for only ISK 6.000

More information at:
www.veidikortid.is

every
trip is an
adventure

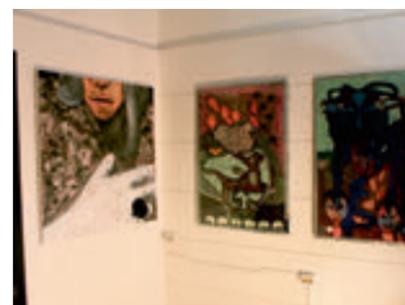
rent your
ride with us



GEYSIR

www.geysir.is
call: 894 44 55

Windows Of Opportunity



The long and winding road of Hverfisgata's cultural reformation got another boost recently with the opening of the studio and exhibition space **Black Window**. A project of local artists **Sylvía Dögg Halldórsdóttir** and **Agnes Marinósdóttir**, **Black Window** is their attempt to create a cultural space that can be used by apprising artists as a blank canvas for their projects. We went along to have a chat with **Sylvía** about it all...

WHO ARE YOU GUYS? HOW DID YOU CONNECT?

I come from Reyðarfjörður in the east of Iceland, but moved years ago to Reykjavík. I then went to study art at the Willem de Kooning Academy in Rotterdam, Holland where I lived for several years. From there I lived in the UK for a while before coming back to Iceland last year. Agnes is self-taught and has been doing art for years, but she trained in product design and has a company called Aggystar that makes customised purses and computer bags.

We met years ago, when we were both studying at FB [an Icelandic 'menntaskóli']. I'd say we're kindred spirits. We were apart for years when I was abroad, but every time we met up, it was like we'd only parted yesterday. How did the idea for **Black Window** come about?

I had a studio a couple of blocks from here, but I was getting evicted so was looking for another place. After a few chance meetings, I ended up talking to the owners of this building and they showed me around. At first it looked rather horrible. There was somebody living here at the time and it was quite broken down. But it was perfect as a studio space. However it was too big for me alone, so I called up Agnes, who was also looking for a place to work. It was a great location for a studio. Then the idea for the exhibition space came afterwards.

AND WHERE DID THE NAME COME FROM? ALONG WITH YOUR SIGNAGE, IT SEEMS RATHER GOTHIC, EVEN HORROR INFLUENCED.

Oh really? That wasn't our intention. **WELL IT IS RATHER STRIKING...** Thanks. We wanted to have a neutral name because we wanted to create a space that could be used by artists for shows, concerts, or even as a pop up shop, whatever idea they choose. We wanted it to be whatever the artist envisaged each time. So when we thought of the name, we wanted it to be rather plan and not too specific. Also sometimes as great as it is being in the presence of art, sometime when you walk into some galleries, you feel that something is off. Yes, the work is there but the feel of the place can make

people feel uncomfortable, so we're trying to make the whole ambience of the place more comfortable. Music is playing, people can come in, hang out...

YOU ALSO PLAN ON MAKING IT A 24-HOUR EXHIBITION SPACE. WHERE DID THAT IDEA COME FROM?

There is a bar in Rotterdam called the Aanschouw, and they have these large display windows outside that they would use to display art monthly from artists who create it specifically for that space, so the pieces were on display 24/7. And that's where we got the idea. **HOW WILL IT ALL WORK? REYKJAVÍK DOESN'T REALLY HAVE A 24-HOUR CULTURE...**

True, but it would be nice though [laughs]! Well the space and workshop will be open through the day at varying times, but the prominent works will be on display through the window, so they can be viewed at any time, day or night. Depending on the demand, they'll likely be on display for a few weeks to a month.

WHAT TYPE OF ARTISTS OR ART DO YOU THINK WOULD BE ATTRACTED TO BLACK WINDOW?

I think that in the art world it's all about marketing and I'm not against it, but I'm good at playing that game. We're more of a DIY thing, so we don't want to attract a specific style or type of work, but anyone with a creative idea that they want to show or share is welcome.

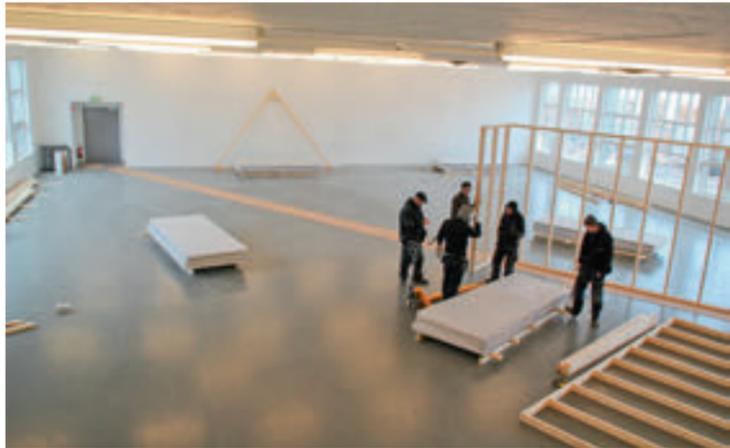
I would say that we want to be open to ideas. There are a lot of artists who've been painting and creating for a long time but they never went to art school, so they feel they don't have the access or contacts to that part of the artistic community to get their work exhibited. So we wanted to make it easy for aspiring artists to contact us.

NOW IF I HAD A PIECE, OR AN ARTISTIC IDEA, HOW WOULD I GO ABOUT GETTING A SHOW?

Our details are both on the entrance and online. And you can feel free to contact us with your ideas. Since we've opened, people have already been calling and sending us photos of their work they want to display.

Building Momentum In Moss

Markús Þór Andrésson is curating the Nordic Biennial



The sixth-annual Nordic Biennial is coming up on June 18 in Moss, Norway. But don't worry if you can't be there. The theme, 'Imagine Being Here Now', stretches time as far as it will go.

The Biennial will showcase over 80 artists from Iceland, Norway, Sweden and beyond. Icelander (and occasional GV contributor) Markús Þór Andrésson—one of the Biennial's five curators—explains it's a venture that will have roving art projects, including some that won't be revealed until 2051.

WHAT CAN WE EXPECT TO SEE AT THIS YEAR'S NORDIC BIENNIAL?

The sixth Momentum Biennial is an international project curated by five Nordic curators. It will take place in and around Moss in Norway, but there will also be an itinerant performance event travelling around the Nordic capitals. You may expect to get an excellent chance to consider what it is to actually see art, given that the exhibition revolves around the notion of the experience of art in a specific time and place. 'Imagine Being Here Now' invites the viewer to fulfil his or her part of the deal that art and artists try to make with their audience that they see actively.

Some projects challenge this by presenting works that are scarcely visible; they may take time to be realised and require the imagination of the viewer to become real. We are collaborating with The Long Now Foundation (www.longnow.org), an institute invested in slowing down the momentary experience and thinking within a time frame of 10,000 years. This focus lends the exhibition project as a whole a dimension, within which we hope to bring forward the concerns of today's art with the passivity of a fleeting moment-to-moment culture.

THERE ARE FIVE CURATORS INVOLVED FOR THIS EDITION. IS THIS YOUR FIRST TIME PARTICIPATING?

Yes, this is the first time for all of us to be involved with Momentum. In recent years, there have been two curators for the biennial, one from within the Nordic scene and a person that comes from a different background. Now, the idea was to break up that routine by asking five insiders to do the job, and of course the first decision we took collectively was to make it an international project. We invited around fifty people from around the world. Still, we have a high percentage of Nordic artists simply because this is where we have based our work and research in the past.

ARE YOU RESPONSIBLE FOR CURATING ALL THE ICELANDIC ART?

The process of bringing together the eighty artists has been very intense, as you can imagine, with five people working together. We have all contributed names and works to the table, and as we mutually know the Nordic scene. We have all crossed lines in terms of one curator lobbying for an artist from someone else's country. At the end of the day we collaboratively chose the group so that it would make sense as a whole, not in terms of each curator selecting ten artists. Perhaps it may have ended up like that, but at least it wasn't intentional. We then somehow organically came to terms with who is responsible for which artist and in case of the Icelandic participants I can say that I am not responsible for all of them.

GIVE US ONE PROJECT IN WHICH WE CAN LOOK FORWARD TO.

The Icelandic artist Magnús Logi Kristinsson will be organising a performance tour with the well-known Finnish artist Roi Vaara. They will invite artists to join them and local artists to take part in this with them and do a tour, like

a rock and roll group, from one place to the next. Except we don't quite know where and when. They will pop up in art institutions or in public spaces in the Nordic countries sometimes in the fall, before the Biennial ends in the beginning of October. I am very excited to see how this project develops, if I manage to be at the right place at the right time. I also wonder if I will be around in fifty years to see the works that have been included in this show but placed in a time capsule so the works will not be known to the public until 2051. You can look forward to that, too, and imagine being there then.

NADJA SAYEJ

- Øystein Aasan (NO)
- Caroline Achaintre (FR)
- Harpa Arnadóttir (IS)
- Michael Baers (US)
- Margrét H. Blöndal (IS)
- Paolo Botarelli (IT)
- KP Brehmer (DE)
- Elina Brotherus (FI)
- Heman Chong (SG)
- Bruce Conner (US)
- Jason Dodge (US)
- Aleksandra Domanovič (RS)
- Leif Elggren (SE)
- Luca Frei (SE)
- Ellie Ga (US)
- Ásdís Sif Gunnarsdóttir (IS)
- Hamza Halloubi (MA)
- Magnús Logi Kristinsson (IS)
- Matti Kujasalo (FI)
- Oliver Laric (AU)
- Karl Larsson (SE)
- Ann Lislegaard (NO)
- The Long Now Foundation (US)
- Lorenzo Scotto di Luzio (IT)
- Katarina Löfström (SE)
- Daniel Medina (VE)
- Maria Miesenberger (SE)
- Naeem Mohaiemen (BD)
- Ulrike Mohr (DE)
- Eadweard Muybridge (UK)
- Simon Dybbroe Møller (DK)
- Rosalind Nashashibi (UK)
- Ioana Nemes (RO)
- Finnbogi Pétursson (IS)
- Prinz Gholam (LB/DE)
- Raqs Media Collective (IN)
- Mandla Reuter (ZA)
- Nikolai von Rosen (DE)
- Hans Rosenström (FI)
- Andreas Siqueland (NO)
- SEXTAGS (NO)
- Simon Starling (UK)
- Fiete Stolte (DE)
- Superflex (DK)
- Ines Tartler (DE)
- Roi Vaara (FI)
- Kjell Varvin (NO)
- Bettina Camilla Vestergaard (DK)
- Wooloo (DK)
- George Young (UK)



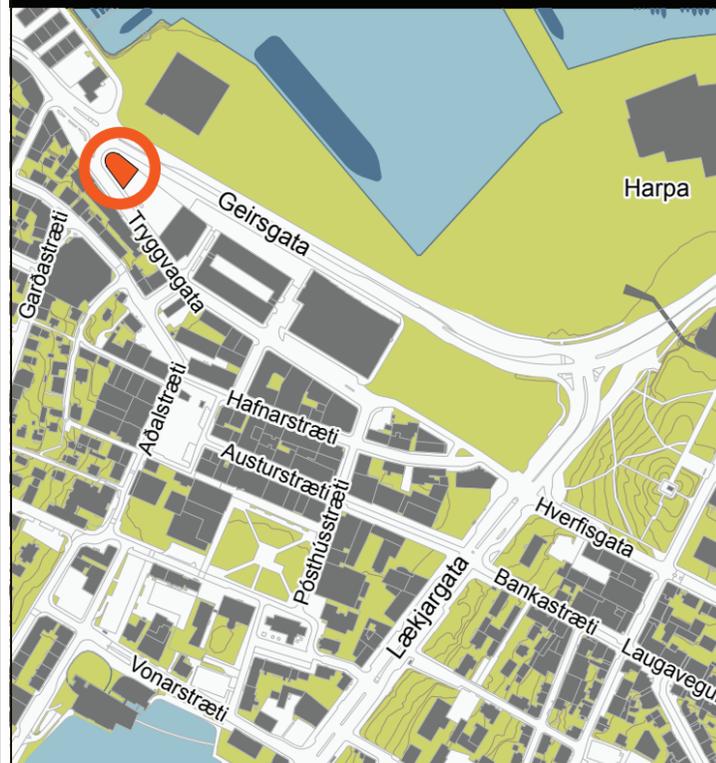
EXPERIENCE THE FORCE OF NATURE

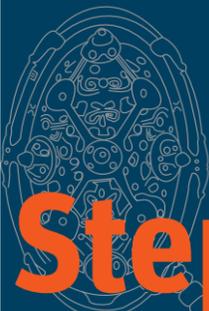
Our two excellent films on eruptions in Iceland start on the hour every hour. The films are shown in english except at 09:00 and 21:00 when they are in german.

Volcano House also has an excellent café, Icelandic design shop and booking service for travels within Iceland.

Opening hours: 8:30 - 23:00
www.volcanohouse.is

Find us at:
Tryggvagata 11, 101 Reykjavík





Reykjavík
871 ±2

Landnámssýningin
The Settlement
Exhibition

Step into the Viking Age

The exhibition and museum shop are open daily 10-17

Áðalstræti 16
101 Reykjavík / Iceland
Phone +(354) 411 6370
www.reykjavikmuseum.is

Reykjavík
City Museum

Multimedia techniques bring Reykjavík's past to life, providing visitors with insights into how people lived in the Viking Age, and what the Reykjavík environment looked like to the first settlers.

Experience Viking-Age Reykjavík at the new Settlement Exhibition. The focus of the exhibition is an excavated longhouse site which dates from the 10th century AD. It includes relics of human habitation from about 871, the oldest such site found in Iceland.

Fjalakötturinn

New Nordic Cuisine
in the heart of the city center



A unique dining experience
like never before



The restaurant is warm and friendly and has the atmosphere of old Icelandic and nordic style.

Our ambition is in serving high quality food, having a wide selection of good wine and providing the best service.

OPENING HOURS

Every day from 18:00 – 22:00
Fridays & Saturdays from 18:00 – 23:00
Sundays from 18:00 – 22:00

Fjalakötturinn | Aðalstræti 16 | 101 Reykjavík | Tel. 514 6060 | Fax 514 6030

FLJÓTT OG GOTT

ICELANDIC FOOD
...just the way mom made it!

BSÍ - BUS TERMINAL
Vatnsmýravegi 10, tel: 552 12 88



Icelandic Food Station

Skólavörðustíg 23
tel: 552 12 88

Moving Mountains: Iceland's Landscape Travelling Through Time



First-time filmmaker Svavar Jónatansson rode his motorcycle around Iceland in 2004. Awe-inspired by the landscape, he began photographing the scenery on his lone journey. Svavar recounts, "I wanted to try a different approach than stopping the motorcycle all the time. I wanted to put the camera on the handlebars, and have a trigger and just shoot single frames. The idea was in my mind, but never got done."

Then, in 2007 while travelling around the country again, Svavar saw a freight truck and thought of shooting still frames out the side windows. He called several freight truck and bus companies, explaining his idea. With help from several of them, as well as some friends and their private vehicles, Svavar's project of capturing landscape in motion evolved into 'Inland/Outland Iceland'.

Puzzled together through various forms of transportation, the three-year project produced around 200,000 photographs, 40,000 of which were used in the final product, Inland/Outland Iceland. The DVD contains two forty-three minute films showing landscape on both sides of the Ring Road—a stretch of highway that spans roughly 1,400 km around the entirety of Iceland, connecting the main habitable parts of the country. An original score by Icelandic musician Daníel Ágúst Haraldsson (GusGus, Nýdönsk, Esja) accompanies the films.

Along with the films, Inland/Outland contains a sizeable amount of bonus material. 'Detail Views' shows specific location on a map before propelling the viewer through the scenery in that particular area. The 'Slideshow' section focuses on traditional stills. 'Inland/Outland' also contains 'Volcanic Drive', showcasing the landscape near Eyjafjallajökull during the eruption, and a 'Making Of' video explaining the production involved with a voice over by Svavar.

Svavar spent roughly four months editing through the pictures he collected. He describes the editing process as "a big puzzle," and admits that "it's not edited together with any kind of formula. It was a very chaotic approach, but it all came together in the end." When Svavar realised he was missing footage

of a particular area, he would take to the road again, making sure the entire Ring Road, both sides, was fully documented. When asked about his inspiration for making the film, Svavar replies: "In the beginning it was simply fulfilling an idea."

ARTIST IN THE PASSENGER'S SEAT

We sat down with Svavar to ask him more about the ins and outs of Inland/Outland Iceland.

How would you suggest people watch the videos?

I have no idea, that's really up to each individual. The only thing I could say is that, hopefully, people will keep their mind and whole sensory system open.

How did you determine the speed of the videos?

It wasn't done in such a systematic way that I could say that there are so many seconds between each photo. I tried to keep the same visual line. If there was a bump in the road, I had to level the camera. I had to hold my body rigid to fight the shaking. It made the human touch so important.

Why still frames and not a video camera?

The video camera approach, looking straight ahead, has been widely done. It was pioneered in Iceland by Friðrik Þór Friðriksson in 1985 and has been repeated by others.

With a still frame, you can minimise the number of frames and reduce the speed between images. The landscape is then not going by so fast that you don't get it.

How would you characterise the mood of the whole project?

People have said that Iceland seems to be a no-man's land. Large parts of the country are uninhabited. That's what I like in the film—you feel like you're alone and then, poof, you go through a town. It's only for three seconds because the towns aren't very large. And then seconds later, poof, you regain freedom because you are out in nature again. Whether there is a certain mood, overall, I couldn't say. The music takes you through different emotions.

How did you choose the composer for the music and what direction did you give him?

Daníel Ágúst Haraldsson is a very good friend of mine and I really trusted him as an artist. He really sensed how to give life to the images, but still let them stand on their own. The music helps you to go along. It gets you into this hypnotic mood of just letting the images flow.

What was your mindset while taking photos?

If I was on the bus, I would keep to myself when I was shooting, listening to music. But with the truck drivers, I didn't want to sit there for hours and say nothing. I went between taking the photos to putting the camera down and having a conversation. There was much more to this project than just taking photographs.

What did you talk about while on the road?

Some drivers talked about country music and Kris Kristoferson for hours. Others talked about how fucked up society has become and who's to blame. There was a whole spectrum of conversation. One guy just didn't say a word. He said one sentence to me and then we drove in darkness down the East fjords.

Any other interesting stories?

Once in November, I went to the East fjords to try and finish what I had started there. I ended up arriving at four in the morning, and I looked around and saw this old, abandoned jeep. It became my campsite for the next two nights. I just crawled into it and slept in a sleeping bag. It was a multi-faceted adventure. That's what really makes me feel content; having all of these different experiences.

Do you have a favourite photograph/scene/season?

No, they are just so varied. My favourite could be early January morning where you can't see anything but a blue light above the mountains, or it could be a really pure, crisp sunny day driving past a glacier. Each place that I came to had completely different weather or light depending on the time of day or season. That's why I added the bonus material, because I thought I couldn't be completely accurate with just doing

Review: The Velocity of Photographs

Landscape whirls by through a patchwork of photographs—seasons changing in seconds, night and day transposing more slowly.

A breathy cello sonata follows the arc of snow-dusted mountains changing into sparkling waterways and then into fog-swept lava fields and onward. A red barn flashes by. Telephone lines, hay barrels, grazing horses, the rare person. From vivid colours to muted shadows, 'Inland/Outland Iceland——' taps into a myriad of emotions through fast-moving portraits of landscape.

'Inland/Outland' captures not only landscape in motion, but a journey without itiner-

ary. Watching one of the forty-three minute videos for the first time is both startling and captivating. The minimalist soundtrack featuring haunting cello solos mimics the rush of scenery and enhances feelings of solitude and a one-with-nature mentality.

The films, pieced-together like memories, do not paint a picture-perfect view of Iceland's landscape; 'Inland/Outland Iceland' often elicits moody and sometimes unsettling view of nature.

The images flow uncomfortably fast and occasionally appear too dark or washed out. As a result, the imperfections create "realness" instead of labelling the land as "otherworldly"—a word used too often to de-

scribe Iceland's diverse landscape.

The bonus material should not be ignored: The 'Volcanic Drive' section follows the road near Eyjafjallajökull and focuses on the blankets of ash and billowing smoke rather than the distant spillway of bright lava. The 'Slideshow' section offers a starkly contrasting view of place compared to the videos. The still-pictures allow the eyes to rest on details at one time and place rather than the progression light and weather across a multitude of scenes shown in the films.

Provocative and forward-thinking, Inland/Outland Iceland is a great experience for those who don't like to sit still and don't buy into the "inspired" view of Iceland. **EB**



the two videos and saying that's it.

Are you planning on making more projects like this?

Right now I'm working on an extension from the highway out to Snæfellsnes, which for me, is one of the most compacted, magical places. The distance isn't that far from the highway, but the landscape there is really amazing with all the mountains and lava. The light there seems to really play special tricks. I've experienced incredible kinds of weather and light playing on the glaciers there.

Will you produce the new project in the same format?

It will be the same approach, but with-

out the mistakes that I have had from the other one. I have a more systematic approach. I shoot in shorter intervals so the flow will be smoother, along with using maps more. The National Park, along with others, supports the project with rides and accommodation. 🍷

First screened in May 2010 at the Nuna (now) arts festival in Canada, Svavar plans to show Inland/Outland Iceland in more places abroad. He is now organising an exhibition at the Vatnajökull National Park for next summer. The DVD was released in Iceland in July 2010.

www.inlandoutland.com

EMILY BURTON

FRESH ICELANDIC SPECIALITIES

GEYSIR Bistro
Abalstræti 2
101 Reykjavík
Tel 517 4300

www.geysirbistro.is

FISH MARKET

FISKMARKAÐURINN

Taste the freshness of a farmer's market

Housed in one of the city's oldest buildings, Fish Market uses ingredients sourced directly from the nation's best farms, lakes, and sea to create unforgettable Icelandic dishes with a modern twist.

OPEN FOR LUNCH WEEKDAYS 11:30 - 14:00
OPEN EVERY EVENING 18:00 - 23:30



ADALSTRÆTI 12 | +354 578 8877 | FISHMARKET.IS
LUNCH WEEKDAYS 11:30 - 14:00 | EVENINGS 18:00 - 23:30

All Is Not As It Seems With Elías Knörr



When you stumble across someone creating fresh stirrings in a literary culture that's already on a constant creative simmer, they must be doing something worth noticing. Following publications of several of his poems on Icelandic poetry websites and the poetry journal Stína, mysterious newcomer to the Icelandic poetry scene Elías Knörr last autumn published a book of new Icelandic poetry 'Sjóarinn með morgunhestana undir kjólnum' ("The sailor with the morning horses under her dress").

Elías Knörr was reportedly born into a family of Icelandic sailors, and was the first man in his family not to go to sea, deciding instead to study Italian linguistics and travel abroad.

So far, so standard. Except for one, very minor, detail. Elías Knörr isn't really Elías Knörr. He's the pseudonym

of one Elías Portello, notable Galician poet, linguist, translator, traveller, and all round rather curious character. His translations and poetry have earned him critical acclaim and awards in his native Galicia and Spain, and his translation of his Icelandic work appeared in the renowned UK Poetry Review earlier this spring.

So how does a Galician linguist end up in Iceland writing under the identity of a small town sailor? A little hesitant, Elías laughs as he tells me he doesn't even know where to start.

WELL, HOW ABOUT FROM THE BEGINNING?

Well I've been writing poetry since I was a teenager and have always been fascinated by language. I studied linguistics and translation in Galicia and am still working on doctoral studies there. I first came to Iceland about nine years ago, to work on my Icelandic studies and began translating several Icelandic works, including Einar Már Guðmundsson's 'Angels of the Universe' and Sjón's 'Skugga-Baldur' into Galician.

WHY WORK UNDER A PSEUDONYM FOR YOUR ICELANDIC POETRY?

Mainly because I wanted for the texts to be valued for what they are, not judged as if were written by a foreigner. There is no chance my work would have got-

ten picked up in the way it has here if I hadn't done that, and certainly the selection for inclusion in the UK Poetry Review wouldn't have come. I wanted to start from an equal place.

The way I write—even in Galician—is to very much stretch the grammatical constructions of language, in a way that that grammar and words become really very strong. The point is to lead the reader to a very particular focus within a word when they read it. Even in mother tongue, people have said to me, "Oh this is strange, or are you sure this is what this word means..." so if an Icelander knew it was foreigner writing, they would just think "Oh that's wrong!" But no, it's not wrong! It's the way I choose to craft and turn the words, so it's really well thought out!

AND WHY USE KNÖRR ("SHIP") FOR YOUR PEN NAME?

Knörr were the ships used by early Icelandic merchants to make trade and transport provisions. They are especially important for my poetry, and for me, because they're associated with a journey and with the notion of travelling from shore to shore. When I publish in Galician, I make it very clear to the reader that I am making 'such and such' experiment with the form; I'll have different chapters, explain my theories, etc. But in this book I wanted to make a

journey and let the polyphony of these characters appear. It gave a lot of freedom, even though some of the topics were difficult. But then again seamen don't have an easy life, and the people they tend to meet don't have an easy life either!

The Icelandic culture of 'going on a Knörr' and seeing the world is very important. You know this word 'heimskur' in Icelandic? It means 'idiot' and its related to the word home. Icelanders say that the one that grows up without having ever left home is really the stupid one. So I will keep using this because it's really important to my poetry.

FROM WHERE, OR FROM WHOM, DO YOU DRAW YOUR INSPIRATION?

I have very concrete literary theories and one of them is to search for inspiration 'outside' myself. This can mean to look to other places and countries and languages but it's also very important for me as a writer to find inspiration outside out my own head. Even though I have a lot of ideas, the world outside is practically unlimited, so if you want to allow yourself new ideas and to reconsider and transform things it's important to consider perceptions and perspectives other than your own. I love to research so I like to write poems that are interesting to investigate.

Poetry isn't just painting words, it's also architecture.

As for who inspires me? Well, if you take the fathers of creationist poetry—Chilean Vicente Huidobro and Galician Manuel Antonio—and put them somewhere in the North Atlantic with Kristín Ómarsdóttir you could be close to Elías Knörr! Of course my style comes from a very personal place, but they are writers I really admire and identify with.

HAVE YOU ANY THOUGHTS ABOUT THE ICELANDIC POETRY SCENE?

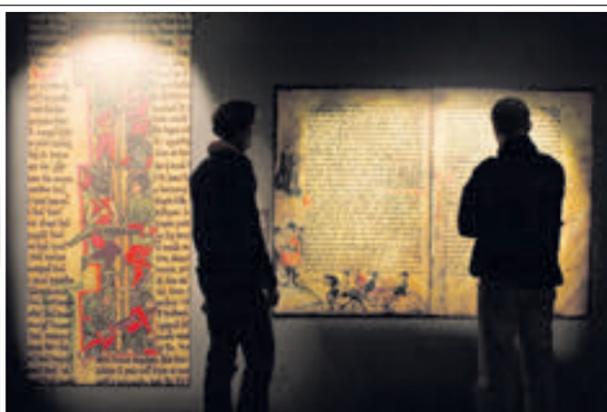
Well I don't really know enough to say completely. Every country has its national clichés in how they create and preserve their literary culture. Personally, I always try to challenge cliché in my metaphors and identifications, and challenge the nature of words and of language. What I like here in Iceland is that there are many people who, in the same way, aren't afraid of doing something. It's like 'it's better to be doing something than not saying any word'. So if you write a book, maybe it won't be the best poetry book, but even if one or two points are gorgeous, then it creates some movement in the literary system and broadens the horizons a little bit further. 🍷

Words
Eimear Fitzgerald

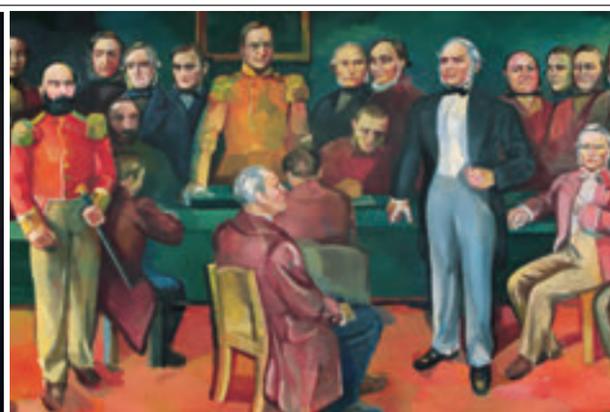
Photo
Yann Langevin



MILLENNIUM – Icelandic art through the ages.
Phase one. Starts 23 June.



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.



EXHIBITIONS - GUIDED TOURS
CAFETERIA - CULTURE SHOP

The Culture House – Þjóðmenningarhúsið
National Centre for Cultural Heritage
Hverfisgata 15 · 101 Reykjavík (City Centre)
Tel: 545 1400 · thjodmenning.is · kultur.is

Open daily between 11 am and 5 pm
Free guided tour of THE MEDIEVAL
MANUSCRIPTS weekdays at 3 pm,
except Wednesdays.



EISTNAFLUG 2011

Í Egilsbúð í Neskaupstað 7. - 9. júlí

AGENT FRESCO ALICE IN CHAINS TRIBUTE ASK THE SLAVE ATRUM
BENEATH BENNY CRESPO'S GANG BLACK EARTH BRAIN POLICE
CARPE NOCTEM CELESTINE CHAO DÁNARBEÐ DIMMA DR. SPOCK
GONE POSTAL EIRÍKUR HAUSSON ELÍN HELENA HAM HAMFERÐ (FRO)
INNVORTIS MAMMÚT MANSLAUGHTER MOMENTUM MUCK OFFERINGS
PLASTIC GODS S.H. DRAUMUR SAKTMÓÐIGUR SECRETS OF THE MOON (DEU)
SIGN SKÁLMÖLD SÓLSTAFIR THE MONOLITH DEATHCULT (NLD) TRASSAR
TRIPTYKON (CHE) WITCHES

Miðasala á www.eistnaflug.is

LISTVINAFÉLAG HALLGRÍMSKIRKJU 29. STARFSÁR
HALLGRÍMSKIRKJA'S FRIENDS OF THE ARTS SOCIETY 29TH SEASON

ALÞJÓÐLEGT ORGELSUMAR Í HALLGRÍMSKIRKJU 2011 THE INTERNATIONAL ORGAN SUMMER IN HALLGRÍMSKIRKJA 2011

19. JÚNÍ – 14. AGÚST / JUNE 19 – AUGUST 14

Hádegistónleikar á fimmtudögum
kl. 12, 23. júní - 11. ágúst

Lunchtime concerts on Thursdays
at 12.00, June 23 - August 11

Í samvinnu við Félag íslenskra organelikara

Hádegistónleikar á miðvikudögum
kl. 12, 22. júní - 10. ágúst

Lunchtime concerts on Wednesdays
at 12 noon, June 22 - August 10

Schola cantorum



Helgartónleikar
Lau kl. 12-12.30 / su. kl. 17-18
Weekend Concerts
Sat. 12 - 12.30 pm / Sun. 5-6 pm



19.6. kl. 17 sun. Sun. June 19 at 17.00
22.6. kl. 12 mið. Wed. June 22 at 12.00
23.6. kl. 12 fim. Thu. June 23 at 12.00

25.6. kl. 12 lau. Sat. June 25 at 12.00
26.6. kl. 17 sun. Sun. June 26 at 17.00
29.6. kl. 12 mið. Wed. June 29 at 12.00
30.6. kl. 12 fim. Thu. June 30 at 12.00

2.7. kl. 12 lau. Sat. July 2 at 12.00
3.7. kl. 17 sun. Sun. July 3 at 17.00
4.7. kl. 20 mán. Mon. July 4 at 20.00

6.7. kl. 12 mið. Wed. July 6 at 12.00
7.7. kl. 12 fim. Thu. July 7 at 12.00

9.7. kl. 12 lau. Sat. July 9 at 12.00

10.7. kl. 17 sun. Sun. July 10 at 17.00
13.7. kl. 12 mið. Wed. July 11 at 12.00
14.7. kl. 12 fim. Thu. July 14 at 12.00
16.7. kl. 12 lau. Sat. July 16 at 12.00

17.7. kl. 17 sun. Sun. July 17 at 17.00
20.7. kl. 12 mið. Wed. July 20 at 12.00
21.7. kl. 12 fim. Thu. July 21 at 12.00
23.7. kl. 12 lau. Sat. July 23 at 12.00
24.7. kl. 17 sun. Sun. July 24 at 17.00
25.7. kl. 20 mán. Mon. July 25 at 20.00

27.7. kl. 12 mið. Wed. July 27 at 12.00
28.7. kl. 12 fim. Thu. July 28 at 12.00

30.7. kl. 12 lau. Sat. July 30 at 12.00
31.7. kl. 17 sun. Sun. July 31 at 17.00
3.8. kl. 12 mið. Wed. Aug. 3 at 12.00
4.8. kl. 12 fim. Thu. Aug. 4 at 12.00

6.8. kl. 12 lau. Sat. Aug. 6 at 12.00
7.8. kl. 17 sun. Sun. Aug. 7 at 17.00
10.8. kl. 12 mið. Wed. Aug. 10 at 12.00
11.8. kl. 12 fim. Thu. Aug. 11 at 12.00
13.8. kl. 12 lau. Sat. Aug. 13 at 12.00
14.8. kl. 17 sun. Sun. Aug. 14 at 17.00

Björn Steinar Sólbergsson, Hallgrímskirkja
Schola cantorum, Reykjavík
Guðný Einarsdóttir, Fella- og Hólaúrkirkja
Pétur Sakari Finnlandi/ Finland
Pétur Sakari Finnlandi/ Finland
Schola cantorum, Reykjavík
Tómas Guðni Eggertsson, Seljakirkja
Davíð Þór Jónsson, piano
Stephen Farr, England
Stephen Farr, England
Schola cantorum og
Alþjóðlega barokksveitin frá Haag
Stjórnandi: Hörður Askelsson
Schola cantorum, Reykjavík
Helga Þóris Guðmundsdóttir, Aftámurkirkja
Zuzana Ferencikova, Austurríki / Austria
Zuzana Ferencikova, Schola cantorum, Reykjavík
Jónas Þórir Þórisson, Bústabakirkja
Henryk Gwardak, Alandseyjar / Aland Islands
Henryk Gwardak, Pyskaland / Germany
Christoph Schoener, Schola cantorum, Reykjavík
Lenka Matěová, Kópavogskirkja, Auður Guðjohansen mezzosópran
Hörður Askelsson, Hallgrímskirkja
Hörður Askelsson, Hallgrímskirkja
Schola cantorum, Reykjavík
Jörg Sondemann, Selföskirkja
David Titterington, England
David Titterington, England

What's the difference between Pawel and Wawel? objazdowy pokaz kina polskiego na Islandii / a touring film screenings of polish movies in Iceland

03-05.06 Höfn

10-12.06 Reykjavik

17-19.06 Flateyri

24-26.06 Ísafjörður

01-03.07 Seydisfjörður

08-10.07 Egilsstaðir

FREE entrance

www.pawelandwawel.org

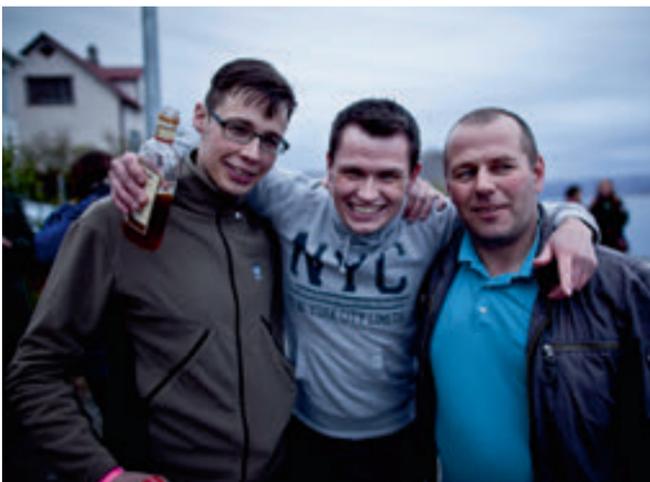




Travel | On yr. own

Skjaldborg: A Very Short Introduction

Time travelling at a documentary film festival in the Westfjords



Words

Ásgeir H. Ingólfsson

Photography

Courtesy of Skjaldborg

Photos from left to right:

1. Skjaldborg cinema, Patreksfjörður
2. Fun times at the film fest!
3. Spot the hipster!
4. AND THE WINNER IS...
5. Wouldn't it look cool if those guys were all sporting 3D glasses

Grapevine pays a visit to the infamous Skjaldborg documentary film festival in Patreksfjörður. Fun times ensue!

"Listen, none of us are famous like Buddy Holly yet, so if we drive off a cliff now it would be very sad and nobody will remember us in sixty years". This is a morbid (and historically inaccurate, and somewhat tasteless) joke overheard in a car on the road between Patreksfjörður and Reykjavík last week. And it was a nervous joke, uttered just after the possibility of flying off a cliff had seemed very real indeed.

But our reasons for visiting Patreks-

fjörður were not morbid at all; we just wanted to see movies at a documentary film festival called Skjaldborg. None of us were famous like Buddy Holly, but it didn't matter because the local world ceased to matter. Because 'Skjaldborg' literally means "a wall of shields", our defence against the rest of the world—our little shelter or even sanctuary. And when we arrived, we were told that the clock had been moved forward by an hour, to Skjaldborg time, but only for the weekend and only in this small town in Iceland that had suddenly become foreign.

This confused many of us, and some

were even angry. But then we became kind of confused and forgot that we brought a laptop and a cell phone. Yes, we pretty much forgot those wonders of modern technology for four whole days. Because we came here to see movies, Icelandic documentaries to be exact, but ended up doing a lot of talking, eating fish and visiting hot springs along the way. And drinking the occasional beer in between. And that was enough, the internet was not missed.

ÓMAR RAGNARSSON REVISITED

What happened at Skjaldborg? We saw a lot of movies. Some of them are de-

tailed in the accompanying sidebar—but we also saw the aforementioned Ómar Ragnarsson being interviewed in the cinema for two hours, in between clips of his old documentaries. Every Icelander under sixty grew up with Ómar Ragnarsson, he has simply put, been everywhere during the last fifty years. On the television, doing shows on the road, recording his own songs, flying his own airplane dangerously close to volcanic eruptions and even in politics for a short while. Ómar evokes mixed feelings with Icelanders, and my friends and I aren't too fond of his musical career. But deep down, we cher-



Landsvirkjun

Landsvirkjun is one of Europe's leading renewable energy companies



ish him and we remember that when we see him at his best, which he was at times during the sometimes flawed but often fascinating Q&A session. He had been invited because he won the honorary award, which he has amply earned. It must be added that awarding him was a somewhat brilliant discovery by the Skjaldborg organisers—Icelanders often think of him as simply 'an entertainer', but many fail to realise that he's also one of our most prolific documentarians.

His documentaries usually capture Iceland's harshest secrets. Deserted and dangerous places in the middle

of nowhere, yes, but also people that time forgot. Hermits to you and me, but people to Ómar. Sometimes funny and wise, but more often just lonely people living outside of time, in rural, forgotten about places.

A NEW ÓMAR RAGNARSSON

Towards those people Ómar was a humble filmmaker. And he also proved to be humble and generous towards his fellow filmmakers. Because, a funny thing happened: the opening film also won the audience award at the end of the festival. It's called 'Jón og séra Jón' ('John and Reverend John') and might

well have been made by Ómar himself.

The film revolves around an abandoned priest who lives alone. His life is falling apart, and some who voted for it felt director Steinþór Birgisson managed to get closer to this rather tragic person than Ómar ever did with his subjects. A less gracious man might get defensive, but at the time of writing Ómar has posted two blog posts about the festival and he never mentions his own honorary award, instead opting to praise Steinþór (who turns out to be an old colleague of his) to the heavens and has very kind words for the festival itself and its organisers: "It seemed easy



enough to have a festival of this calibre once, but to do so for five years in a row is quite an achievement". I agree with him and truly hope that this little miracle of a festival will continue for years to come, so I can write many more articles about it.

THE FILMS OF SKJALDBORG

I didn't see every film at Skjaldborg but I saw three that would have been worthy winners. The winning film itself, '**John and Reverend John**', but also '**Paradox**' and '**A9ainst**' ('Ge9n' in Icelandic). '**Paradox**' was a paradox indeed, a film about the re-imagining of an Icelandic short film from the sixties, a short film that was shot but never finished and had been laying in a box for decades. But it was also about directors from different generations and their differences and contained possibly the funniest scene of the entire festival.

'**A9ainst**' is a documentary about the Reykjavík 9 (www.rvk9.org). The film divided the festival audience, breeding heated discussions—and if it gets proper distribution it could end up being a tick-

ing time bomb. It's not a perfect film, but a very interesting one and a true original. If enough people see it, it just might change the ways of the society it seeks to criticise.

A fourth film that many felt a deserved winner was '**Baldur of Bakki**' (Icelandic: 'Bakka-Baldur') by respected filmmaker Þorfinnur Guðnason. I can't say for myself, because I accidentally missed the film, but based on the good things I heard about the movie I will not make the same mistake the next time I have a chance to view it.

A total of twenty-one films were shown at the festival, as well as four works-in-progress. I won't mention them all here (and I didn't view them all) but '**My Father's Land**' ('Land míns föður'), '**The Will To Live**' ('Lífsviljinn') and '**Morbid Summer of Laziness**' are all worth a look, for very different reasons. Then there was the festival's most surprising treat, '**Freerun Iceland**', a film about an extreme sport (jumping and running over buildings and other obstacles) that even some sport-hating friends of mine were endlessly fascinated by. ☺

Who needs oil when you have rain?

Visit our new interactive exhibition on renewable energy
at Búrfell Power Station.

Free admission 10 am to 6 pm every day.
Route information at www.landsvirkjun.com/visitors



Ice Axes, Blood, And Rainbows

Just kidding about the blood



“Waterfalls are a wonderful sight, rainbows are gorgeous, and when you put the two together, you get the most wondergeous thing ever seen

Glacier hiking and ice climbing, like many things in Iceland, are once in a lifetime opportunities for most travellers. Many people in the world may never get even get the chance to attempt either of the two. But after at the very least attempting both of them, one feels accomplished and humbled at the very same time. Accomplished for having done something active and unique, humbled by the beauty and awesomeness of nature. These were both feelings I was lucky enough to retain after a trip to the Sólheimajökull glacier.

A YEAR OF WINTER

Sólheimajökull is 150 km outside of Reykjavík, about a two and a half hour drive not including stops. If you don't have your own glacier hiking gear and it's your first time visiting a glacier, a guide is recommended. Those guys will provide the proper equipment and information on how to use it, leaving little to no chance of severe injury.

When we passed a snowy-topped mountain, a passenger in our group expressed his curiosity as to what it was. We were informed that it was Mt. Hekla, a volcano prone to erupting about every decade, the last eruption being in 2000. "It's due for an eruption", our guide Simmi warned. But Hekla has been a tame volcano compared to Katla, a volcano we were less than 60 kilometres from when we finally arrived at Sólheimajökull glacier.

GLACIER FACTS

As we drove through the Mordor looking glacier valley (Simmi thought it looked more like Helm's Deep,

which eased my mind; it wasn't only tourists that thought Iceland had Middle-Earthen qualities), we learned that Sólheimajökull is the outlet glacier or the glacier tongue to Mýrdalsjökull glacier, the fourth largest glacier in Iceland. Beneath Mýrdalsjökull, an ice cap glacier, lies Katla. Katla, as mentioned in our last issue, is the volcano that blew up a century ago with an eruption so large it caused a "year of winter" in Europe. Being this close to such a volcano is... mildly unsettling.

When we arrived, we had to put on contraptions called 'crampons'. They go directly on your feet, giving you traction on the glacier and the ability to ice climb. Once the crampons were securely on, Simmi and his colleague Billi gave a quick tutorial about the proper way of walking with the appliances on our feet, before we took the fifteen-minute hike to the location where we would do our ice climbing. Along the way, we stopped to see a moulin, a hole wherein water and other materials collect. Usually found around crevasses, a moulin can reach the very bottom of the glacier, or can be shallow. Water carries black sand, ash, and other sediments down the moulin, and when the glacier recedes, black cones are left to mark the spot where a moulin once was.

MOUNTING THE GLACIER

Ice climbing is something everyone needs to try at least once. When facing the wall it may seem daunting, but don't be deterred by your initial fear. Once up on the wall, the adrenaline will take over and it will be hard to stop. And falling isn't even a worry. When you do "fall" off the wall, the guides belaying you do

such a good job, you don't move an inch. Our guides provided a safe environment, where it felt comfortable to at least give climbing a try. As long as you don't ice axe the rope. Then there might be some issues though (like having to buy everyone in your tour group a beer).

WHAT'S UP SKÓGAFOSS?

After everyone had tried their hand at ice climbing, the group made its way back to the van and for the cool down part of the trip, we visited Skógafoss. Skógafoss is one of the most 'popular' waterfalls in Iceland, not only for the beauty of the waterfall itself, but also because of the rainbow that can be seen on sunny days by the mist that the waterfall creates. Waterfalls are a wonderful sight, rainbows are gorgeous, and when you put the two together, you get sorta the most wondergeous thing ever seen. After basking in the glow of the waterfall and its rainbows, we drove back to Reykjavík, tired after a good day's work.

Arctic Adventures puts together a fun, informational trip to a glacier for a day of hiking, climbing, and sightseeing. Not many people in the world get to see glaciers, go ice climbing, or see a waterfall that creates one of the most gorgeous rainbows ever seen. This trip allows you to do all three. The beauty of it is that you even feel like you accomplished something if you decide to test your abilities at ice climbing. There isn't a better feeling in the world than feeling accomplished and seeing beautiful, awe-inspiring nature at the same time. ✨

Words

S. Alessio Tummolillo

Photography

Jose Hernández



AIR ICELAND

Always best price online.
Various online-offers to all Air Iceland's

www.airiceland.is

websales@airiceland.is / tel. +354 570 3030



YOU'LL KNOW WHEN YOU SEE IT

Whale-watching in Reykjavík



“We caught a glance of a large whale. Seeing the dorsal fin made my hair stand on end. There is something really exciting about seeing such large animals in their natural habitat, something that can barely be described

Words

Marta Bardón

Photography

Hvalreki

To many, no visit to Iceland is complete without a whale-watching trip. Few places offer a better opportunity to view the largest sea mammals on the planet. While tours out of Húsavík in northern Iceland are reportedly the best, the tours operated out of Reykjavík also provide fine whale watching.

In hopes of seeing the huge cetaceans, The Grapevine headed down to the harbour to catch Elding's 13:00 tour. Camera in hand, we climbed aboard their red and white boat, which had several floors to accommodate passengers comfortably. After we had been briefed with safety instructions, they gave us equipment and waterproof coats so that we wouldn't catch a cold.

While some stayed outside on the deck, others preferred to stay inside with a cup of coffee in the cosy cafeteria. We briefly dipped in to check it out and had a nice chat with the friendly waitress who was very knowledgeable about whales.

SOME FLY

Then the boat set sail, gradually pick-

ing up speed. The air blew fiercely against us as we steered into the waves. An enthusiastic tour guide began telling us about the different types of whales and birds that we could expect to see. The tour guide's voice travelled throughout the vessel thanks to the strategically located loudspeakers.

She told us about puffins, which are the most common birds in Iceland. There are approximately 10 million of them in and around the country. Vestmannaeyjar, an island off the south coast of mainland Iceland, boasts the largest puffin colony in the world. During the tour we saw one that raced away in front of the boat as we gained on it. While the puffin's movement seemed dizzy and overwhelming, some of our fellow passengers thought it was endearing. In addition to the puffin, we also spotted and learned about numerous species of birds that migrate from the Arctic to the Antarctica, a 22,000 km journey that takes three months of flying. Amazing!

After fifteen minutes of navigating through the Arctic waters, pas-

sengers were filled with admiration over the breathtaking view that surrounded us. When a snow-capped mountain range appeared on the horizon, everyone at once took out their cameras to capture the scene. In the distance, we could also see Esja, the mountain range seen across the harbour from Reykjavík. We could even see the town of Akranes (pop. 6549).

OTHERS SWIM

As we went further out to sea, the guide proceeded to explain the system they use to notify us of a whale sighting. The announcement is made by the cry of an hour. The ship becomes a clock in which the bow is 12 and the stern is 6. The guide also told us to keep our nostrils close, for the whale's breath is repulsive. So, if during the voyage, someone begins to feel nauseated by a very unpleasant smell, it's probably not a nearby passenger, but a whale!

However, for the seasick prone, the company also offers special vomit bags. This can definitely come in handy when making attempts at whale-watching in rough seas.

Despite the freezing cold and the fact that there were more whale watching boats around us than whales, some passengers were reluctant to leave the deck. Every single moment contains the possibility of spotting a whale. Regardless of the whales letting us down this time around, we still left the boat with lots of new knowledge about birds, different whales and their stories.

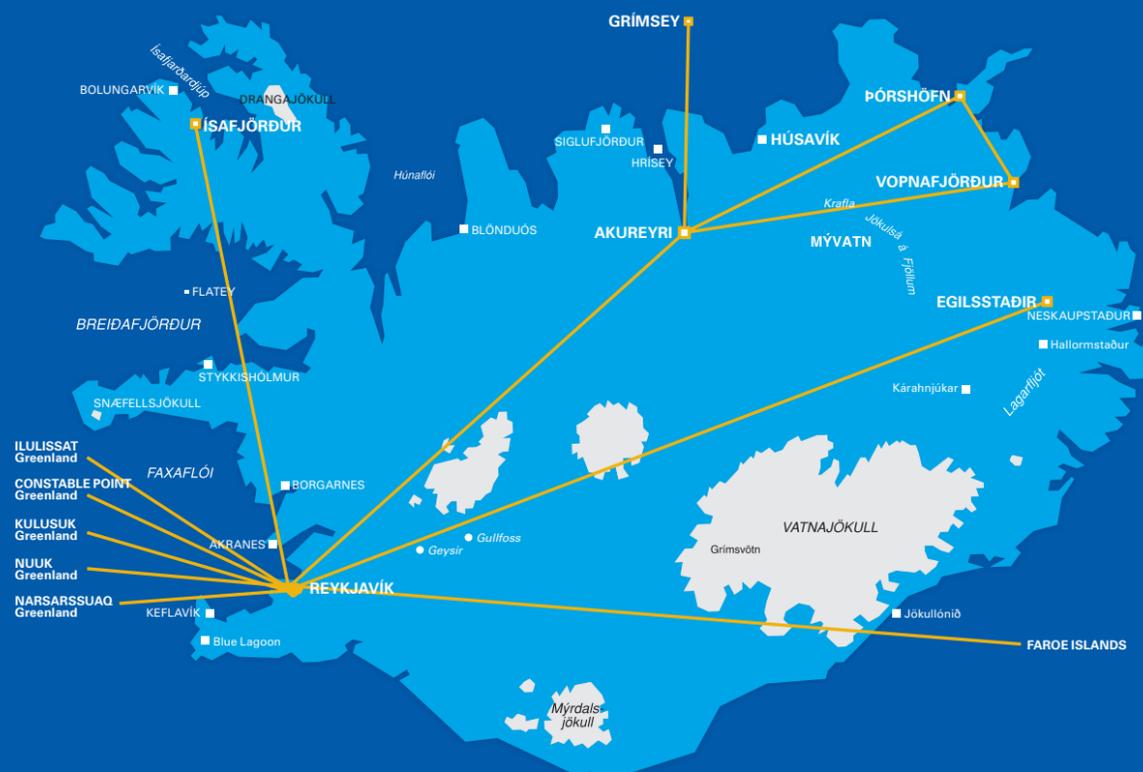
5 O'CLOCK! A WHALE!

As the boat rocked violently some laughed while others were visibly scared. Then excitement took over when someone yelled suddenly... "5 o'clock!". We caught a glance of a large whale. Seeing the dorsal fin made my hair stand on end. There is something really exciting about seeing such large animals in their natural habitat, something that can barely be described. You'll know when you see it.

Thus, in the end, we acquired new knowledge, a new perspective of the city of Reykjavík and even saw a whale! 🐋

www.airiceland.is

destinations.



Contact Air Iceland or travel agent for reservation.

The Amazingly Accurate Relationship Checkup



The Icelandic dating scene might at first seem like one gigantic free-for-all. But as any sociologist worth his salt will tell you, even the most anarchic system follows its own set of rules, however obscure they may seem.

While it is true that Icelanders have more sex partners than most people, or so surveys would have us believe, it still remains a fact that not everything is equally permissible. One may well go home with a different person every weekend, without the stigma that might accompany this in more conservative countries. This holds largely true for both genders, even if there might be some remnants of the old idea that what is OK for a man is somewhat less so for a woman.

Relationships here usually do start on a night out, whether the people involved know each other beforehand or not. Alcohol is usually involved. Chatting to someone while sober is usually seen as an act of desperation, while being exactly the right amount of drunk usually does the trick. Exactly what the right amount is, however, might be the subject of some debate.

IT ALL BEGAN SO WELL...

So, assuming you have managed to stay acceptably drunk until closing time, neither too much or too little, and you have followed your Icelandic home. This is where it gets tricky. While changing partners may be no big deal, Icelanders are actually more willing to jump into a relationship than most.

There is little of the month long ordeal of wining and dining and other dating games until things start to get defined, as one might find in continental cultures.

If you go home with the same person two or three times in a row, it is usually assumed that you are having a relationship. At this point, seeing other people is frowned upon and might easily get you into trouble. Dating various people until you make up your mind is a sign of bad character, while sleeping around with different people every weekend is fine as long as you avoid repetition and the unspoken promises that this would entail.

COUNTRY-WESTERN WISDOM

This might seem confusing to some, but everything has its reasons. Icelanders get married late, if at all. People are therefore not usually going out with the ultimate goal of marriage in mind, which would call for a more thorough selection process. Icelandic relationships are, on the whole, easy to get out of. While breaking up is always hard, as country-western singers have long known, there isn't much stopping, say, a mother of three leaving her man if she gets bored with him. Single motherhood carries its own burdens, to be sure, but there is very little of the accompanying stigma that one may find in more southern climes, and the family will usually pitch in when help is needed.

Icelandic relationships are on the whole easy to get out of, if so desired, and people rarely stay together purely for economic or social reasons. Per-

haps because of this, and also because of the rumours prone to spread in a small town, adultery is relatively rare. If it takes place, it happens while on a drunken night out, almost as if by accident. While not accepted, this still carries less stigma than a long-term extramarital relationship would. An affair stretching over years—or even a second family, as certain French politicians are famous for—would be almost unthinkable here. Not to say that it can't happen, anything can, but mostly, we have our own way of doing things. If you want someone else that much, you can just leave.

So, in the immortal words of Count Dracula (who should always be quoted in a relationship column): "Our ways are not your ways". Have fun with the locals, love them if you can, but be respectful of the culture, however strange it might seem at first.

VALUR GUNNARSSON
JÓI KJARTANS

Will Malcolm Walker and Twitter Sort Everything Out?

A bidding war is looming regarding the sale of Iceland, the supermarket chain, a UK frozen food specialist that is 67% owned by Landsbanki and 10% by Glitnir. The chain now owns close to 800 stores and has recently reported record sales: Profits have risen by 20% year on year in March, and sales have increased by £156 million. Iceland's total annual sales now exceeds £3bn. UK Retail giants ASDA, Morrisons, and even US-based Walmart, appear to be interested in acquiring the chain. Malcolm Walker, founder and present CEO, owns 23% of the company, and recently told Bloomberg that he would outmatch any bid.

Landsbanki's stake in the supermarket chain is currently being valued up to £2 bn (€2.26 bn), which, if sold would most likely be put toward settling the €3.9 Icesave debt towards

Britain and the Netherlands. Last year, Malcolm offered Landsbanki £1bn for the chain. Good news for Icelandic taxpayers: It is expected that Landsbanki may stand a good chance getting more than double that.

Malcolm, who recently informed the Daily Mail that he has now secured necessary funding to match any bid, is now in discussions with UBS and Merrill Lynch who have been hired by Landsbanki to negotiate the deal. If all things go according to plan, this sale will put a huge dent in the Icesave debts and may well arrive before Iceland has to face the EEA court. Last week, European trading watchdogs gave Iceland three months to pay the British and Dutch governments' Icesave compensation scheme—or else.

Big in the news these last days is the high-tech revision of Iceland's constitution. The international media appear to

be quite baffled about the fact that Iceland's constitutional committee—who are currently overhauling the country's constitution—has invited all citizens to participate in putting forward suggestions online. Spokesperson Berghildur Bernharðsdóttir told the Associated Press that most of the discussions actually take place on Facebook. Prime Minister Jóhanna Sigurðardóttir said that in her mind a clear review of the constitution would only [ever] be carried out with the "direct participation of the Icelandic people".

The Washington Post recently ran with the tongue-in-cheek headline 'Iceland Crowdfunds its Constitution', intimating that ratified policies will all come about through online social media. "The constitution makers are present on Twitter, they're posting interviews on YouTube, and their pictures are even posted on Flickr". In the

Guardian, Þorvaldur Gylfason, a member of the constitutional council, was quoted as saying, "This is the first time a constitution is being drafted basically on the internet".

And Katrín Oddsdóttir, another council member, told CNN, "[After the economic crisis], we were forced to do something about our democracy. The social contract is the basis of our society...Everything is open for discussion. What's happening is that we are creating ownership...Thousands of people are writing the constitution together, online".

Foreign Policy Magazine could not resist these snide comments: "This model may have worked in the Viking days—I'm guessing administrative tasks were pretty minimal back then, but this new scheme seems to combine all the world features of local government community forums and online

comment boards. It will be interesting to see how much of the public input will actually be incorporated into the final draft".

Honestly, though, what's to be snide about? The fact that this tiny nation are all nosing up to their laptops and voicing their opinions and actually being listened to by the powers-that-be can surely only be a good thing. And, unlike many other nations, the fact that everything is open for all to see does smell of a real democracy in the making. Now if only that little problem of our finances can be sorted out we can start getting on with our lives again.

Fingers crossed for Malcolm Walker.

MARC VINCENZ

THE VIKING TAVERN IN REYKJAVÍK
RESTAURANT & BAR

LET'S TALK ICELAND
THE HISTORY OF ICELAND
IN ONE FUNNY HOUR

VIKING MARKET
HANDMADE ICELANDIC
DESIGN FOR SALE OUTSIDE

SHOWN EVERY DAY AT 8PM

OPEN WHEN THE WEATHER ALLOWS

VÍKINGAKRÁIN - HAFNARSTRÆTI - TEL+ 354 861 7712

WWW.VIKINGAKRAIN.IS

Noodle Station

Noodle soup with chicken IKR 930
Noodle soup with beef IKR 930

Home of the best noodle soup!

Skólavörðustígur 21A

Puzzled?

Don't be! We got just the right thing to take home

The Islandia - Antique Map puzzle and The Reykjavik City puzzle make a great Souvenir.
500 pieces in a handy box.

minja Design

Skólavörðustíg 12 • Tel: 578 6090 • www.minja.is

Icelandic Design & Crafts

Skólavörðustígur
Bergstráskvæði
Laugavegur
Vegamóðustígur
minja

KRAFTAVENK

Traveller
2009
READERS' SPA AWARDS
WINNER
WORLD'S HOTTEST SPA
BLUE LAGOON
ICELAND

**BLUE LAGOON
ICELAND**

Energy for life
through forces of nature

Blue lagoon is open daily www.bluelagoon.com

Taste the best of Iceland
in one amazing meal

**Icelandic
Gourmet Fiest**

Our famous Icelandic menu
includes Brennivín
and 7 delicious tapas

Starts with a shot of the infamous
Icelandic spirit Brennivín

Smoked puffin with blueberry
"brennivín" sauce

Icelandic sea-trout with peppers-salsa

Lobster tails baked in garlic

Pan-fried monkfish with lobster sauce

Grilled Icelandic lamb Samfaina

Minke Whale with cranberry-sauce

White chocolate "Skyr" mousse
with passion coulis

5.890 ikr.

The only kitchen
in Reykjavík open
to **23:30** on weekdays
and **01:00** on weekends

Tapas
RESTAURANT- BAR

Vesturgata 3B | 101 Reykjavík | Tel: 551 2344 | www.tapas.is

Is It 'A Nation Of Book-Lovers'? Is It 'The Future Of Music'?

No, It's A Proto-Fascist Tanning Salon



The University of Reykjavík (not to be confused with the University of Iceland, located in Reykjavík) recently published the results of a 2010 poll about the lifestyle and habits of 16–18 year olds in Iceland. Similar polls were conducted in 2004 and 2007. In all cases some 11 thousand students answered the questionnaire—the seemingly reliable continuum of the investigation makes for an interesting comparison, which has already hit the headlines. On June 14, Vísir.is declared: "High school students happier and healthier", quoting Jón Sigfússon, manager of UR's research division, Research and Analysis: "The results are all in all positive. The teenagers spend more quality time with their parents, participate more in sports and so on".

This certainly seems to be the case. Not only do students in the age group exercise more than before, eat less white sugar, spend more time outdoors with their parents and take part in the

boy and girl scouts movement in growing numbers: the findings report their growing trust in the police, the courts and the church—steadily and significantly growing. Yes, the church. Yes, the police. Yes, the courts.

EXCESS HAM

At the same time, the figures reveal that the youngsters read significantly less: 40% of those asked did not read a single extracurricular book in 2010, as compared to 30% in 2007. They attend the cinema far less than before (while downloading a bit less too, it seems), spend less time in cafés, are less involved in their schools' social life and fewer form bands and play in them than before. They attend more parties though. All in all the shift seems significant, clear and rapid: less liberal arts, more exercise and hierarchy. What is the precise term for such a shift? Let us start politely and use writer Andri Snær Magnason's phrase: at the very least our youth is being 'ham-ified'.

Now, in the same week as these findings are revealed, the media tell us about young Icelandic males joining the Norwegian army. Those already serving their... uncle-land get a free trip back home if they spend some time recruiting, and thus a young man who already served in Afghanistan has been travelling through Icelandic high schools 'informing' students about this career option. So far, three schools have opened their doors to the young man and his mission. This went mainly unnoticed until the Norwegian public broadcast company

NRK published a report on the Icelanders in the army. NRK spoke with soldier Hilmar Haraldsson, 29, who cites his thirst for adventure as his main reason for joining, the desire to experience things Icelanders normally don't. "Are you willing to die for Norway?", the reporter asks. "Yes", says Hilmar, plain and simple. That he is willing to kill—'for Norway'— goes without saying. Another soldier, Bjarki Kristinsson, 21, says he would not mind going to war for Norway, explaining: "Icelanders and Norwegians are not that different. We have a lot of history in common, for example the saga literature". But he is not serving just for the sake of the sagas and medieval kinship: while mentioning his desire for adventure, as Hilmar before him, Bjarki also notes the financial crisis as playing its part in the decision to enlist. When asked how his family felt about his decision he replies: "I have always been interested in sports and spent a lot of time in the wild, so they knew that this would suit me".

Along with the Icelandic soldiers themselves, NRK speaks with veteran Stein Ørnhøj who argues that the issue should have been controversial in Iceland: "If Norwegian citizens went to war for other countries, that would make me really uneasy", he explains.

EXCESS SUBSERVIENCE

A positive spin was given to the decline of reading and cultural activities among our youth, extolling the development as a supposedly 'healthier lifestyle'. By a parallel lack of intellectual friction the story of young men joining a foreign army seemed unproblematic when reported by the Icelandic media, which

"It's only a joke, he will dismissively explain when criticised. Literary technique. It's not real. Just role-play. Don't be sour. I'll have my friends rape you. Just kiddin'. Ah, what a laugh."

at first made no mention of death or politics, but merely quoted the part of NRK's interview about the young men's thirst for adventure. A few Arabian nights, boys will be boys, etc.

How do we interpret this? What is this? Perhaps you already noticed this country's 2011 phonebook. Perhaps you didn't. On its cover a half-naked male bodybuilder stands erect in the foreground, decoratively surrounded by younger female gymnasts posing in the background. The man involved, who goes by many names, has made a profession out of being, not merely a celebrity, but the symbol of a particular attitude, expressed by his physique, his writings and TV-appearances. The attitude is a familiar mix of misogyny, anti-intellectualism, classicist veneration of the male physique, cleanliness and an arbitrary exercise of power, under the currently obligatory thin veil of humour and mandatory liberal views. There is nothing liberal about the imagery involved, though, no more than about his TV sketches on 'how to behave around a Negro' or his blog posts about feminists, most of whom are reportedly "disgusting as well as being psychopaths". It's only a joke, he will dismissively explain when criticised. Literary technique. It's not real. Just role-play. Don't be sour. I'll have my friends rape

you. Just kiddin'. Ah, what a laugh. While most writers of my generation have seen little reason to join the Icelandic writers' guild, once an important venue for discussion and critique but in recent years mainly an agency for summer houses and residencies, the proto-fascist cover model of the 2011 phonebook is 'proud to be a member' since 2010. And yes, he is eloquent and has among other things established a rich vocabulary denoting the subtle variations of tan.

Proto-fascist is the precise term for the imagery epitomised on the cover of the phonebook. It is also the correct term for a value-system extolling physical exercise to the point of exterminating book reading and cultural activities, a value-system wherein an interest in sports and love for the wilderness seems a valid premise to join an army-cultivating desire for subservience and authority in such abundance that young men travel abroad to enlist, to murder at command. It is a situation in which schools see no reason, no valid argument, to keep recruiting officers off their premises. This value-system, still more loudly and clearly expressed through imagery than words, is a direct result of the ongoing right-wing hold on media, on cultural institutions and the education system from where representatives of the barbaric tradition continue keep distributing a scorn for critical thought. They may or may not know what they are doing. Regardless, the resulting inanity is not merely irritating; it is dangerous and should be taken seriously. ☹

HAUKUR MÁR HELGASON
HAUKUR MÁR HELGASON

The Green Choice

Premium Quality Vegetarian Food



- Vegetarian dishes
- Vegan dishes
- Bakes and soups
- Wholesome cakes
- Raw food deserts
- Coffee and tea



Grænn Kostur is the perfect downtown choice when you are looking for wholesome, great tasting meals.



1.490 kr.
Vegetarian Dish of the Day

Grænn Kostur | Skólavörðustíg 8
101 Reykjavík | Sími: 552 2028
www.graennkostur.is

Opening hours:
Mon - Sat. 11:30 - 21:00
Sun. 13:00 - 21:00

GEYSIR



An offering of **clothing** &
other **merchandise** that reminds
us of good old **Iceland**

Farmers Market, Geysir Icelandic Wool Sweaters, Feldur,
Vík Þrjónsdóttir, Blik, Fjallraven & Hunter Boots



GEYSIR



PAGE 20

One thing I greatly enjoy about Icelandic punk, something that kind of laid the groundwork for Icelandic pop tradition, but has maybe been thinned out a lot by this 'krútt' bullshit, is the idea that every band had to be distinct from all the others.

-GusGus' Biggi Veira ponders Icelandic music.

PAGE 21

Yeah, you could be an amphetamine junkie. Or like yesterday when I couldn't go to sleep because I love the internet.

-FM Belfast's Lóa ponders her band's new album title.

PAGE 10

"They have demanded a two-year prison term for me. And they think they can just walk up to me and kiss and hug me like it's no thing. 'No, sir', I tell those women who try".

-Former Prime Minister Geir Haarde, who is on trial for negligence and mismanagement, is not fond two-faced MPs. No sir, girl!

PAGE 32

And when we arrived, we were told that the clock had been moved forward by an hour, to Skjaldborg time, but only for the weekend and only in this small town in Iceland that had suddenly become foreign.

-Sure, cinema is all about escapism. But documentaries? And a whole documentary film festival? Whaaaaa?

PAGE 12

Even though many countries in the EU had problems complying with their emission reduction targets for 2010, it should be acknowledged that they are at least trying. That is not the case with Iceland.

-Apparently Iceland's not as environmentally friendly as many of you like to think. Who would have thought it!

Page 16

Jón Sigurðsson worked in an office his whole life. He never lifted a stone in his struggle or wielded a sword—even if his obituary remarked that he was Iceland's pride, sword and shield.

-Meet Iceland's Independence Day hero, "Lazy Jón" Sigurðsson.

River Rafting on Hvítá River from 7.990 ISK

Nature is the Adventure!



Arctic Rafting offers rafting trips on the Hvítá River, only 10 minutes from the Geysir area. The trips start at 7.990 ISK and a variety of combination tours are available every day.

We can also pick you up from your hotel or hostel in Reykjavík. Call us on +354-571-2200, meet us at Laugavegur 11 at Fjallakofinn outdoor store or ask for us at your hotel or nearest tourist information center.



www.arcticrafting.com | info@arcticrafting.is | +354-571-2200 | Visit us at Fjallakofinn outdoor store Laugavegur 11

YOUR VACATION PLANNER IN ICELAND

FREE BOOKING SERVICE

Day Tours
Activities
Car Rental
Last-minute
Accommodation

Whale Watching
The Blue Lagoon
The Golden Circle
Horseback Riding
Volcano Tours

Diving & Snorkeling
Glacier Tours
Hiking
Caving
River Rafting

Kayaking
Super-Jeep Tours
Aerial & Helicopter
Sightseeing
Greenland I., and More!

Official Tourist Information Centre, Adalstræð 2 Tel: +354 570 7700 icelandonline.com

The REYKJAVÍK GRAPEVINE iNFO



Music, Art, Films and Events Listings + Eating, Drinking and Shopping + Map

YOUR ESSENTIAL GUIDE TO LIFE, TRAVEL AND
ENTERTAINMENT IN ICELAND

Issue 8 - 2011

www.grapevine.is



CONVERGE ARE BACK TO EAT YOUR SOUL!

Some might claim that Converge's 2004 concert at Iðnó helped fan the flames of yet another Icelandic hardcore renaissance that was brewing at the time and culminated in milestone releases by bands such as I Adapt, Fighting Shit and Gavin Portland (fun fact: Converge guitarist Kurt Ballou produced Gavin Portland's criminally overlooked 'IV: Hand In Hand With Traitors, Back To Back With Whores'). Others probably don't agree. Regardless, Converge tore the house down and left Reykjavík's extreme music lovers with burst eardrums, gaping mouths and some fresh ideas.

And now they're back! Whoa! Fun times! We have high hopes for their Sódóma appearance, and assuming they didn't start sucking during live over the last seven years, the show should leave no heart untouched, no skull unsplit. Plus their opening bands, For a Minor Rejection and LOGN are pretty great, too.

See you there.

WHERE? Sódóma Reykjavík
WHEN? Monday, June 20, 21:00
HOW MUCH? 2.500 ISK

I DON'T WANT TO GO TO SLEEP EITHER



out NOW!
on cd and lp

FM BELFAST don't want to sleep

★★★★★ (4/5)

Fréttablaðið

Time and time again they deliver – whether it's an awesome album, an energetic stage performance or an interview that divulges the secrets of lead singer Lóa's hairy legs – it's all good stuff.

Gina Louise, *The Line of Best Fit*



this album is now on a special offer in our official webstore www.havari.is

MUSIC

CONCERTS & NIGHTLIFE IN JUNE

PRESCRIBING WITH LOVE MUSIC FOR YOUR LIVE EXPERIENCE

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

17 FRI

- B5**
00:00 Local DJ
- Bakkus**
21:00 *Saytan/Fistfokkers* concert
00:00 DJ Benson is fantastic!
- Barbara**
12:00 Flea Market
- Boston**
22:00 DJ Maggi Lego
- Café Oliver**
22:00 Local DJ
23:00 Girls Just Wanna Have Fun, 3 for 1 cocktails for ladies
- Den Danske Kro**
22:00 Live Music
- Dubliner**
21:00 Pa Trubador
00:30 Hjalmar
- Harpa - Eldborg**
21:00 Helgi Bjórns, from 3500 ISK
- English Pub**
21:30 Live Music
- Esja**
22:00 Xante Cocktail party, DJ Tommi White, DJ Hlynur Mastermix
- Faktóry**
23:30 Cinnamon Festival
- Hressó**
22:00 Dalton, followed by DJ Fúsi
- Hvíta Perlan**
00:00 DJ Mikki "The Fox"
- Kaffibarinn**
23:00 DJ CasaNova
- Sólon**
22:00 Independence Day party - local DJ & party food
- Trúnó**
12:00 Maisól og múffubazarinn
22:30 Surprise DJ
- Vegamót**
22:00 DJ Jonas

18 SAT

- B5**
00:00 Local DJ
- Bakkus**
22:00 Es, Islaja, Jarse and Lau Nau
- Barbara**
00:00 DJ Lingerine
- Boston**
22:00 DJ Unnur Andea
- Café Haiti**
21:00 Jussanam - Brazilian Jazz Sessions, 1000 ISK
- Café Oliver**
22:00 Local DJ
23:00 Girls Just Wanna Have Fun, 3 for 1 cocktails for ladies
- Café Rosenberg**
21:00 Guitar Islancio
- Den Danske Kro**
22:00 Live Music
- Dubliner**
21:00 Kavanagh the trub
00:30 TV Clif
- English Pub**
21:30 Live Music
- Esja**
22:00 DJ Hlynur Mastermix
- Faktóry**
22:00 Waiters & Bellboys - The Noise Revival Orchestra, 1000 ISK
- Harpa - Kaldalón**
17:00 Voces Mascarorum, Icelandic a capella, 3000 ISK
- Hressó**
22:00 Timburmenn, followed by DJ Fúsi
- Hvíta Perlan**
00:00 DJ Mikki "The Fox"
- Kaffibarinn**
23:00 Dad's Weekend - DJ Gisli Galdur & DJ B Ruff
- Nasa**
20:00 GusGus, 2900 ISK
- Sódóma**
23:00 Smashing Pumpkins Tribute, 1000 ISK
- Sólon**
23:00 Local DJ playing RnB and club music
- Trúnó**
22:30 Surprise DJ
- Vegamót**
22:00 DJ Jonas

23
June



Jamie Cullum plays Harpa

Harpa, Eldborg - main hall

June 23

From 3500 ISK

Jazz musician Jamie Cullum is coming to Reykjavík for a highly-anticipated concert at Harpa's Eldborg (let's just say that the tickets were almost sold out at the time of writing this.)

Cullum is well known for his superlative talent on the piano as well as in composing catchy jazz-pop tunes. Since his live gigs are usually open to improvisation and last more than two hours, this is an opportunity that the die-hard fan (and good music lovers as well) shouldn't miss.

Ticket prices go from 3500 to 7900 ISK, quite cheap considering we are talking about an international top-class musician and that crazy price to climb to ye olde Eagles' nest a few weeks ago was as high as 15000 ISK. Damn!

19 SUN

- Barbara**
21:00 Screening of *The Black Swan*
- Café Oliver**
22:00 Salsa Night
- Café Rosenberg**
21:00 Closed
- Den Danske Kro**
22:00 Live Music
- Dubliner**
21:00 Snorky Trub
- English Pub**
21:30 Live Music
- Hallgrímskirkja**
17:00 Björn Steinar Sólbergsson
The director of International Organ Summer, Björn Steinar Sólbergsson, will give a concert on the grand organ. Steinar will play Icelandic and French music, 2500 ISK
- Sólon**
23:00 DJ Tuning Tricks and Tracks, Corona and Tequila Fun Festival
- Trúnó**
14:00 American Heartbreak Day. Special offer on American Heartbreak Icecream

20 MON

- Barbara**
21:00 Showing Season 2 of *The Real L-Word*
- Café Oliver**
22:00 Margarita Night

- Café Rosenberg**
21:00 Amazing Creature
- Den Danske Kro**
22:00 Live Music
- Dubliner**
21:00 Siggí Trubador
- English Pub**
21:30 Live Music
- Faktóry**
19:30 Converge, 2500 ISK

21 TUE

- Café Flóru**
22:00 Ólöf Arnalds, 2000 ISK
- Café Oliver**
22:00 Live Karaoke
- Café Rosenberg**
21:00 Mogadon
- Den Danske Kro**
22:00 Live Music
- Dubliner**
21:00 Ingvar
- English Pub**
21:30 Live Music
- Kaffibarinn**
22:00 HalliValli
- Trúnó**
Stýrmir Night

22 WED

- Barbara**
21:00 Pub Quiz
- Café Oliver**
22:00 Live Music

BIÓ ★ PARADÍS HVERFIGATA 54 :: 101 REYKJAVÍK :: BIOPARADIS.IS
:: arthouse and repertory cinema :: café :: bar

A SUMMER OF ICELANDIC CINEMA

50+ films
from the past
30 years.

English subtitles.

and the
CURRENT
WORLD
CINEMA

SEE LISTINGS IN THIS SECTION
MAY - SEPTEMBER / DAILY

A FULL LIST OF EVERY HAPPY HOUR OFFER IN 101



- B5**
Happy Hour every day from 17-19, beer and wine for 650 ISK.
- Bar 11**
Beers & shots for 450 ISK on Thursdays.
- Bar 46**
Happy Hour every day from 16-19, beers and shots are for 500 ISK.
- Barónspöbb**
Beer is 500 ISK until 19.
- Bjarni Fel**
Mojitos 750 ISK every weekend from 23:00.
- Boston**
Happy Hour every day from 16-20, two for one on beer.
- Celtic Cross**
Thursdays, lager for 500 ISK. Inquire about the malt beer punchcards.
- Den Danske Kro**
Happy Hour every day from 16-19, two for one. Shots for 500 ISK every Monday.
- Dillon**
Happy Hour every day from 16-20, two for one.
- Dubliners**
Happy Hour every day from 15-20, two for one Polar Beers, beer and shot for 1000 ISK.
- Faktorý**
Happy Hour every day from 17-20, large Egils Gull 500 ISK.
- Hotel 101 Bar**
Happy Hour is daily from 17-19, all drinks are 50% off.
- Hótel Holt Gallery Bar**
Happy Hour every day from 16-19, beer and wine 50% off. Cocktail of the day is 50% off.
- Íslenski Barinn**
Every day, beer of the day for 650 ISK.
- Kaffibarinn**
Red wine special on Wednesday evenings at 600 ISK a glass.
- Nýlenduvörverzlun Hemma & Valda**
Happy Hour every day from 16-20, Viking Beers for 550 ISK.
- Óliver**
Happy hour every day from 23-01.
- Obla Di Obla Da**
Happy Hour every day from 12-20, 500 ISK beers, 600 ISK shots and 800 ISK single + mixer
- Prikið**
Happy hour every day from 17-19, large beer 400 ISK. Buy four large beers, get free nachos.
- Trúnó**
Happy hour every day from 16-20, all beer and wine 500 ISK.
- Stofan**
Refills on beer 600 isk all day
- Pingholt bar (Center Hotel Pingholt)**
Happy Hour every day from 17-19 as of June 1 (currently every Friday and Saturday), all drinks are half off.

RUN A 101 REYKJAVÍK BAR? IS YOUR 'HAPPY HOUR' MISSING? HAVE THE PRICES CHANGED? DROP US A LINE AND WE WILL AMEND.

- Café Rosenberg**
21:00 Blússveit Pollyjar & Strákarnir
Hans Sævars
- Den Danske Kro**
22:00 Live Music
- Dubliner**
21:00 Tryggvi Trubador
- English Pub**
21:30 Live Music
- Hólakirkja/Fellakirkja**
20:00 Sandström/Gunnarsson
The jazz duo plays Swedish and Icelandic folk songs, with sparkles of jazz harmonic and original compositions, 1500 ISK
- Hallgrímskirkja**
12:00 Schola cantorum
Concert by the celebrated chamber choir Schola Cantorum Reykjavicensis, 1500 ISK
- Harpa-Kaldalón**
17:00 Voces Masculorum, Icelandic a

- capella, 3000 ISK
- Hressó**
22:00 Afró-Kúba Band
- Hvíta Perlan**
21:00 Sleepless in Reykjavík Concert
- Kaffibarinn**
22:00 Hellert
- Salurinn, Kopavogur**
22:00 Minningar - Þuríður Sigurðardóttir & Vanir Menn, 3500 ISK
- Sódóma**
21:00 Endless Dark+Special guests, 1000 ISK

23 THU

- B5**
00:00 Local DJ
- Barbara**
00:00 DJ Unnur Andrea

- Boston**
22:00 DJ Andrea J
- Café Oliver**
22:00 Ingó Verðurguð
- Café Rosenberg**
21:00 Brothar Grass
- Den Danske Kro**
22:00 Live Music
- Dubliner**
20:00 Irish session
22:00 Andy García
- English Pub**
21:30 Live Music
- Esja**
22:00 Tapas & White wine day
- Gerðuberg**
12:15 Jazz at noon - The Tiny Trio, 1000 ISK
- Hallgrímskirkja**
12:00 Laszlo Petö
The organist of the church in Stykkishólmur, will be playing the grand Klais-organ, 1500 ISK
- Harpa, Eldborg**
21:00 Jamie Cullum, from 3500 ISK
- Hressó**
22:00 Timburmenn
- Hvíta Perlan**
22:00 Wireless GOGOyoko:
unplugged concert, 1500 - 2500 ISK
- Kaffibarinn**
21:00 HúsDJús - Yamaha
- Sódóma**
21:00 Ferlegheit, Elberg and The Vintage Caravan, 1000 ISK



THOSE CRAZY VIKINGS KEEP TALKING ICELAND

At a Viking Bar near you!

Vikingakráin

Every night at 20:00

2200 ISK

'Let's Talk Iceland' invites you to join seven Vikings on a zany journey through time to find out more about Iceland's history. It's a show where the audience is not only invited to ask questions when something is unclear, but also to participate in some of the action! It promises to take the audience on an "unforgettable journey" starting at the settlement era of Iceland, spanning all the way to present day.

With a fancy new Viking Bar in town (Vikingakráin), the show has found a new home. Vikingakráin is a restaurant/bar that is set up to represent the Viking times and cuisine. Thus, it was a natural move for the Let's Talk Iceland Comedy crew to shimmy on over. So if you wanna catch some crazy ol' Vikings in action at a Viking themed restaurant, make sure you head on over.

laUNDROMAT CHAMPAGNE



15.555 kr.

MOËT & CHANDON
CHAMPAGNE

(THE REAL STUFF)

F*CK THE CRISIS!

www.thelaundromatcafe.com

laUNDROMAT

GO AHEAD & BREASTFEED

WE LIKE
BOTH
BABIES
AND BOOBS!

www.thelaundromatcafe.com



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.



1919
RESTAURANT
AND LOUNGE

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

Shark Lamb Whale Puffin Wild-game
and ALL the icelandic beers

Traditional Icelandic cooking with a modern flair.



Íslenski barinn
Behind the times and proud of it!

Tel 578 2020
www.icelandicbar.is
Pósthússtræti 9 101 Reykjavík

KAFFI ZIMSEN

BEST FRIENDS DAY MONDAYS

LARGE DRAFT 3.50 €

Hafnarstræti 18 - 517 4988 - www.kaffizimsen.is




National Museum of Iceland

OPENING HOURS:
Summer (May 1st – September 15th)
Daily 10–17
Winter (September 16th – April 30th)
Daily except Mondays 11–17



Suðurgata 41 • 101 Reykjavík • Tel. +354 530-2200 • www.natmus.is



Reykjavik Museum of Photography

30th Anniversary 2011
Exhibitions all year round
ADMISSION FREE

30 LJÓSMYNDASAFN REYKJAVÍKUR
Reykjavik Museum of Photography
1981–2011

GRÓFARHÚS 6th floor
Tryggvagata 15, 101 Reykjavík
Opening hours:
12–19 mon–fri, 13–17 weekends
www.photomuseum.is

MUSIC

CONCERTS & NIGHTLIFE IN JUNE



17 June

Cinnamon Faktory
Celebrate Independence Day The Sweet Way!
June 17, 23:30
Faktory
Free

This Independence Day, the Cinnamon Bunch is putting on yet another dance party, this time to celebrate the 200th birthday of Iceland's national hero, Jón Sigurðsson. The event is 100 percent, bona fide free! The advertisements claim, "gratuitous patriotism for everyone." Cinnamon: good on everything, especially dancing, and especially national pride.

Trúnó
22:30 DJ Vala
Vegamót
22:00 DJ Símon
Viðey island
20:00 Svavar Knútur and Kristjana Stefans concert, 3000 ISK

24 FRI

B5
00:00 Local DJ
Barbara
Led Jungle Annual Celebration
01:00 DJ Dramatik
Boston
22:00 DJ Biggi Maus
Café Oliver
22:00 Local DJ
23:00 Girls Just Wanna Have Fun, 3 for 1 cocktails for ladies
Café Rosenberg
22:00 Brother Grass
Den Danske Kro
22:00 Live Music
Dubliner
21:00 The Trubador
00:30 HG Band
English Pub
21:30 Live Music
Esja
22:00 DJ Hlynur Mastermix
Hressó
20:30 Big Music Day 2011 "Fête de la Musique"
22:00 Kóktel Kvartett Jakobs Smára, followed by DJ Elli

Hvíta Perlan
00:00 DJ Aki
Kaffibarinn
23:00 Alfons X
Sódóma
23:00 Metallica Tribute, 1000 ISK
Sólon
23:00 DJ Rikki G

Trúnó
22:30 Surprise DJ
Vegamót
22:00 DJ Hannes

25 SAT

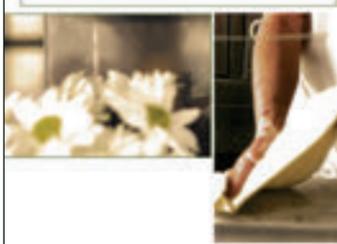
B5
00:00 Local DJ
Barbara
00:00 DJ Manny
Boston
22:00 DJ Kari
Café Haiti
21:00 Jussanam - Brazilian Jazz Sessions, 1000 ISK
Café Oliver
22:00 Local DJ
23:00 Girls Just Wanna Have Fun, 3 for 1 cocktails for ladies
Café Rosenberg
22:00 KK
Den Danske Kro
22:00 Live Music
Dubliner
21:00 The Trubador
00:30 HG Band
English Pub
21:30 Live Music

Esja
22:00 DJ Hlynur Mastermix
Hallgrímskirkja
12:00 Pétur Sakari
The 19 year old Pétur Sakari, one of Finland's youngest and foremost organists, will play the grand organ, 1500 ISK
Hressó
22:00 Hljómsveitin Silfur, followed by DJ Elli
Hvíta Perlan
00:00 DJ Aki
Kaffibarinn
23:00 Dansa Meira - Már & Nielsen
Sódóma
00:00 Sólstafir & Dimma, 1000 ISK
Sólon
23:00 DJ Rikki G
Trúnó
22:30 DJ Óli
Vegamót
22:00 DJ Jónas

26 SUN

Barbara
21:00 Queer Movie Night
Café Oliver
22:00 Salsa Night
Café Rosenberg
21:00 Heather Millard
Den Danske Kro
22:00 Live Music
Dubliner
21:00 Siggí Trub

HORNIÐ
Restauranter • Pizzeria



Hornið opened in 1979 was the first restaurant of its kind in Iceland, a restaurant with a true Italian atmosphere. Hornið is known for good food made out of fresh raw materials, good pizzas baked in front of the guests, good coffee and comfortable service.

Lunch offers every day.
Open every day from 11:00 to 23:30
For reservations call 551-3340



Always cheeses and red wine offer on Wednesday evenings

www.facebook.com/kaffibarinn

No photographing allowed



MUSIC

CONCERTS & NIGHTLIFE IN JUNE

English Pub

21:30 Live Music

Hallgrímskirkja

17:00 Pétur Sakari

The 19 year old Pétur Sakari, one of Finland's youngest and foremost organists, will play the grand organ, 2500 ISK

Trúnó

20:00 Cheese Tasting Night

27 MON

Barbara

21:00 Screening of *The Real L-Word* season 2

Café Oliver

22:00 Margarita Night

Café Rosenberg

21:00 Live music

Den Danske Kro

22:00 Live Music

Dubliner

21:00 Siggí Trub

English Pub

21:30 Live Music

28 TUE

Café Oliver

22:00 Live Karaoke

Café Rosenberg

21:00 5 í Tangó

Den Danske Kro

22:00 Live Music

Dubliner

21:00 Ingvar Trub

English Pub

21:30 Live Music

Eldbofg

21:00 *Afrocubism*, from 3500 ISK

NASA

22:00 *Caribou*, 3800 ISK

Trúnó

20:00 Stýrmir Night

29 WED

Barbara

21:00 Pub Quiz



A Festival For Lovers Of Classical Music

Ísafjörður Music School & Rögnvaldur Ólafsson's Art School

June 21 - June 26

Festival Pass, 7.500 ISK; Concert Pass, 5.500; Lunch Concerts, Free; Matinee Concerts, 500 ISK

Every summer, a group of aspiring classical musicians travel to Ísafjörður to enrol in master's courses at Við Djúpið. At the same time Við Djúpið puts on a music festival with concerts for everyone else to enjoy. Choose one concert, choose two, or choose them all.

Ísafjörður, population 3.000, is considered the capital of Iceland's remote Westfjord region. Though it is especially well known for being a fishing village, it is also known for its vibrant music life. In fact, the first music school in the country did not open in Reykjavík, but in Ísafjörður. The majestic place is definitely worth the visit, and why not check out a concert or two while you're there? For more information about the festival, visit www.viddjupid.is.

Music & Entertainment | Venue finder

Amsterdam Hafnarstræti 5 D4	Dillon Laugavegur 30 F7	Næsti Bar Ingólfstræti 1A E5
Austur Austurstræti 7 E4	Dubliner Hafnarstræti 4 D4	Ótíver Laugavegur 20A F5
B5 Bankastræti 5 E4	Esja Austurstræti 16 E4	Ólstofan Vegamótastígur F5
Babalú Skólavörðustígur 22 F5	English Pub Austurstræti 12 E4	Prikið Bankastræti E5
Bakkus Tryggvagata 22 D4	Faktorý Smiðjustígur 6 E5	Rósenberg Klapparstígur 25 E6
Bar 11 Hverfisgötu 18 E5	Ólsmiðjan Lækjargata 10 E4	Sódóma Reykjavík Tryggvagata 22 D3
Barbara Laugavegur 22 F5	Hressó Austurstræti 20 E4	Sólón Bankastræti 7A E5
Bjarni Fel Austurstræti 20 E4	Bankinn Hverfisgata 20 E5	Thorvaldsen Austurstræti 8 E4
Boston Laugavegur 28b F6	Kaffi Zimsen Hafnarstræti 18 D4	Trúnó Laugavegur 22 F5
Café Paris Austurstræti 14 E4	Kaffibarinn Bergstraðastræti 1 E5	Vegamót Vegamótastígur 4 F6
Celtic Cross Hverfisgata 26 E5	NASA Þorvaldsenstræti 2 E3	Vestur Tryggvagata 20 D3
Den Danske Kro Ingólfstræti 3 F5	Nýlenduúruverzlun Hemma & Valda Laugavegur 21 F5	

Grapevine Top 6 Most Played tracks during the making of this issue

- 1 Converge**
Dark Horse
- 2 A-Ha**
Hunting High And Low
- 3 Fucked Up**
Turn The Season
- 4 Steve Reich**
DOUBLE SEXTET MOVEMENT 3: FAST
- 5 Squarepusher**
My Red Hot Car
- 6 George Michael**
Fastlove

New bar menu

- Rib-eye mini burgers
- Duck confit dumplings
- Tandoori tiger prawns
- Pizza with yellow fin tuna
- Lobster spring rolls

... warm and casual.

Happy hour

2 for 1 offers daily from 4-7 pm

Viking beer · white & red wine
Bombay sapphire · cocktail of the day



Whale Watching

Authentic Adventure
Modified Icelandic Fishingboat



Included:
Seafood soup
and warm
Bread rolls

Sjósigling

Reykjavik Old Harbour

Phone +354 562 5700
Mobile +354 863 5700
www.sjosigling.is - info@sjosigling.is

ISK 7.500
With Free access to
Icelandic Bird Museum

Children 7-15* ISK 3.500
Children 0-6* FREE
*Children with adults

Over
101
Birds!

Icelandic BIRD MUSEUM



Eagle Café

Restaurant

Reykjavik Old Harbour

ISK 1.000
Free for those who go
Whale Watching with Sjósigling

Children 7-15* ISK 500
Children 0-6* FREE
*Children with adults



Hótel Holt · Bergstaðastræti 37 · 101 Reykjavík · 552 5700 · gallery@holt.is · www.holt.is

Experience Icelandic Art and Design

From Reykjavík

ROUTE 40
Art&Design



Kópavogur Art Museum-Gerðarsafn
Hamraborg 4, Kópavogur
Tel. +354 570 0440
Open every day 11-17 except Mondays
www.gerdarsafn.is



Hönnunarsafn Íslands Museum of Design and Applied Art
Garðatorg 1, Garðabær
Tel. +354 512 1525
Open every day 12-17 except Mondays
www.honnunarsafn.is



Hafnarborg The Hafnarfjörður Centre of Culture and Fine Art
Strandgata 34, Hafnarfjörður
Tel. +354 585 5790
Open every day 12-17 Thursdays 11-21
Closed on Tuesdays
www.hafnarborg.is

Bus nr. 1 runs Route 40

To the Blue Lagoon

Den Danske Kro

• Mondays •
Shot's night - all shots ISK 400.-

• Tuesdays •
Live music and Beer Bingo night

• Wednesdays •
POP-QUIZ night (special offer on drinks) & Live music

• Thursdays •
Live Music / Scandinavian nights

• Fridays •
Live music / Sing-along nights

• Saturdays •
Live music / Sing-along nights

• Sundays •
Hangover & Live music night Really good prices on drinks



Ingólfsstræti 3 · 101 · Reykjavík
www.danske.is

MUSIC

CONCERTS & NIGHTLIFE IN JUNE

Café Oliver
22:00 Live Music

Café Rosenberg
21:00 Böddi

Den Danske Kro
22:00 Live Music

Dubliner
21:00 Tryggvi Trub

English Pub
21:30 Live Music

Gerðuberg
22:00 French tones - Trio Vadims Fyodorovs, 1500 ISK

Hallgrímskirkja
12:00 Schola cantorum
Concert by the celebrated chamber choir Schola Cantorum Reykjavicensis, 1500 ISK

Hressó
22:00 Afró-Kúba Band

Hvíta Perlan
22:00 Sleepless in Reykjavik concert

Kaffibarinn
22:00 Alfons X

30 THU

B5
00:00 Local DJ

Barbara
21:00 DJ Dramatik

Boston
22:00 DJ KGB

Café Oliver
22:00 Ingó Verðurguð

Café Rosenberg
21:00 Sting Tribute

Den Danske Kro
22:00 Live Music

Dubliner
20:00 Irish Session
22:00 Ingvar Trubador

English Pub
21:30 Live Music

Hallgrímskirkja
12:00 Tómas Guðni Eggertsson & Davíð Þór Jónsson
Works by J.S. Bach on the grand Klais-organ and the Bösendorfer grand piano, 1500 ISK

Hressó
22:00 Timburmenn

Hvíta Perlan
21:00 DJ Mikki "The fox"

Kaffibarinn
21:00 HúsDJús - President Bongo

Trúnó
22:30 Surprise DJ

ONGOING

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

Iðnó
20:00 Cellophane Comedy show
Thursdays

Grapevine events June

24 Hemmi og Valdi
🕒 9 pm
Grapevine Grassroots #29
FREE CONCERT

Now offering catering service!

sushibarinn
Laugavegur 2 · 101 Reykjavík tel: 552 4444

Opent:
Mondays-Saturdays 11:30-22:30
Sundays 16:00-22:00

Music | Review



The Noise Revival Orchestra

'Songs of Forgiveness EP'

www.myspace.com/thenoiserevival

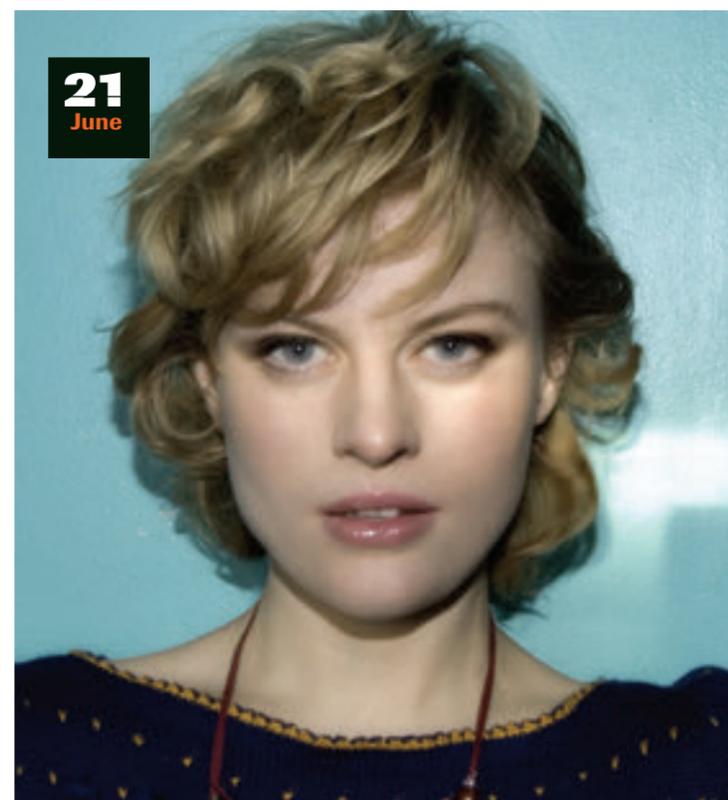
Fun, jovial, care-free

The Noise Revival Orchestra seem to have moved away from their experimental orchestral work in the EP 'Songs Of Forgiveness'. Perhaps, in an attempt to gain a more mainstream fan base, the band has progressed

towards a more pop inspired place, with repeating hooks such as the track 'Crushin On You'. That said, the EP as a whole has a "semi-professional" feel to it, the sound not as refined as some listeners may like. This may stem from the task of making eight different instruments weave together to perfection. However, the tracks are fun to listen to, connecting the diverse instruments decently, augmented wonderfully by Nathan Felix's Strummer-esque vocals. The EP has a jovial, care free sound to it as well, giving it the ability to be an album anyone can listen to when they're having an off day, and sure to make a fantastic mood even better.

- S. Alessio Tummolillo

If you're into an eight-piece band with a poppy feel and '70s/'80s punk band vocals, The Noise Revival Orchestra will playing a show at Faktörý on June 18.



The peaceful sounds of Ólöf Arnalds

An event you'll bend over backwards to attend!

June 21

Café Flóra

2000 ISK

Ólöf Arnalds is one of those female singers who makes a strong connection with her audience. 'Innundir Skinni', her last album, sounds like an intimate solitude in which the woman rests gently while the child sleeps in the crib. Ólöf has unravelled her emotions, breaking the linguistic veil to reach to your heart intact. Although most of her songs are in Icelandic, the meaning transcends to the surface. Her latest album has received critical acclaim since it was released and this show is a great chance to discover the magical sounds of Ólöf.

Now offering catering service!

FREE CONCERT
Every Thursday

Tómas Tómasson
Eðvarð Lárusson
Magnús Einarsson

THE BEATLES

Fimmtudaga kl 22:00 og frítt inn

OB-LA-DI OB-LA-DA

Happy Hour Every Day from 12 - 20

ART GALLERIES & MUSEUMS IN JUNE

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
Send us your listings: listings@grapevine.is

OPENINGS

Spark Design Space

June 17

Thread

On Independence Day, Spark will be presenting two generations of jewellery makers

Runs until September 1

ONGOING

The Culture House

Medieval Manuscripts - Eddas and Sagas

Some of Iceland's medieval manuscripts on display. Open guided tour in English on Mondays & Fridays at 15:00

On permanent view

Child of Hope - Youth and Jón Sigurðsson

Exploring the life of Icelandic national hero, Jón Sigurðsson, made especially accessible to children, families, and school groups

Flora Islandica

The publication Flora Islandica by Eggert Pétursson, with 271 real-size drawing of flowers in Icelandic nature, is on display

The Library Room

The old reading room of the National Library. Displaying books of Icelandic cultural history dating from the 16th century to today. Works include oldest published versions of the Sagas, Eddic Poems, and more

On permanent view

Gallerí Ágúst

God Appeared to Me

Painter and filmmaker Magnus Helgason exhibits his new paintings

Runs until June 18

Gallerí Fold

Marta Rosolska Photography

Runs until November 14

Gerðuberg

Christmas is coming...

An exhibition of Christmas cards, trees, decorations, etc., in the Collectors' corner

Runs until June 30

Connected

Exhibition about the connection between people and technology

Runs until June 24

'Þorablót'

Aðalheiður S. Eysteinsdóttir recreates the scene in this traditional Icelandic late-winter feast which takes its name from the Old Norse month of Þorri (mid-February to mid-March) and centres on food prepared in the old style

Runs until June 19

Gagn og gaman

Exhibition of works produced by children who took part in 'Gagn og gaman' craft and activity courses in the period 1988-2004

Runs until 28 August



Summer Solstice Yoga Festival 2011

An event you'll bend over backwards to attend!

June 18 - 22

Árskógar, Eyjafjörður

1 day: 15.000 ISK, 2 days: 22.000 ISK, 3 Days: 30.000 ISK, 4 days: 35.000 ISK.

June 21 is the longest day of the year for those of us in the Northern Hemisphere. To celebrate this elongated day, there are all sorts of events around the world. But, what better place to revel in the exultations than a place known for its 'Midnight sun'? That's exactly what a group of yoga enthusiasts were thinking when they created the Kundalini Yoga Festival at Árskógar in Eyjafjörður (near Akureyri). The event takes place from June 18 to June 22, with midnight yoga commencing at 23:30 on June 21.

Whether you're a yoga enthusiast or you just want to enjoy the beautiful nature of Eyjafjörður, the Kundalini Yoga Festival sounds like just the place for you! And hey guess what, meals and accommodation are included in the price! More information can be found at: www.sumarsolstodur.123.is.

Wanted: Your Coastal Culture Stories

Sail Húsavík, the Nordic Coastal Culture Festival—which will be held between July 16 and July 23 this summer—is collecting stories from people around the country about their experience, knowhow and expertise regarding everything connected to the sea.

The concept 'costal culture' is somewhat new to Icelanders, as it is so closely integrated into the common cultural heritage. A hundred and fifty years ago Icelanders lived as either farmers or Þshermen. The homes of Þshermen were called 'þurabúðir' ("dry towns") as they did not produce any milk. Collecting eiderdown and eggs, seasonal Þshing, hunting seabirds, and assisting young pufÞns—it's all part of our costal cultural heritage, a culture that Sail Húsavík wants to celebrate.

Costal culture is well known in the other Nordic countries, and Þshermen, craftspeople and other experts from around the Nordic countries will come to Húsavík to show off craftsmanship connected to the coast and to talk about superstitions and traditions so integrated into the culture that people accept them as a given. If you have stories, short and long, poetry, old sayings or superstitions that you think bring costal culture to life, please email thuridur@nordice.is.

Hafnarborg, Hafnarfjörður

Ingenuity

Exhibit by Einar Thorsteinn

Runs until June 19

Life and Art Without Boundaries -

JBK Ransu and Guðrún Bergsdóttir

Part of the Art Without Boundaries Festival, presenting the art of people with disabilities and promoting collaboration between disabled and non disabled artist

Runs until June 19

Hönnunarsafn

Our Objects - from the Museum's Collection

Objects acquired by the Museum since its opening in 1998 will be put on display in the exhibition area. Objects such as Icelandic and foreign furnitures, graphic design, textiles, ceramics, and glass, to name a few

Runs until october 16

i8

Kristján Gudmundsson

Gudmundsson is an artist who uses very bare, basic drawings to challenge assumptions of what drawings actually are

Icelandic Printmakers Association

India - the abstract above the abstract

An exhibition of Gréta Mjöll's work. All the pieces on display are new works. Free Admission

Open Thursday - Sunday, 14:00 - 18:00. Runs until June 19

Kling & Bang

Silent Room, Silver Room

Collection of Claus Carstensen's newest mixed media painting

Runs until June 26

Knitting Iceland

Come and knit at Laugavegur 25, 3rd floor. Every Thursday, 14:00 - 18:00

On permanent view

The Living Art Museum

Carl Boutard

An exhibition displaying Boutard's work, which is closely related to nature, science and language

Runs until July 3

The Lost Horse Gallery, Hverfisgötu 71

Art listings continue after center spread ...

WHALE WATCHING EXPRESS



„That was marvellous! We saw many whales and dolphins. Fantastic.“
-Samantha

Make the most of your day!

Spend more time whale watching and less time waiting.



Takes only 2-2½ hours

We offer free pick-up in the Reykjavik area!

WHALE WATCHING TOURS

APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEPT	OKT
10:00	10:00	10:00	10:00	10:00	10:00	10:00
	14:00	14:00	14:00	14:00	14:00	
		17:00	17:00	17:00		
15 JUL - 15 AUG		20:00	20:00			

Say the keyword and save 10% of your whale watching adventure: **Grapevine Special Offer.**



PUFFIN WATCHING

The Puffin Express adventure is an inexpensive and charming option for everyone.

Five times daily: 8:30, 10:30, 12:30, 14:30 and 16:30.

Sea Angling Trips also available daily at 18:00.



Only 20 Euros!

HOW TO BOOK?
Call us +354 892 0099 or book online specialtours.is

BOSTON BAR
LAUGAVEGUR 28B

TEL: 517 7816

OPENING HOURS:
MONDAY-THURSDAY 16-01
FRIDAY-SATURDAY 16-03
SUNDAY 19-01

DJ'S AND/OR LIVE MUSIC FROM THURSDAY TO SATURDAY

SMALL KITCHEN:
ENJOY A SNACK OR LIGHT MEAL ON THE SUNNY TERRACE OR AT YOUR TABLE

ABOVE THE SECOND HAND SHOP




BOSTON
BAR - SUNNY TERRACE

BJARNI FEL



Operating in one of the oldest houses downtown - new & fresh on the block but with plenty of soul & character!

Austurstræti 20
101 Reykjavík

BJARNI FEL



FEEL WELCOME

At the **SEAFOOD CELLAR RESTAURANT** we place New Nordic kitchen in the forefront. We are a seasonal restaurant that worships everything that Icelandic nature brings us as well as getting a few things from Scandinavia. We only use the freshest and the best nature brings us. We, and our ambitious, productive friends collect and produce the raw materials and bring it home. We serve it with love and respect for the ingredients and the environment around us.

We do it our way.



Aðalstræti 2 / 101 Reykjavík / tel. 511 1212 / sjavarkjallarinn.is

Cleanliness is next to godliness
"John Wesley 1778"



www.thelaundromatcafe.com

MAP

Places We Like

1 Sægreifinn

Geirsgötu 8

Down by the Reykjavík harbour, Sægreifinn fish shop and restaurant is a pretty unique establishment. The menu features various fish dishes (including most of the "crazy Icelandic food" you'll want to tell your friends you had) and a rich portion of some pretty good lobster soup. Good food and welcoming service make this place a must-try.

2 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.

3 English 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!

4 Hamborgarabúllan

Geirsgata 1

Considered by some to be the best real hamburger in Reykjavík, "Bullán" does serve some mysteriously delicious burgers, guaranteed to take the edge off any hangover.

5 Boston

Laugavegur 28

Like an older sibling to the fabled (now deceased) Sirkús, Boston is a warm and mellow second-floor bar on Laugavegur that plays host to the arty party crowd. The baroque wall dressings and deep, rich coloured décor make this bar feel pretty swank, but Boston also serves up some reasonably priced food earlier in the evening, so it's not too swank.

6 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

7 Kaffibarinn

Bergstaðastræti 1

Weekends are somewhat overrated at Kaf-barinn if you ask me. Don't get me wrong, they can be brilliant if you're completely pissed, the DJ is fresh and the crowd is full-blooded, still the weekdays are better. It doesn't matter when you pop in, you're always treated like a pal rather than a customer, and you should always expect get caught in some shenanigan, whether it's a crazy Monday bender or a wacko Tuesday... well... bender.



8 Litla Jólábúðin

Laugavegur 8

Christmas store run year round. Established in a backyard on the little residential street of Grundarstígur in 2002, Litla Jólábúðin moved to Laugavegur a few years ago, but maintains a mom-and-pop store kind of feeling. Akureyri has Jólagarðurinn, Reykjavík has Jólábúðin.

14 Mai Thai

Laugavegur 118

Located across from Hlemmur Bus Station, Mai Thai imports and sells all sorts of products from South East Asia, particularly Thailand and the Philippines. Depending on the day, you might find fresh coriander, mint, chillies, bean sprouts, exotic fruits such as Durian, Carambola or Coconut, as well as year round products such as frozen spring rolls, various kinds of rice sold in bulk bags, sauces and spices galore, egg and rice noodles, Asian snacks, clothes and other knick-knacks. In short, a wide array of what are still considered rare and exotic treats in Reykjavík.

9 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.

15 Babalú

Skólavörðustígur 22

Located on the second-floor of a quirky little building on Skólavörðustígur, Babalú is an inviting, quaint and cosy café serving up a selection of tea, coffee and hot chocolate along with delicious baked goods and light meals. Food and drink aside, Babalú boasts colourfully decorated and super-comfortable surroundings and a genuinely friendly and likeable staff.

10 Núðluhúsið

Laugavegur 59

Although hardly breaking new ground in Thai cuisine, Núðluhúsið is a safe bet for a cheap, generously portioned, tasty enough meal. You can expect fresh ingredients and fast, courteous service. So if you're wondering which of the many Thai restaurants to choose from on a low budget, we recommend Núðluhúsið.

16 Habibi

Hafnarstræti 18

This small restaurant offers up a concise menu of delicious Arabic cuisine, from shawarma to kebabs and falafels. The staff is really friendly and accommodating of requests to kick up the spiciness or tone it down if the customer so desires. Habibi seriously hits the spot after hours of partying (or any other time of day) so it's convenient that the place is open until 6 a.m. Friday and Saturday.

Café Loki in front of Hallgrímskirkja



Enjoy some solid homemade Icelandic food

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



For a map of outside downtown Reykjavik visit www.grapevine.is or the Icelandic phonebook website www.ja.is

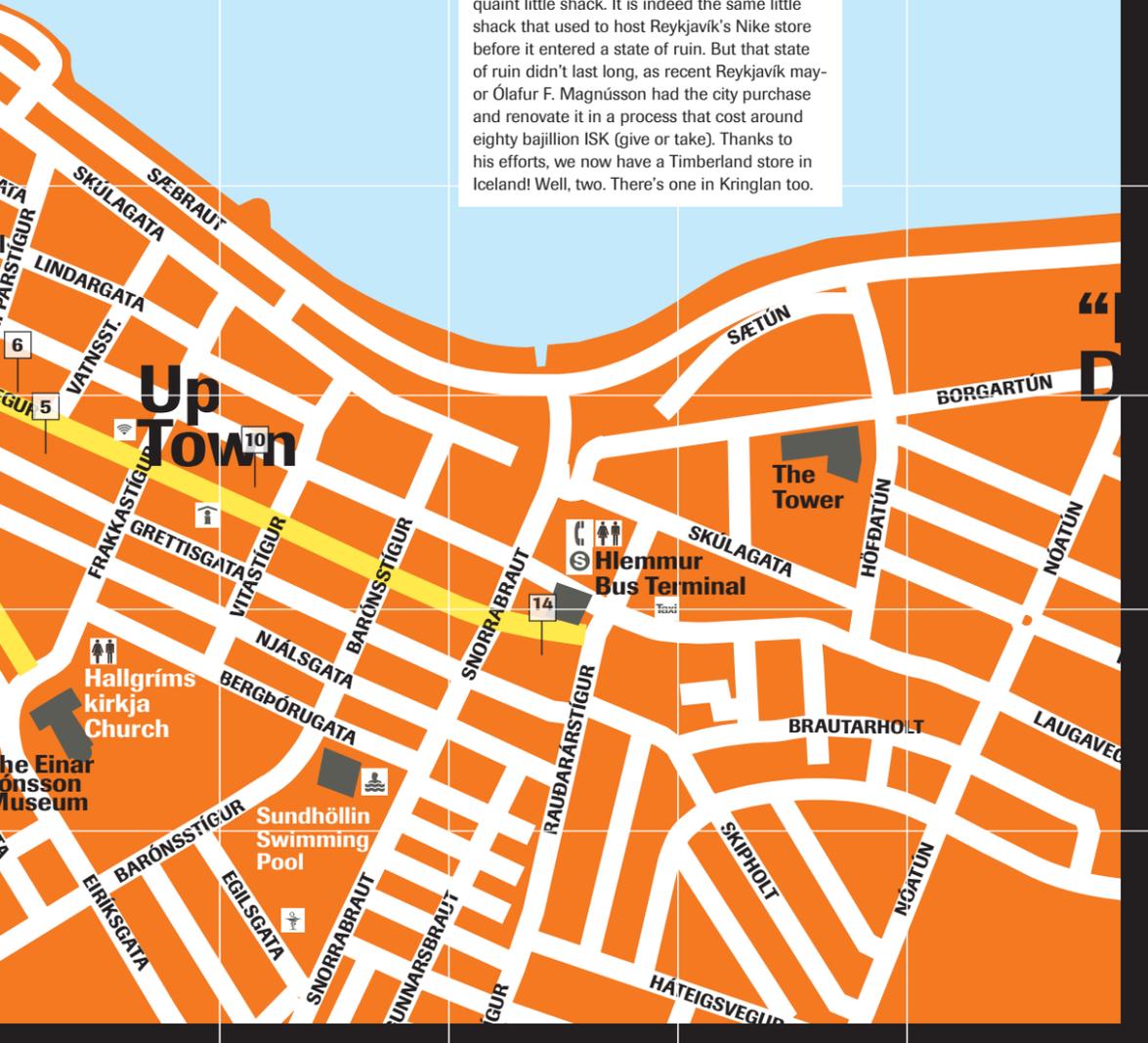
If you have an iPhone, check out the cool Locatify app in the AppStore. It's got a FREE guided audio tour of the downtown area, courtesy of your pals at Grapevine.

NEW IN TOWN

Timberland
Laugavegur 6



Timberland brand hiking boots, outdoor clothing and other products for the active outdoors-y type have finally arrived on Laugavegur. The 'classic Timberland boot' (rappers call them 'Timbos') takes the design of construction worker boots and pads them with materials so fancy that you most definitely don't want to be doing any construction work while wearing them. The new store is located at Laugavegur 6, in a quaint little shack. It is indeed the same little shack that used to host Reykjavik's Nike store before it entered a state of ruin. But that state of ruin didn't last long, as recent Reykjavik mayor Ólafur F. Magnússon had the city purchase and renovate it in a process that cost around eighty bajillion ISK (give or take). Thanks to his efforts, we now have a Timberland store in Iceland! Well, two. There's one in Kringlan too.



11 Café Óliver
Laugavegur 20a
If you like trendy party-types who dance like crazy to a lively mix of music where glamour is all that counts, the stylish Óliver is the nightclub for you. Check out Óliver's live karaoke nights on Tuesdays. If you don't suffer from stage fright you can go on stage and sing your favourite song accompanied by the local troubadour.

12 Kaffifélagið
Skólavörðustíg 10
Kaffifélagið has been a Grapevine favourite since they opened on Skólavörðustígur a couple of years back. The small coffeehouse always delivers an excellent cup of Italian-style coffee, and downtown regulars can spring for a clip-off coffee card to save on each purchase.

13 OSUSHI
Lækjargata 2a
Great place to satisfy your craving for raw fish and vinegar rice. The selection on 'the train' is wide and varied and the atmosphere is relaxed. Also, the colour-coded plates make it easy to keep tabs on your budget while scarfing down your maki and nigiri.

17 Austur
Austurstræti 7
Sleek and shiny, this new restaurant and bar is a straight-up boutique hot spot for stylish kids and trendy professionals alike. Appropriate for formal business meetings but casual enough for the roll-out-bed-at-5pm crowd, they serve up ample, satisfying, modern dishes at reasonable prices. This is also one of the rare places to get a full breakfast all day long! It's really fucking good too.

18 Kolaportið
Tryggvagata 19
Reykjavik'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.

19 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".



A DAY IN THE LIFE

Guðmundur Jörundsson

What's up, Guðmundur?
I graduated last weekend in fashion design from the Iceland Academy of Arts, which was pretty nice. Now I'm working on a new men's fashion line for both Herrafataverzlun Kormáks & Skjaldar and GK Reykjavík. Next week we'll film a new fashion/music video to the GusGus song, 'Over'. My colleagues at Narvi Creative Studio are co-producing it with GusGus and my graduation fashion line will be used. Otherwise I try to go fishing when I can.

EARLY MORNING >
On the rare occasion that I don't go straight to work in the morning, I stop by Kaffismiðjan (Kárástígur 1). It's on my way and it's a great place to hang out. I expect to do more of that this winter after I've populated the world.

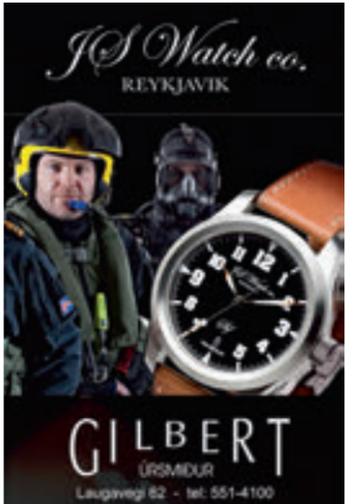
LUNCH >
I never go anywhere but Dill (Sturlugata 5) for lunch. Well, sometimes I go to Grillið (Hotel Saga, Hagatorg).

MID-DAY >
There's nothing better than sitting in a hot tub at either Sundhöll Reykjavíkur (Barónstígur) or the Seltjarnarnes swimming pool (Suðurströnd). Although I hate nothing more than the Vesturbæjarlaug swimming pool (Hofsvallagata).

AFTERNOON >
It's refreshing to have a drink at Ölstofa Kormáks & Skjaldar (Vegamótastígur 4) after a long workday. That's very refreshing.

HEAT OF THE NIGHT >
I most enjoy spending the evenings at friend's houses in good company. If I go to a bar, it's usually Bakkus (Tryggvagata 22), at least these days.

TAX FREE
WORLDWIDE
Ask for a Tax free form and save up to 15%



SHALIMAR
PAKISTANI & INDIAN RESTAURANT/TAKE AWAY
ICELANDIC Fish, Prawns, Lamb & Chicken in original PAKISTANI & INDIAN curries, TANDOORI grill, NAN breads, Kebabs, Samosas, Pakoras VEGETARIAN dishes PUNJABI LUNCH & PUNJABI DINNER every day
5510292 www.shalimar.is

THE LOBSTER HOUSE

HUMARHÚSIÐ RESTAURANT

Lunch menu

- Cream of lobster soup** 1490.-
Garlic roasted lobster
- Lobster & escargot "ragout"** 1590.-
Mushrooms, garlic
- Whale "sashimi" dip sauce** 1290.-
Mushrooms, herbs, ginger, red beets
- Lobster "maki"** 1590.-
Avocado, mango, cucumber, chilli mayo
- Lobster salad** 1490.-
Rucola, pumpkin seeds, fruit chutney

VEGETARIAN

- Veggie steak** 1790.-
Red beets, potatoes, parsnip

FISH

- Catch of the day** 1990.-
Please ask your waiter

- Lobster grill** 4890
200 gr. lobster, horseradish, salad

DESSERTS

- Chocolate "2 ways"** 990.-
White and dark chocolate, fruits

- "Lazy-daisy"** 990.-
Coconut, yoghurt

Located in Central Reykjavik
Amtmannsstíg 1 · 101 Reykjavik · Tel: 561 3303
humarhusid@humarhusid.is



ART

GALLERIES & MUSEUMS IN JUNE

A Dream Realised By Accident

AfroCubism visit Iceland



AfroCubism is a project that began as a dream thirteen years ago. Nick Gold's idea was to fuse the sounds of Malian and Cuban music for an album. But along the way, the Malian half of this collaboration either lost their passports, couldn't get their visas together, or found better paying opportunities, the true reason still a subject of controversy. Believe what you will, the result of this blunder was the acclaimed album 'Buena Vista Social Club', which landed at 260 on Rolling Stone Magazine's '500 Greatest Albums of All Time' list in 2003. With AfroCubism visiting Reykjavik to perform at Harpa on June 28, we thought it appropriate to get in contact with their kora player, Toumani Diabaté, and get the skinny on their upcoming show.

The first thing Toumani clarified was that it was a stroke of luck that AfroCubism was even able to come together. "I went to Netherlands with my band Symmetric Orchestra and Eliades Ochoa came to the hotel with my manager, and I was there sitting with my Kora. And I played with Eliades Ochoa for two hours at the lobby in the hotel. And it was really nice and I wanted to record something with Eliades Ochoa. We spoke to Mr. Nick Gold who is my producer and also the producer of Eliades Ochoa". The look on Nick Gold's face when he heard

this news must have been priceless. His dream project of thirteen years ago literally fell into his lap. Having been under the impression that Toumani was part of the Malians in the original project, this sort of came as a shock. Toumani cleared that up, stating that he wasn't one of the original Malians, but is very happy that things turned out the way they did.

Nick Gold and Eliades Ochoa then went on to meet Toumani in Paris for his show, and many of the members were added on there. "We found singer Kasse Mady Diabaté and the balafon player, Lasana Diabaté, in Paris. Then we met in Madrid a couple months later in December to record for one week together".

He is adamant that AfroCubism isn't a project stemming from Buena Vista Social Club. "They cannot be compared. There is no reason to compare them. This is original. It's a new style of music".

Toumani was ecstatic to come to Reykjavik, stating that he was "very happy". He had collaborated with Björk on her 2007 album Volta. "I had a very good relationship with Björk. And also the whole band. So I'm very excited to play this music in Iceland. This music needs to be listened to everywhere. By everyone". SAT

Viðundrin (The Wonderous World of the Wewonders)

An exhibition of old and new collections of the artist group Viðundrin (The Youwonders). Artists Ninna Þórarinsdóttir, Inga María Brynjarsdóttir and Þórey Mjallhvít H. Ómarsdóttir make up the group

Runs until June 17

Mokka Kaffi

Edda Guðmundsdóttur - "Seasons Exhibition"

The paintings in this exhibition were painted between 2006 and 2011. Edda's works are inspired by the seasons

Runs until June 23

National Gallery of Iceland

Femme - Louise Bourgeois

28 works by Louise Bourgeois, principally installations or "cells" and sculptures, but also paintings, drawings and textiles

Runs until September 11

Kjarval, from the collection of Jón Þorsteinsson and Eyrún Guðmundsdóttir

Exhibition of cubistic paintings by

Jóhannes Sveinsson Kjarval

Runs until September 11

Strides

Changes in Icelandic painting from the late 1800s to the 2000s

Runs until December 31, 2012

The National Museum

BE YE WELCOME, MY GOOD FRIENDS!

Collection of carved Nordic drinking horns

Runs until December 31

Carved Coffers

From the collection of the National Museum

Runs until August 31

Make Do and Mend

Repaired objects from the collection of the National Museum

Runs until September 1

Don't Touch the Ground

Exhibition on the games of 10 year old children

Runs until July 24

Pétur Thomsen exhibition

Collection of Pétur Thomsen's photographs

The Nordic House

The Library

The collection centres on new Nordic literature, both fiction and non-fiction. The library lends out novels, academic publications, audio books and more

On permanent view

Project 0

Paintings, sculptures, drawings, installations, video works by Randi Nygård, Tommy Johansson, Maja Nilsson, Jørgen Aase Falkenberg.

Runs until June 26

Reykjavík Art Museum

Ásmundarsafn

From Sketch to Sculpture - Drawings by Ásmundur Sveinsson

Runs until April 22, 2012

Magnús Árnason - Homage

Runs until April 22, 2012

Tomí Ungerer - Posters and Drawings

Tomí is an award winning illustrator known for his social satire

Runs until July 24

Perspectives - On the Borders of Art and Philosophy

Comprehensive exhibit that represents the breadth and diversity of styles and artistic media pursued in Iceland today

Runs until September 4

Hafnarhús

Erró - Collage

Runs until August 21

Perspectives - On the Borders of Art and Philosophy

Comprehensive exhibit that represents the breadth and diversity of styles and artistic media pursued in Iceland today

Runs until September 4

Tomí Ungerer - Posters and Drawings

Tomí is an award winning illustrator known for his social satire

Runs until July 24

Kjarvalsstaðir

Jóhannes S. Kjarval - Key Works

Runs until January 15, 2012

Jórl Horses in Icelandic Art

Runs until August 21

Workshop

Open and informative workshop for children and families in connection with the exhibition Jórl Horses in Icelandic Art. Make a reservation in advance by email: fraedsludeild@reykjavik.is

Runs until August 21

Reykjavík City Museum

Reykjavík 871 +/- 2 (The Settlement Exhibition)

Archaeological findings from ruins of

Art | Venue finder

ART67
Laugavegur 67 | **F7**
Mon - Fri 12 - 18 / Sat
12 - 16

Artótek
Tryggvagata 15 | **D4**
Mon 10-21, Tue-Thu 10-19, Fri
11-19, Sat and Sun 13-17
www.sim.is/Index/Islenska/
Artotek

ASÍ Art Museum
Freygata 41 | **G6**
Tue-Sun 13-17

Árbæjarsafn
Kistuhylur 4

The Culture House
Hverfisgata 15 | **E5**
Open daily 11-17
www.thjodmenning.is

Dwarf Gallery
Grundarstígur 21 | **F4**
Opening Hours: Fri and Sat
18-20
www.this.is/birta/dwarfgallery

The Einar Jónsson
Eiríksgröta | **G5**
Tue-Sun 14-17
www.skulptur.is

Gallery Ágúst
Baldursgata 12 | **G4**
Wed-Sat 12-17
www.galleriagust.is

Gallery Fold
Rauðarástígur 14-16 | **G8**
Mon-Fri 10-18 / Sat 11-16 /
Sun 14-16
www.myndlist.is

Gallery Kaolin
Ingólfsstræti 8 | **F4**

Gallery Kling & Bang
Hverfisgata 42 | **E5**
Thurs-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 | **E4**
www.hitthusid.is

i8 Gallery
Tryggvagata 16 | **D3**
Tue-Fri 11-17 / Sat 13-17 and
by appointment. www.i8.is

Living Art Museum
Skúlagata 28 | **D6**
Wed, Fri-Sun 13-17 / Thu
13-22. www.nylo.is

Hafnarborg
Strandgötu 34,
Hafnarfjörður

Mokka Kaffi
Skólavörðustíg 3A | **E5**

The National Gallery of Iceland
Frikirkjuvegur 7 | **F4**
Tue-Sun 11-17
www.listasafn.is

The National Museum
Suðurgata 41 | **G2**
Open daily 10-17
natmus.is

The Nordic House
Sturlugata 5
Tue-Sun 12-17
www.nordice.is/

Núttímalist Galleria
Skólavörðustígur 3a | **E5**
Restaurant Reykjavík
Vesturgata 2 | **D3**

Reykjavík 871 +/- 2
Aðalstræti 17 | **D3**
Open daily 10-17

Reykjavík Art Gallery
Skúlagata 28 | **D6**
Tuesday through Sunday 14-18

Reykjavík Art Museum
Open daily 10-16
www.listasafnreykjavikur.is

Ásmundur Sveinsson Sculpture Museum Sigtún
Hafnarhús Tryggvagata 17 | **D3**
Kjarvalsstaðir Flókagata | **I7**

Reykjavík Maritime Museum
Grandagarður 8 | **B2**

Reykjavík Museum of Photography
Tryggvagata 16 | **D3**
Weekdays 12-19 / Sat-Sun
13-17 - www.ljosmyndasafn-
reykjavikur.is

Sigurjón Ólafsson Museum
Laugarnestangi 70

SÍM, The Association of Icelandic Artists
Mon-Fri 10-16
Hafnarstræti 16 | **D4**

Spark, Design Space
Klapparstíg 33 | **F5**
www.sparkdesignspace.com

Enjoy
Verði þér að góðu

Enjoy
dining out

Enjoy covers the ambiance, food and location of 32 restaurants in Reykjavik

Seafood, steakhouses, vegetarian, innovative cuisine and more . . .

www.salka.is



ART

GALLERIES & MUSEUMS IN JUNE



The Summer Festival Of The Arts

Akureyri

June June 17 - August 28

Free

Akureyri's 19th annual Summer Festival of the Arts kicks off this year with all kinds of fun. We're talking concerts, art exhibitions, dance and theater shows, readings and more! A collaborative endeavor between The Akureyri Cultural Center and various art promoters in Akureyri and the surrounding area, the festival hopes to enhance the cultural life of the town, welcoming anyone who can appreciate the arts—from the 'high' to the 'low'.

The Arts Festival begins on June 17th, Iceland's Independence Day, with an exhibition called: "Mardöll", related to the Forum "Would you know more? - A conversation on roots" and finishes on August 28 with cultural events all over Akureyri.



Nomadic Art Needs Your Help

Hestamiðstöðin Saltvík (Húsavík)

Deadline for applications, July 30

Free

Hey youngsters! The people of Artsave need your talent and creativity. So let's put our brilliant brains to work and come up with a new façade for their travelling gallery.

Artsave is like a nomadic laboratory and international platform for artists of all disciplines, which travels in a mobile container unit. Last year the container was installed at the Reykjavík Harbour, but this summer it's moving to Hestamiðstöðin Saltvík, near Húsavík.

To celebrate this new era, Artsave wants a facelift and invites children and students from the Húsavík, Mývatn and Akureyri areas to participate in a competition for the exterior design of the mobile container.

Artist candidates have to take into account that their proposed designs must follow a specific theme or tell a story, but otherwise they are free to choose whatever they want. Proposals for the container competition must be sent to Artsave with an explanation of the idea before July 30.

The winner will get five working days to execute the project under the supervision of Artsave. The application form and more information can be found at www.artsave.is.



The Watercolours of Ólafur Thorlacius

Ólafur Þór worked with the Icelandic Coast Guard for many years as a map-maker. He has now retired and paints beautiful watercolors in his free time.

Ongoing

Reykjavík Museum of Photography

Valdís Thor

100 photographs on display

Runs until June 29

The Photographs of Leifur Þorsteinson

Exhibition of the work of Icelandic photographer Leifur Þorsteinnsson

Runs until August 28

Reykjavík Citizens - Photos from a working man

Karl Christian Nielsen's exhibition depicts photos of every day life between 1916 and 1950

Runs until August 28

Sigurjón Ólafsson Museum

Sigurjón Ólafsson's Pillars & "Icelander"

Runs until August 28

Tjarnarbíó Theatre

Sirkus Íslands

Five-day circus workshops for children.

Runs until June 30

Vikingakráin

Let's Talk Iceland Comedy Show

Every day, 20:00, 2200 ISK

one of the first houses in Iceland and other excavations in the city centre

On permanent view

Reykjavík Maritime Museum

From Poverty to Abundance

Photos documenting Icelandic fishermen at the turn of the 20th century

On permanent view

The History of Sailing

Iceland's maritime history and the growth of the Reykjavík Harbour

On permanent view

The Coast Guard Vessel Óðinn

Display of vessel that took part in all three Cod Wars

On permanent view

Baiting Bright Fishhooks

Exhibition about the Little Fishing Book by Jón Sigurðsson, containing guidelines to fishing equipment and processing.

Runs until December 31

The Herring Adventure

This exhibition explores the adventurous herring era, using the photographs of Haukur Helgason from 1953-57, the short film of Sigurður Guðmundsson from 1941 and various objects related to the herring fishing.

Runs until September 18

The Call of Sagas

A exhibition from Finland about a adventurous voyage in an open boat from Finland to Iceland, honoring the old viking shipping routes.

Ongoing



THE VIKING
FAMILY BUSINESS FOR 50 YEARS

THE VIKING : INFO

Laugavegur 1 • Reykjavík • 581 1250

Hafnarstræti 3 • Reykjavík • 551 1250

Hafnarstræti 104 • Akureyri • 4615551

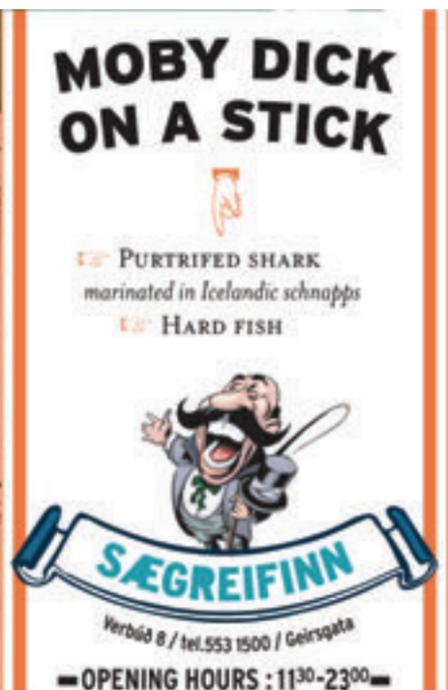
Adalstræti 27 • Ísafjörður

Eden • Hveragerði

email: theviking@simnet.is



GEYSIR



GRILLED FISH, MEAT AND VEGETABLES.

GÚSTAV AXEL GUNNLAUGSSON, CHEF OF THE YEAR 2010, HAS OPENED A NEW RESTAURANT IN THE HEART OF REYKJAVÍK.



SKÓLAVÖRÐUSTIG 14 - 101 REYKJAVÍK - ÍSLAND - 571 1100 - WWW.SJAVARGRILLID.IS

HOW TO DRIVE SAFELY IN ICELAND

ALCOHOL & DRUGS

Under no circumstances, is it permitted to drive when alcohol or other drugs have been consumed. Severe penalties can be expected if you commit such a crime.

If driving under the influence of alcohol and drugs you will not be entitled to compensation in case of an accident and will have to bear the total cost of the accident yourself.

SPEED LIMITS

High-speed cameras are present on most roads and the police also keep a scrupulous eye on speeding.

Fines for drunk driving or exceeding speed limits can be very high not to mention a possible suspension of driving license.



Unpaid fines are not waived simply because a driver has left the country and returned home.

The speed limit is as follow:

- 50 km/hr in urban areas except when speed limit sign show something else.
- The main rule on highways is that gravel roads have a speed limit of 80 km/hr.
- Paved highwayroads have a speed limit of 90 km/hr. Signs indicate if other speed limits apply.



See further instruction on www.drive.is



ROAD TRAFFIC DIRECTORATE

Dance At The Arts F

Or: Life of a Reykjavík dance fan

Last fall, Alexander Roberts described the Reykjavík dance scene and its potential in glowing terms in these pages. Pointing to talented Icelandic dance makers, an expanded number of dance events in the coming months, and plans for a city-funded theatre devoted solely to dance...well, the future shone. Viewing the same territory, I see a few clouds. Sure, astonishing work can be seen; at the same time, the quantity and range of dance on offer are limited, and ho-hum work abounds. Five events from the Reykjavík Arts Festival—enriched this year for the performing arts—can help explain.

AN UNUSUAL TRIP

'The Journey of the Phoenix', a theatre-dance-music hybrid created and performed by María Ellingsen (actor), Reijo Kela (dancer) and Eivör Pálsdóttir (singer), stood apart from the typical Reykjavík dance(-theatre) work. To see the piece, you climbed onto Borgarleikhúsið's big stage, where an impromptu theatre-in-the-round was set up. Two rows of chairs and a row of risers surrounded Snorri Freyr Hilmarsson's stage set: a circular maze inscribed in sand and, hanging from the rafters, three pipes moulded as tree trunks and lit from within. The performers—costumed by Filippía Elfsdóttir in a casual dark suit and sneakers (Reijo), a voluminous long white dress with a train (María) and a gigantic long black dress (Eivör)—waited in the first row.

What ensued was a strange journey/love story/death quest, simultaneously everyday and other-worldly. Reija attempted to negotiate the maze but, finding it non-negotiable, retired to the side. María tried next but quickly gave up and ran over to beseech Reija instead. A little persuasion got him to roll slowly across the stage with her until, unsatisfied, he threw her off.

The pattern of seduction and rejection, accompanied by percussive sounds and vocalisation without words, continued—though things got weirder. He appeared in a fur coat and antlers, they climbed the trees, he had her on his tool belt, he rode her giant train as she pulled him around the maze on her hands and knees, destroying any remaining labyrinth pattern. In the end, Kela ran a

victory lap and María was replaced by Eivör, singing a passionate song. Love, death, rebirth, contradictory desires—so it goes. The work appealed because of its ambiguity, unexpectedness, subtlety and detail. Rather than going for shock and awe (run for the smoke machines), the creators kept it human-sized.

ICELANDIC WORK

If there is one artist you can count on appearing in any collection of dance and dance-theatre works in Iceland, it is Erna Ómarsdóttir. For the Arts Festival, she presented 'We Saw Monsters', which, like many of her works for her own group of performers, focused on contradictions, inside us and in the world. Good/evil, self/other, creation/destruction, life/death—these are her big themes (she also has a healthy interest in the grotesque). But just because Ómarsdóttir returns to the same ideas—and re-uses many of the same dramatic devices—doesn't mean her most recent piece isn't worth seeing. In fact, 'We Saw Monsters' turned out to be one of her strongest works, filled with luscious imagery and boasting a clear structure.

The work began with two blond girls outpitted in pink dresses and white stockings, a good sign that bad things were about to happen (they also contorted their bodies in unladylike ways). A protracted death scene followed. The death scene was accompanied by sweet lullaby music, meaning that screeching guitars came next (the music was by Valdimar Jóhannsson). Accompanying the ear-splitting music was hair spinning, throwing one's body around, sex and screaming; the smoke machine too. Later elements included prosthetic hands and copious fake blood.

All this demonstrated Erna's unparalleled skill at image creation. But what really made the work (or, more accurately, much of Erna's body of work) sui generis was the marriage of the intellectual and the visual/dramatic. A scythe becomes a phallus, a butcher a butterfly—at a good Erna piece, you don't need a programme to tell you what the piece is about (and it is about something, or many things).

Erna also appeared in 'Six Pairs', an evening of original work commissioned by the Festival and RÚV (to be included in a series of TV programmes next year). A half-dozen Icelandic choreographers (all the usual suspects, except Margrét Sara Guðjónsdóttir) were matched with the same number of Icelandic composers, and each came up with 10 to 15 minute work. The pieces fell into two camps: clever concepts (Margrét Bjarnadóttir set two performers a-play with mirrors; Steinunn Ketilsdóttir cast a spell; Erna showed us her Icelandic tongue) and traditional dances works (Helena Jónsdóttir, Sigríður Soffía Nielsdóttir, Lára Stefánsdóttir).

'The Journey of the Phoenix', May 24 and 25, the City Theatre

'We Saw Monsters', May 20 and 21, the National Theatre

'Six Pairs', May 31, Tjarnarbíó
'Haze', June 4, the National Theatre

'Opening Night', May 22, the City Theatre

uno
cucina italiana

UNO – cucina italiana is an Italian restaurant located in central Reykjavík. Experience a fusion of Italian and Icelandic flavours served in a casual and vibrant environment.

Must try dishes

Mink whale carpaccio

Mink whale carpaccio with fennel, cabbage, parmesan cheese and lemon oil.

Lobster tail and tiger prawn Linguini

Linguini with tiger prawns, Icelandic lobster, rucola and cherry tomatoes in shellfish sauce.

Grilled salmon

Grilled salmon with Icelandic barley, grilled vegetables, radishes, dill, toasted almonds and sage butter.

Grilled minke whale

Grilled minke whale with „Brennivín“ glaze, rosemary potatoes and grilled vegetables.

White chocolate skyr panna cotta

With Limoncello gel and oat crumble.



Our kitchen is open

11.30 – 23.30

Sundays to Thursdays and

11.30 – 24.00

Fridays and Saturdays



See you soon ... A presto

UNO | Hafnarstræti 1-3 | 101 Reykjavík | Tel. 561 1313 | uno.is

estival

The clever concepts worked better, but none of the pieces was substantial, perhaps an impossibility with this format. The only piece with any narrative momentum was Steinunn's 'Galdur'. The music for that piece, by Hildigunnur Rúnarsdóttir, also stood out—the sole composition, I think, without an electronic element. (The remaining music was by Hilmar Örn Hilmarsson, Ólöf Arnalds, Þórarinn Guðnason, Áskell Måsson and Daníel Bjarnason.)

IMPORTED PRESENTATIONS

Beijing Dance Theatre showed 'Haze', a piece inspired by economic and environmental crises, circa 2008. Choreographed by Wang Yuanyuan and set to music by Henryk Górecki and Biosphere, the work was performed on a stage-sized mattress thick and spongy enough to allow the dancers to fall pat on their backs and spring back up again. This was in pursuit of a metaphor: the dancers' difficulty in getting their footing on the soft surface was supposed to mimic the struggle of finding one's way in uncertain times. In practice, the effect was more prosaic—a severe limitation of movement options. Delicate or quick steps were impossible, and a single phrase—striking an exaggerated arabesque, then falling over and rolling on the mattress—was performed repeatedly.

The lighting of the piece was also meant to convey something about economic/environmental problems. But the stage elements failed to merge with the dancing which, except for a few mime sequences, was made up of generic, repetitive steps with little relation to the piece's ostensible subject. The burden of giving the unremarkable movement

"meaning" fell to the young, earnest, slightly-raw performers—who did manage to convey a certain generalized angst.

The second imported work, Les SlovaKs' 'Opening Night', featured five dancers (Martin Kilvady, Milan Herich, Milan Tomasik, Peter Jasko and Anton Lachky) and a musician (Simon Thierry) from the Balkan countries. To music supplied by the violinist/electronic technician, the dancers did moves from street dance, various modern idioms and traditional Slavic dance, demonstrating their extreme proficiency at all. But the piece was bland: the performers joked around with each other and the audience, but never really let go of themselves, genuinely interacted or did anything surprising.

Results from the series, then, were mixed. There were two exceptional dance-theatre works, but no good examples of works that spoke primarily through movement. Perhaps the Arts Festival isn't the place to see younger artists, but a project like 'Six Pairs' would be more exciting if it managed to get at least a few fresh faces involved. With so little imported work shown in Iceland—the two works described here are a substantial fraction of the foreign work that will be shown here this year—more care needs to be taken in choosing it. Adventurous dance of many types is flourishing in continental Europe right now—shouldn't we be able to see some of it? Alongside, of course, the best home-grown stuff.

STACEY STEINBERG



Elding Whale Watching

from Reykjavik
all year round

Make sure
it's Elding!

Call us +354 555 3565
or visit www.elding.is

Take part in an adventure at sea with an unforgettable trip into the world of whales and sea birds.

Elding Whale Watching schedule - all year round

EL-01 / EL-02 / EL-03

Jan-Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct-Dec
	9:00	9:00	9:00	9:00	9:00	9:00	
13:00	13:00	13:00	13:00	10:00*	10:00*	13:00	13:00
				14:00*	14:00*		
			17:00	17:00	17:00		
			20:30**	20:30**			

*10:00 and 14:00 departures from 1 July to 10 August.
**20:30 Midnight Whale Watching from 15 June to 31 July

- **EL-04 Sea Angling** 1 May - 30 September at 11:00
- **EL-05 Puffin Tour** 15 May - 15 August at 9:30 and 15:00
- **EL-07 Ferry to Viðey** all year round

Free entry to the Whale Watching Centre

[elding.is](http://www.elding.is)

Perspectives - On the Borders of Art and Philosophy. Claudio Parmiggiani, Untitled, 2008.

Jór! Horses in Icelandic Art

Erró - Collage

18 Sept. 2010 – 21 August 2011

Erró – Collage

Tomi Ungerer - Drawings and Posters

21 May – 4 September

Perspectives – On the Borders of Art and Philosophy

Magnús Árnason - Homage

30 April 2011 – 15 April 2012

From Sketch to Sculpture – Drawings by Ásmundur Sveinsson

From Sketch to Sculpture - Drawings by Ásmundur Sveinsson

Erró - Assemblage

28 July – 28 August

Kjarval - Key Works

3 May 2010 – 15 January 2012

Jór! Horses in Icelandic Art

7 May – 21 August

Magnús Árnason - Homage

30 April 2011 – 15 April 2012

Hafnarhús

Tryggvagata 17
Open daily
10 a.m. – 5 p.m.
Thursdays 10 a.m. – 8 p.m.

www.artmuseum.is

Kjarvalsstaðir

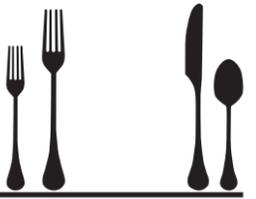
Flókagata
Open daily
10 a.m. – 5 p.m.

artmuseum@reykjavik.is

Ásmundarsafn

Sigtún
Open 1 May – 30 Sept
daily 10 a.m. – 4 p.m.

T +354 590 1200



Welcome To The Neighbourhood

The wind must be blowing just right, as we could have walked blindfolded down Skólavörðustígur to find Sjávargrillíð. The smell of a seafood grill grew stronger on approach. Without reservations we arrive to a bustling dining room on an early Wednesday evening. After a slight pause, and a glance over the reservation book, we are led to a dark, boisterous cellar where the party has already started. A banquet of twelve was under way and we were offered a dim table on the sidelines. At first we felt like stowaways in the hull of a ship. Back

lit driftwood lines the walls with light slipping through the cracks, maritime maps and abstract modernist portraits dot the walls, and a custom made couch modelled after a stone break wall separates us from the kitchen. Had we dined above, I would have overlooked this hideaway completely. The interior design is quite impressive, considering the exterior of the house is so colourless and pedestrian. From the old seltzer bottles with which still water is served, to the flat river stones used for serving custom butter, almost every detail is considered save for the lone tea candle

illuminating our table. I use this to my advantage and steal a kiss from my date.

The menu is equally subdued, with a manageably tame selection of deliciously healthy, intelligent combinations. We both settle on the set menu of the three course lobster feast (6.900 ISK), which begins with lobster from Höfn with celery root, seaweed, and date; lobster and mussels from Breiðafjörður in the west of Iceland with cauliflower, cucumber, and snow peas, and finishing with a raspberry vanilla crème brûlée. The thought

of wild mussels alone sold me on the platter.

We began with an unexpected creative amuse bouche, compliments of the chef, served in the form of a miniature clay potted plant and playing on the texture of topsoil with the taste and bite of fresh fennel. With little visibility we had to rely strictly on taste and texture, which surpassed any conceptual presentation. We started off with a bang. The langoustine appetiser, which is what Icelanders commonly accept as lobster, slid out of their shells and washed away effortlessly with the bright Cabernet Franc suggested by our waiter. The biggest surprise of the evening was the arrival of the main lobster tail; which turned out to be of proper proportion. An average size lobster is a rare bird on the Icelandic table; and like most of our better seafood, nearly all is sold off for export. Perhaps the only lull of the evening was the accompanying mussels from Breiðafjörður that I had highly anticipated. My gullet was keen on the flavourful wild variety, but instead was served a mild, farm fresh sort that bordered on blasé. A dash of contrast might increase their vigour, but nothing tastes quite like fresh wild mussels. Keep fishing! As for dessert, a simple crème brûlée punctuated by homemade raspberry sorbet, bull's-eye.

Sjávargrillíð is a nice addition to Icelandic dining. It should pass the test of time since it strives to cater equally to foreign guests and locals alike. With affordable prices, pleasantly comfortable decor, and exceptional Icelandic cuisine, this place should gain a loyal following. Count me as one.

MADELEINE T
HVALREKI

EAT AND DRINK

3 X BAKERY

1 SANDHOLT

This classy little bakery on Laugavegur is a feast for the senses. The glass case stocked with snúður, danishes, pain au raisin, chocolate lava cakes, etc. are very hard to resist. The sandwiches are pretty wonderful too. Laugavegur 36

2 MOSFELLSBAKARÍ

While not conveniently located in the 101 area, this well-known bakery is well worth the drive to Mosfellsbær (or their other shop in 108). Their baked goods are always flaky and moist and gooey and sweet and delicious. Also, they deliver. Háholt 13-15, Mosfellsbær or Háaleitisbraut 58-60, Reykjavík

3 KVOSIN

Nestled down on Aðalstræti next door to a small grocery shop of the same name, this is the latest addition to Reykjavík's baking scene. The big perk about this place is that they've got ample seating at which to enjoy the spoils of the confectioner's ovens. Aðalstræti 6-8

3 X AMERICAN BREAKFAST

1 GRÁI KÖTTURINN

The Truck is the very embodiment of the all-American breakfast – larger than life and gluttonous to the extreme. Grái Kötturinn does the dish right, with fluffy pancakes, eggs done the way you like 'em, bacon, toast and home fries stacked high, and served with complimentary coffee. If you wake up dying of hunger, you know where to go. Hverfisgata 16a

2 PRIKIÐ

Not to be outdone, Prikið's got a Truck of its own – bacon, eggs, pancakes, potatoes, toast – to stop hunger in its tracks. For those of the British persuasion, the Station Wagon has your hankering for baked beans covered. Bankastræti 12

3 HRESSÓ

While the big-breakfast item on Hressó's menu is called "English Breakfast" it's the size that counts where American breakfasts are concerned and this is big enough to get the job done. Bacon, eggs, toast, satisfaction. Austurstræti 20

3 X STUFF YOU CAN'T GET AT BÓNUS

1 MAI THAI

If you're looking for a clean break from gaudy yellow wrappers, pink pigs and Euro Shopper and your diet could use a flavour infusion look no further than Mai Thai. Chilli paste? Check. A selection of fish sauces? You got it. Fun labels with jovial, smiling Buddha's on them? Of course! Laugavegur 116

2 NÓATÚN

Nóatún has got you covered on that all too familiar occasion when you find yourself desperately in need of artichokes and canned mussels, or one of the many other "specialty" items not stocked in the ubiquitous grocery chains. Hringbraut 121

3 OSTABÚÐIN

Cheese and meat aren't meant to be vacuum packed. Ostabúðin gets that. It's nice to see cheeses on offer other than Gouda of varying fat content and the odd havarti, and it's even nicer to see it smack dab in the middle of 101. Skólavörðustígur 8

Food & Drink | Venue finder

3 Frakkar Baldugata 14 G5	Íslenski Barinn Pósthússtræti 9 E4	Gata Laugavegur 3 E5	Indian Mango Frakkastígur 12 F6	O Sushi Lækjargata 2A E4	Sushibarinn Laugavegur 2 E5
Aktu Taktu Skúlugata 15 E7	Bar Ellefu Hverfisgata 18 E5	Glettan book café Laugavegur 19 E5	Jómfrúin Lækjargata 4 E4	Pisa Lækjargötu 6b E4	Sushismiðjan Geirsgötu 3 C3
Alibaba Veltusund 3b D3	Café d'Haiti Tryggvagata 12 D4	Grái Kötturinn Hverfisgata 16A E5	Fjallkonubakaríð Laugavegur 21 F5	Pizza King Hafnarstræti 18 D4	Svarta Kaffi Laugavegur 54 F7
American Style Tryggvagata 26 D4	Café Loki Lokastígur 28 G6	Grillhúsið Tryggvagata 20 D3	Kaffifélagið Skólavörðustígur 10 E5	Express Pizza Vallarstræti 4 E4	Sægreifinn Verbúð 8, Geirsgata C3
Argentina Steakhouse Barónstígur F7	Café Paris Austurstræti 14 E4	Habibi Hafnarstræti 20 D4	Kaffitár Bankastræti 8 E5	Gamla Smiðjan Lækjargötu 8 E4	Tapas Vesturgata 3B D3
Austurlanda-hraðlestin Hverfisgata 64A F7	Café Roma Rauðarárstígur 8 G8	Hamborgarabúlla Tómasar ("Bullan") Geirsgata 1 C3	Kaffivagninn Grandagarður 10 B2	Prikið Bankastræti 12 E5	Thorvaldsen Austurstræti 8 E4
Á Næstu Grósum Laugavegur 20B F5	Deli Bankastræti 14 E5	Hiölla Bátar Ingólfstorg D3	Kofi Tómasar Frænda Laugavegur 2 E5	Ráðhúskaffi E3 Tjarnargata 11	Tíu Dropar Laugavegur 27 F5
B5 Bankastræti 5 E4	Domo Þingholtsstræti 5 E4	Homið Hafnarstræti 15 D4	Kornið Lækjargata 4 E4	Santa María Laugavegur 22A, F6	UNO Hafnarstræti 1-3 D3
Bakkus Tryggvagata 22 D3	Einar Ben Veltusundi D3	Hótel Holt Bergstaðarstræti 37 G5	Krua Thai Tryggvagata 14 D3	Serrano Hringbraut 12 I5	Vegamót Vegamótastígur 4 F5
Ban Thai Laugavegur 130 G8	Eldsmiðjan Bragagata 38A G5	Humarhúsið Amtmannstígur 1 E4	La Primavera Austurstræti 9 E4	Shalimar Austurstræti 4 E3	Við Tjómína Templararund 3 E4
Babalú Skólavörðustígur 22A F5	Fiskmarkaðurinn Aðalstræti 12 E3	Hressó Austurstræti 20 E4	Mokka Skólavörðustígur 3A E5	Silfur Pósthússtræti 11 E4	Vitabar Bergþórugata 21 G7
Bæjarins Beztu Tryggvagata D4	Geysir Bar/Bistro Aðalstræti 2 D3	Icelandic Fish & Chips Tryggvagata 8 D3	Nonnabiti Hafnarstræti 9 D4	Sjávarkjallarinn Aðalstræti 2 D3	



ELDHRIMNIR

Persian Grill . Vegetarian . Royal Buffet . Grand Café



Eldheitt

Fresh & exotic ...

Persian Grill .
Vegetarian . Hot soup . Fresh Bread .
Naan & Wine . Beer .
Tea . Coffee .

Hot Buffet!

Lunch 1.690,- kr.
Vegetarian - soup special
All you can Eat!

Tel: 561-0990
see more: Eldhrimnir.is





HOFNIN

The Harbour RESTAURANT

Down by the Old Harbour • Mamas recipes • Icelandic style • New wave kitchen
Geirsgötu 7c • 101 Reykjavík • Tel: +354 511 2300 • www.hofnin.is

REVIEWS



UNO cucina italiana

Hafnarstræti 1-3



At Least The Grappa Was Good

Tis the season I am usually consuming a heavy dose of fine art washed down by the afternoon spritz and evening prosecco of a Venetian piazza. Alas, I must pass on the Venice Biennale this year and make do with the extents of my backyard. For art, I view a nice exhibition at gallery i8 by former Biennale heavyweight Kristján Guðmundsson. A worthy exhibition deserves to be followed up by proper Italian dining, and uno was just around the corner.

Uno opened its doors early this year boasting to be capobranco, and based on the menu, it seemed like the cuisine might be as close as I will get to Italy this summer.

Something must be abuzz at Uno. It was only around six on a Friday evening when my guest and I were turned away from a near empty restaurant. The hostess scanned the dining room before remarking that a table would not be open for at least three hours. Two thirds of the restaurant was empty, and Uno cannot accommodate a two top until after nine? The books might be full, but when your dining room is barren at six, there is always room for a couple walking in off of the street. This is the bread and butter of the

restaurant business. Learn to turn your tables or juggle your books. This is not exclusivity, it is incompetence. We hesitantly make reservations for the same time the following evening.

The scenario is similar. A near empty restaurant, yet we are packed in like sardines with the other guests. We are rushed to order food before we are offered the chance to order aperitifs, and once we do, the chronic interruptions from the server's predatory circles prevented any conversations from fruition. Embarrassed or impatient, perhaps she took the hint that we preferred to dine in peace. She relinquished control of our table to a less tenacious young lad. Our service improved, but our experience was heading toward oblivion. My first course of deep-fried lobster was cold, my beef carpaccio was without taste, and my bruschetta never arrived. I had yet to receive a hot dish. From the sound of the cooks on the front line, the wheels were about to come off a less than full dining room. Bells were ringing, voices were yelling, and food was being auctioned off. Oh, here comes my slow cooked Lamb Osso Bucco. Miserably cold. I was counting on this dish to be the saving grace of

the evening. It is rather hard to botch a lamb that cooks all day, unless you are cooking it at room temperature or forgot to turn on the oven.

Why did I set my expectations so high? Was it the hype in the menu about scouring Italy for the perfect risotto? Was it the authentic sounding dishes? Of course, if one is going to spend 22.000 ISK on a casual dinner for two, the bar is slightly raised. This really felt like it was going to be Iceland's premier Italian restaurant, yet it fails like Olive Garden. At least the grappa was good.

I would like to return when Uno is properly staffed, and with someone capable managing the front of the house, as the kitchen seems to have good intentions. But in the mean time there is a lot of polishing to do.

MADELEINE T
MADELEINE T



THE FISH COMPANY IS RANKED #1 OF 120 RESTAURANTS IN REYKJAVIK ON tripadvisor

A DELICIOUS 4 COURSE MENU

AROUND ICELAND

JOIN THE CHEFS OF THE FISHCOMPANY FOR A TRIP AROUND ICELAND. THE BEST AND FRESHEST INGREDIENTS FROM ALL OVER THE ISLAND WILL TANTALIZE YOUR TASTEBUDDS IN A TRIP SURE TO LIVE LONG IN YOUR MEMORY

 VESTMANNAEYJAR 63°20' N 20°17' W	 BORGARNES 64°32' N 21°55' W
 HÚSAVÍK 66°03' N 17°18' W	 EGILSSTAÐIR 66°17' N 14°23' W

FISH COMPANY
64°08' N 21°56' W

VESTURGÖTU 2A, GRÓFARTORG
101 REYKJAVÍK - ICELAND
+354 552 5300 - INFO@FISHCOMPANY.IS
WWW.FISHCOMPANY.IS

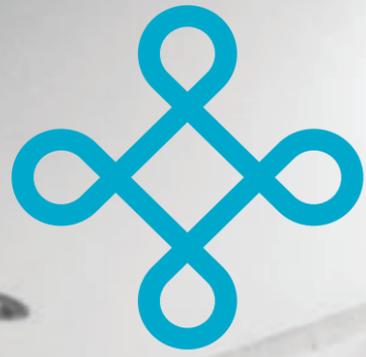
Iceland's Restaurant of the year 2009 & 2010

by the Nordic Prize

DILL restaurant

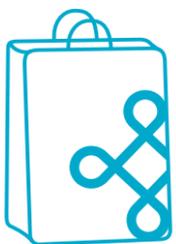
Nordic House Sturlugata 5 101 Reykjavík tel. +354 552 1522 www.dillrestaurant.is
Open for lunch every day from 11.30 and for dinner wednesday to sunday from 19.00.

www.bodydesign.com



macland

New  flavor



Store



Repairs



Support



www.macland.is

The REYKJAVÍK GRAPEVINE

www.grapevine.is

OUTSIDE REYKJAVÍK **SPECIAL** | Issue 1 | North & Northwest

Full outside listings inside | Map | Places | Photos | 

(the great escape)





THE ROAD

WORDS:
PAUL FONTAINE

COVER PHOTOGRAPHY:
MAROESJKA LAVIGNE

PHOTOGRAPHY:
MAROESJKA LAVIGNE, SKARI, THORSTEN HENN,
JULIA STAPLES



I love travelling around Iceland. Usually, I hitchhike, and have circled the Ring Road twice in this fashion. So when I was asked if I wanted to check out the northwest of the country—including some places I'd never seen before—I was of course enthusiastic about the idea.

I have to say, this was a pretty fun trip. The countryside is stunningly beautiful, and seems to change each time I see it. Even total strangers in villages of a hundred or so people were warm, inviting and talkative.

Of course, this isn't to say that travelling in Iceland is easy. The drives can be very long, the weather can change on you in a heartbeat, and road conditions can take a turn for the worse without much warning. Combine this with hours at a time in a tiny car with very few CDs, and tensions can run high.

But there's a way around that. You can make up great car games, such as 'What's It Called?'. In this game—which requires a minimal command of Icelandic—one person picks a random location on the map of Iceland and translates the name directly into English (e.g., Sauðárkrókur would be "sheep river hook"), and the other person tries to guess what the original Icelandic name is.

More importantly, you can try to enjoy the journey, the road itself, instead of maintaining the belief that the fun will begin when you get to where you're going. Keep your eyes open as you travel—you'd be amazed at some of the things you might see. Don't be shy about pulling over, getting out of the car, taking a few minutes to enjoy where you are right now.

It's amazing how easily you fall back into the road mindset, no matter how long it's been since you last travelled. But travel, to me, is about the going—not just the arriving. This is especially true in Iceland, and I hope you keep that in mind as you explore this beautiful country, too.

Accommodation provided by:

Hotel Hellnar / Hellnar / 356 Snæfellsbær / Phone: 435-6820 / www.hellnar.is

Breiðavík við Látrabjarg / Látrabjarg / 451 Patreksfjörður / Phone: 456-1575 / www.breidavik.is

Gamla Gistihúsið Mánagötu 5 / 400 / Ísafjörður / Phone: 456-4146 / 897-4146 / www.gistihus.is

Hotel Akureyri / Hafnarstraeti 67 / 600 Akureyri / Phone: 462-5600 / www.hotelakureyri.is



Distance from Reykjavík: ca. 180 km

Arnarstapi

2



The countryside landscape of the western part of the Snæfellsnes peninsula is both dramatic and contrasting where one will come across some of the country's extraordinary natural wonders. Among them is Arnarstapi, an old fishing village rich with history and interesting sights to explore. Its beautiful harbour with a magnificent view over the gulf of Faxaflói and all the unusual cliffs and surreal rock formations rising up from the unfriendly ocean have made the place a popular hiking destination. A short walk away one will find the small and homely café Fjörhúsið.

Ölkelda: The Mineral Water Isn't For Sale—It's Free (For Now)

The first stop on our tour of northwest of Iceland was a place you'd normally drive right past without noticing it: a farm like so many other farms you drive by on Route 1, called Ölkelda. But what makes this farm unique, located on Route 1 about an hour north of Borgarnes, is the presence of a natural spring that gives forth naturally carbonated water. This we had to experience.

Pulling into the driveway in the middle of the day, we saw no one around. There were no signs indicating a natural spring anywhere near the place, and for a moment we thought we were lost. A knock on the door of the first house we came to was answered by a friendly middle-aged farmer named Svavar. When I asked where this purported spring was, he pointed to a small pipe sticking out of the ground that ended in a spigot. "Right over there. Just help yourselves".

And so we did. The reviews, I have to say, were mixed. I thought it tasted a lot like Toppur, a lightly carbonated bottled water you can buy in most supermarkets. Our photographer felt it tasted like the fizzy drink you take when you're feeling ill, or hungover. Regardless of the taste, the water is high in minerals such as calcium, potassium and iron. Svavar came out later on, hopped on a tractor, drove to his barn, and hoisted out a large aluminium sign with all the water's nutritional information on it. He explained that his grandmother, who is 101 years old,



drinks this water every day.

The first question that sprang to my mind was if he'd ever considered bottling and selling the water, or at least charging people for drinking it. He dismissed the idea outright. "The problem is, if the water sits in a bottle for a

while, it gets this yellowish colour near the bottom. That's the iron. It's good for you but it doesn't look really good". After a few beats, though, he asked how much we would pay if the water were being sold in bottles in the store. "I was thinking maybe, I don't know, 100

krónur per bottle?". Which is hilarious, seeing how "pure Icelandic water" is sold in stores for twice this. When we told him this, he appeared to mull over the idea of taking his water onto the open market. So we recommend stopping there now, while it's still free.



www.goya.is

A piece of Spain in Akureyri, capital of the north.

Goya Tapas bar Kaupvangsstræi 23 Akureyri 519 7650



Breiðavík: When You Really, Really Need To Get Away From It All



3

The next time you hear someone say that they “really want to get away from it all”, you can now recommend to them the ideal location: **Hótel Breiðavík at Látrabjarg**. Located on the westernmost point of Europe (although technically on the North American continental plate, we're not going to get pedantic about it or anything), getting there involves first getting to the Westfjords town of Patreksfjörður, which is in itself an out-of-the-way location, even by Icelandic standards.

From there, your drive will take you from paved roads by the sea to unpaved roads over the mountains, but don't fear—our Toyota Yaris was able to make the trip without a problem, and as the hotel is only open in the summer anyway, getting there should be a snap for most rental vehicles.

Descending from the Mars terrain of the mountaintops to Látrabjarg was really something. I think I audibly gasped as I saw the view: an idyllic farm by the sea, with a beach of sand-coloured sand (black sand is far more ubiquitous in Iceland, but we would discover that sands a colour most non-Icelanders are

used to is a common sight in the Westfjords), surrounded in a semi-circle by steep mountains. Parking and getting out of the car, the sight was accompanied by sound—the faint hiss of waves, sheep bleating, our own footsteps on the gravel driveway, but otherwise, total silence. In addition, it should be noted that there was absolutely no mobile phone reception out here. This was isolation.

Our room had a homey, grandmother's guest room feel to it, and right outside the window, sheep were grazing (don't worry; they take them in at night, so you won't be kept up listening to bleating). For those worried about a complete and total Shining-esque isolation, you can buy access to WiFi for 1.000 ISK per day. Not that you'll want it—right nearby are some truly stunning cliffs that offer all kinds of birdlife, especially puffins. Watching puffins fly is pretty comical, too, so if the stunning beauty of the locale isn't enough, the comedy value of the puffins should more than make up for it.

In all, a fantastic place to finish working on that novel, or to otherwise take a break from everyday contact with the rest of the world in an idyllic setting.

Distance from Reykjavík: ca. 450 km

Ísafjörður

4



A trip to the capital of the Westfjords, Ísafjörður, is a worthwhile journey as the town and its surroundings offer plenty of activities for travellers. The town is renowned for being a mix of a thriving fishing and music community and is for example home to the annual music festival Aldrei fór ég suður, growing in size and popularity every year. The nearby mountains and valleys boast many scenic hiking trips, after which you can relax at a downtown café with a drink in hand and chat with friendly locals.

Distance from Reykjavík: ca. 170 km

Stykkishólmur

5



The small village of Stykkishólmur is considered one of the more magical municipalities in the country. Surrounded by historical sites and natural beauty, the town is located on the north shore of the Snæfellsnes peninsula. The small and colourful houses are built around the harbour where fishing boats are docked alongside cruise ships and ferries. The town is the gateway to the Breiðarfjörður islands and several companies organise daily sight-seeing trips among the thousands of small islands where one can spot wild birds flying around the boat while tasting freshly caught scallops.

“Like driving on the moon”

Gardner Huges, 56 year old client from Utah.

GEYSIR ATV TOURS

Experience the 4x4 fourwheeler rides around the amazing geysir area
1,5 km from Geysir Center



Ferðamálastofa
Icelandic Tourist Board

Open all year

Daily trips in June, July and August
every two hours from 10:00 – 18:00.

Geysir ATV Tours
Tel: + 354 869 4474
atvtours@atvtours.is
www.atvtours.is

Dear Traveller

We would like to welcome you to Iceland. While we were waiting for you to visit, we manufactured with great care a range of woolen garments. We would be honored if you could come and take a look. The staff of Vik's woolen factory/specialty shop.



Vikurprjón Ltd
Knitting factory
Located in Vik
www.vikurprjon.is

Get up and go!

Travel in Iceland on your own terms!

Flexible predefined day tours or your way

Mixing activities with seeing the best sites

Do you want to get up and go your own way in Iceland?



Visit your guide online at: solstice.is or contact us through email: info@solstice.is
Tel: +354 898 7356



Solstice
Tours



Solstice.is





At The Foot Of The Power Centre

SNÆFELLSNES IS PRETTY COOL



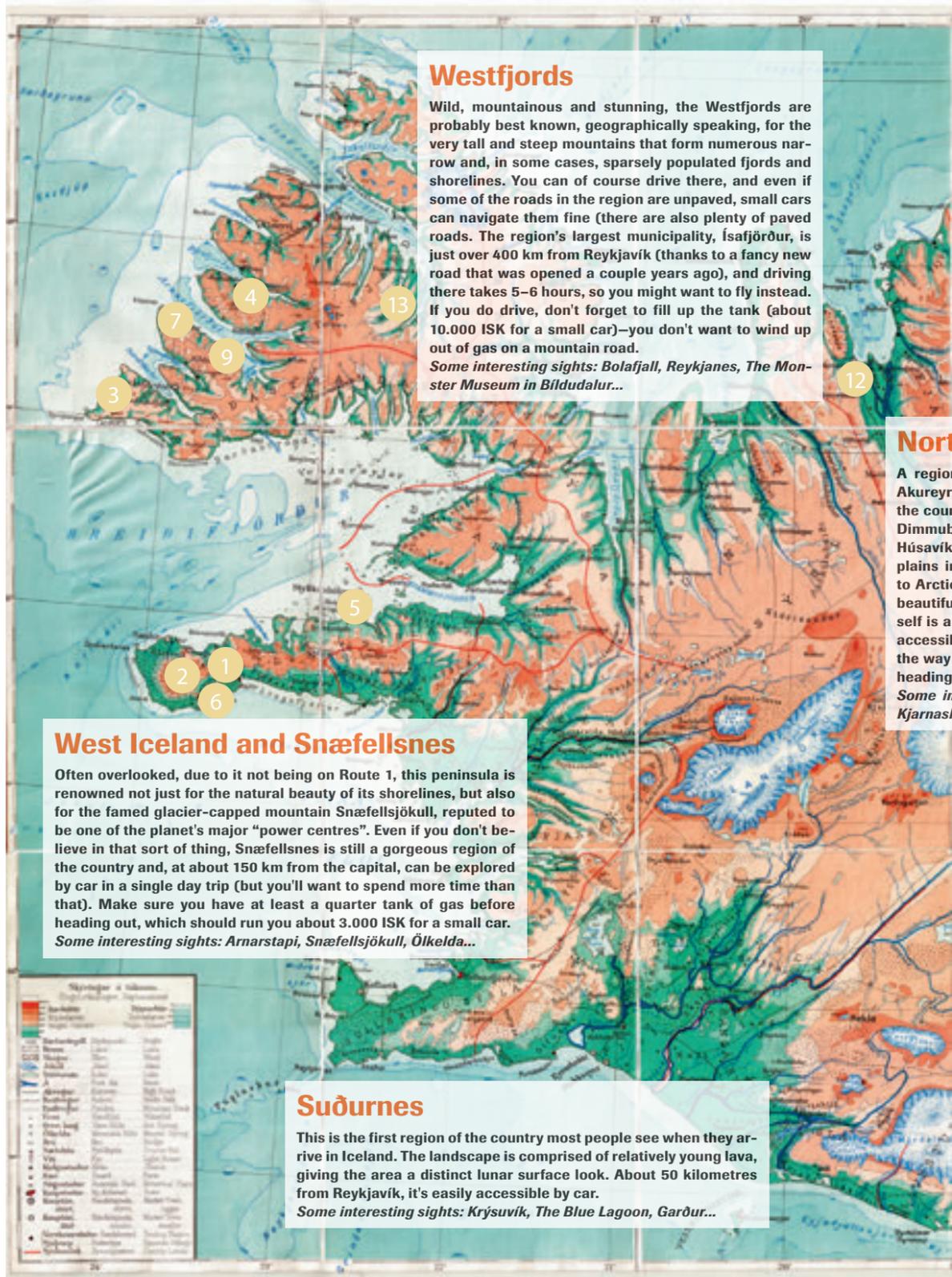
The southern coast of Snæfellsnes is all-too-often ignored, in favour of the more popular Stykkishólmur or even Ólafsvík, both on the north shore. But Snæfellsnes' south coast is absolutely breathtaking, and it seems more and more people are discovering just that.

Take, for example, Hótel Hellnar. Located in the tiny but awesomely named village of the same name on the southwest coast of Snæfellsnes, it offers what's possibly the most ideal view in the region—something the hotel takes full advantage of. Maríus Sverrisson, who runs the place and was our gracious host, explained that the hotel had been newly renovated, and it does indeed have that new hotel feel to it. Part of those renovations included making the sea-facing windows so huge you can practically feel the ocean breeze.

"There's a special energy to this place", Maríus told me. "You maybe don't notice it when you're here, but when you go back to the capital, you feel this stress starting to sink in. Here, you can really relax". Some attribute this energy to Snæfellsjökull, which sits on top of a mountain and is considered, in New Age circles, to be one of the Earth's major power centres. Whether you believe this to be the case or not, there's no question that walking near the shore, just down the hill from the hotel, definitely soothed our road-jangled nerves.

New Age folks aren't apparently the only ones with a spiritual claim to the area, however. Maríus pointed out that about a hundred metres away, a shrine to the Virgin Mary was set up—odd for a decidedly Lutheran country. We decided to check it out. What we found was a small white statue of the Virgin Mary, standing on a small platform placed into the side of a hill, overlooking a small, stagnant, stone-ringed pool of water. An inscription at the foot of the statue informs the visitor that the Virgin Mary appeared on this spot in the year 1230, Bishop Guðmundur Arason asked her to bless the water at this spot, and the statue was put in place in 1989. We were told that some Christian pilgrims had been at the site just hours before, but they seemed to have cleared out.

After a truly inspired dinner featuring fresh cod, seafood soup, and a cheesecake made from skyr (tastes the same, but it's lighter, and easier on the stomach), we took a walk down a path to the shore. The beach here consists mostly of large, round stones which were easy to walk on. There, we found an ideal spot—a natural cave carved into the cliffside by sea and wind. It made for a really nice spot to sit, drink and stare at the sea, even providing us shelter when it began to rain. It's the kind of spot you'd miss if you weren't looking for it, and exactly the spot we wanted to find.



Westfjords

Wild, mountainous and stunning, the Westfjords are probably best known, geographically speaking, for the very tall and steep mountains that form numerous narrow and, in some cases, sparsely populated fjords and shorelines. You can of course drive there, and even if some of the roads in the region are unpaved, small cars can navigate them fine (there are also plenty of paved roads). The region's largest municipality, Ísafjörður, is just over 400 km from Reykjavík (thanks to a fancy new road that was opened a couple years ago), and driving there takes 5–6 hours, so you might want to fly instead. If you do drive, don't forget to fill up the tank (about 10,000 ISK for a small car)—you don't want to wind up out of gas on a mountain road.

Some interesting sights: *Bolafjall, Reykjanes, The Monster Museum in Bíldudalur...*

West Iceland and Snæfellsnes

Often overlooked, due to it not being on Route 1, this peninsula is renowned not just for the natural beauty of its shorelines, but also for the famed glacier-capped mountain Snæfellsjökull, reputed to be one of the planet's major "power centres". Even if you don't believe in that sort of thing, Snæfellsnes is still a gorgeous region of the country and, at about 150 km from the capital, can be explored by car in a single day trip (but you'll want to spend more time than that). Make sure you have at least a quarter tank of gas before heading out, which should run you about 3,000 ISK for a small car.

Some interesting sights: *Arnarstapi, Snæfellsjökull, Ölkelda...*

Suðurnes

This is the first region of the country most people see when they arrive in Iceland. The landscape is comprised of relatively young lava, giving the area a distinct lunar surface look. About 50 kilometres from Reykjavík, it's easily accessible by car.

Some interesting sights: *Krýsuvík, The Blue Lagoon, Garður...*

Selárdalur: The Cute Kind Of Scary

As if learning all about local sea monsters in Bíldudalur wasn't spooky enough, we were advised to drive west from there, along the south shore of Arnarfjörður, until we reached the very tip of the peninsula, where we would find a place called Selárdalur. There, we were told, was a church, a house, and several sculptures—including seals, Leifur Eiríksson, and the lions of Alhambra—made by a self-taught artist named Samúel Jónsson. Naturally, we were on it.

The drive was fairly straightforward. It's just a two-lane road, no fancy twists and turns or mountains to climb. We thought it was going to be a simple drive. But then we saw her.

Up ahead, walking down the side of the road, was an old woman in green rubber boots, an opened backpack on her back, and nest of frazzled hair around her head. After a brief debate in the car, we elected to pull over and offer her a ride. By chance, she was going to the same place we were. Now, I'm not one to judge on appearances, but this woman—who refused to tell us her name, or be photographed or recorded—gave us a distinctly witch-y vibe. Not in a cooking-children-in-an-oven way, but more of a wandering shamanic sorceress way. She claimed to have grown up in "the next farm down" from Samúel Jónsson's place, and told



us she'd be happy to tell us a few things about this artist.

Samúel Jónsson was self-taught; what they would call a "visionary artist" today. The bulk of his work didn't start until after he retired, when he started using his pension money to buy plaster

and build these sculptures in this isolated corner of the country. The wind was pretty fierce on this day, although the sky was clear, giving the location an even more forlorn feel. But the almost childlike playfulness and naivety that went into these sculptures seemed to

dispel the gloom of this farm (which, like many places in Iceland, was once a site of witch burnings), their cheerfulness in stark contrast to their surroundings.

The site is in the midst of restorations and, when complete, will offer an

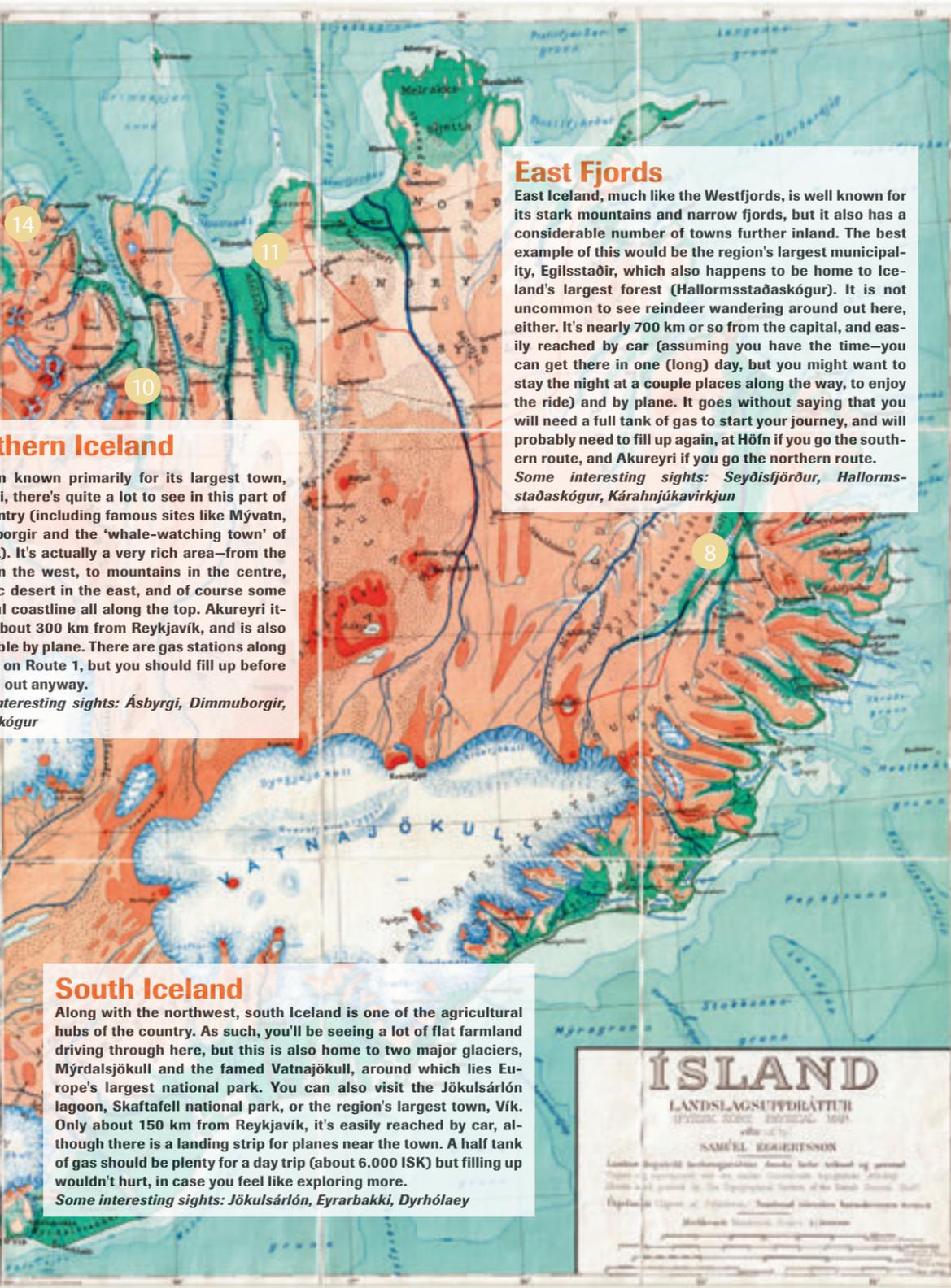
apartment and workspace for artists, as well as a small shop, designed by the architect Sigurður Pálmi Ásbergsson. For now, it seems the ideal spot for a picnic, inspiration, or possibly a spiritual inner journey that will turn your soul inside out. Either way, definitely worth checking out.

Distance from Reykjavík: ca. 700 km

Lagarfljót



Just as the Scottish have folklore about the nightmarish Loch Ness monster who dwells in the depths of the great Loch Ness, so the Icelanders have their own haunting sea creature. "Lagarfljót-sormurinn" is a lake monster according to east Icelandic folklore, who stirs in the depths of the Lagarfljót lake, near the eastern hub of Egilsstaðir. A tourist boat by the same name cruises the lake and features special tours and on-board banquets. Nearby is Hallormsstaðarskógur, which is the largest forest in the nation.



East Fjords

East Iceland, much like the Westfjords, is well known for its stark mountains and narrow fjords, but it also has a considerable number of towns further inland. The best example of this would be the region's largest municipality, Egilsstaðir, which also happens to be home to Iceland's largest forest (Hallormsstaðaskógur). It is not uncommon to see reindeer wandering around out here, either. It's nearly 700 km or so from the capital, and easily reached by car (assuming you have the time—you can get there in one (long) day, but you might want to stay the night at a couple places along the way, to enjoy the ride) and by plane. It goes without saying that you will need a full tank of gas to start your journey, and will probably need to fill up again, at Höfn if you go the southern route, and Akureyri if you go the northern route.

Some interesting sights: Seyðisfjörður, Hallormsstaðaskógur, Kárahnjúkavirkjun

Northern Iceland

Known primarily for its largest town, Akureyri, there's quite a lot to see in this part of the country (including famous sites like Mývatn, Dimmuborgir and the 'whale-watching town' of Húsavík). It's actually a very rich area—from the mountains in the west, to mountains in the centre, to desert in the east, and of course some of the most beautiful coastline all along the top. Akureyri is about 300 km from Reykjavík, and is easily reached by plane. There are gas stations along Route 1, but you should fill up before you get out anyway.

Some interesting sights: Ásbyrgi, Dimmuborgir, Dimmuborgirkirkja

South Iceland

Along with the northwest, south Iceland is one of the agricultural hubs of the country. As such, you'll be seeing a lot of flat farmland driving through here, but this is also home to two major glaciers, Mýrdalsjökull and the famed Vatnajökull, around which lies Europe's largest national park. You can also visit the Jökulsárlón lagoon, Skaftafell national park, or the region's largest town, Vík. Only about 150 km from Reykjavík, it's easily reached by car, although there is a landing strip for planes near the town. A half tank of gas should be plenty for a day trip (about 6,000 ISK) but filling up wouldn't hurt, in case you feel like exploring more.

Some interesting sights: Jökulsárlón, Eyrarbakki, Dyrhólaey

Map courtesy of Landmælingar Íslands - Map from 1928

You Will Believe In Bíldudalur: Visiting The Sea Monster Museum



Bíldudalur is like many small towns and villages in the Westfjords—nestled deep in a fjord against some intimidating mountains, comprised of what appears to be two or three streets and a handful of small houses. But Bíldudalur is special for two reasons.

First, the location itself shields the village from Iceland's characteristic relentless winds, making the weather relatively fair all year round. Second, it sits on the shores of Arnarfjörður, home to the bulk of Iceland's sea monsters. In fact, Bíldudalur has a museum dedicated to these creatures, which made our visit an unforgettable experience.

Typically, when you think of locals using folklore for the entertainment of tourists, you might imagine something fairly cheesy or exploitative. This was definitely not the case with the Sea Monster Museum. For one, the layout of the museum itself gives one more the feeling of an old man's reading parlour than anything else: the centrepiece of the exhibition floor is a round structure covered in shelves with books, figurines of the four major sea monsters of the area—fjörullalli ("shore laddie"), hafmaður ("sea man"), skeljaskrímsli ("shell monster") and faxaskrímsli ("combed monster/sea horse")—and a few monitors where

you can view a clips from a documentary about the fjord's sea monsters.

This, to me, was the most fascinating part of the exhibit. It's one thing to listen to some eccentric hippy-dippy granola-muncher talking about supernatural beings; it's quite another to see old, no-bullshit, grizzled farmers and fishermen discuss, quite matter-of-factly, seeing such creatures. To be honest, it gave the sightings an air of credibility that even a sceptic like me was not impervious to. The documentary itself should be released on DVD this winter.

The crowning piece of the exhibit is an interactive map that really has to be seen to be believed. By moving small plastic pieces over a map of the region, with arrows to guide you in the directions of monster sightings, cartoon bubbles of text and images describing monster incidents in the fjord make it seem as though this quite little hamlet is practically teeming with horrible beasts. Luckily for us, we didn't encounter any, but thanks to what we learned at the Sea Monster Museum, we're well prepared should the occasion arise.

Getting To Akureyri, And Enjoying It

-IT'S NOT THE DESTINATION; IT'S THE JOURNEY

Billed as "the capital of the north" more times than I could count in a lifetime, Akureyri is, to many tourists, the place you stay when you're up north. And not without reason—its geographical and topographical location keep the weather relatively mild year round, the town is lush with greenery in the summer time and covered in snow in the winter, and they also have Hotel Akureyri.

Maybe it was because we had been sitting in a car for seven or eight hours (I fell asleep a couple of times for brief spells and lost track), but this place was like an oasis on a desert planet. The rooms were great, and when I wanted some boiling hot water for the instant cup-o'-noodles I'd bought, the guy at the front desk didn't make a fuss about going into the kitchen at a quarter to midnight to put the kettle on. We chit-chatted for a bit while waiting for the water to boil. He told me that his family lives in Ísafjörður, and he drives there from Akureyri a few times a month. This floored me—earlier that day, when we finally connected to Route 1 after driving several hours from Ísafjörður, it was practically heartbreaking to see road signs indicating that we were actually closer to Reykjavík than we were to Akureyri. I asked him how he was able



to do this drive so often.

He shrugged. "You know, the road between Akureyri and Ísafjörður is always going to be several hundred kilometres long. It doesn't matter how fast you drive. If you try to speed yourself there, you're just going to get stressed out and annoyed. It's better to take frequent stops, get out and stretch your legs, take a few pictures, you know. Enjoy the way there and take your time,

instead of rushing to get where you're going". This was probably the best all-around travel advice I'd heard since I learned about rolling clothes up for packing instead of folding them.

I lived in Akureyri for a year, and while there's a lot to see and do in the region, the first and foremost place I'd recommend anyone checking out is the botanical gardens. Especially since summer's here. Amateur botanists

will certainly enjoy checking out the variety of hardy perennials there; everyone else should enjoy just being able to take their time wandering the grounds, relaxing in a clearing with a packed lunch, and marvelling at what volcanic soil plus mild weather can produce. If you only have an hour or so in Akureyri, spend every minute of it here. You won't regret it.

Distance from Reykjavík: ca. 480 km

Húsavík



The fishing town Húsavík, which sits at the shore of Skjálfandi bay, has been experiencing a great increase in tourism in recent years. The biggest draw for travellers is the fact that the Skjálfandi bay is known for being an excellent whale-watching spot and many companies offer daily whale-watching excursions from the harbour. Visitors should also check out the Whale Museum, located by the harbour. The museum was founded in 1997 and provides information on cetaceans and Iceland's whaling history. The Húsavík church, which is one of the oldest wooden churches in Iceland, is also worth a look.

OUTSIDE REYKJAVÍK IN JUNE

By the sea and a delicious lobster

At the Restaurant Fjöruborðið in Stokkseyri



> Only 45 minutes drive from Reykjavík

Eyrarbraut 3, 825 Stokkseyri, Iceland · Tel. +354 483 1550
Fax. +354 483 1545 · info@fjorubordid.is · www.fjorubordid.is

OUTSIDE MUSIC

18 SAT

Græni Hatturinn, Akureyri
21:00 Eivör concert

19 SUN

Gljúfrasteinn, Mosfellsbær
16:00 Ragnheiður Grönda, 1000 ISK
Græni Hatturinn, Akureyri
21:00 Eivör concert
Hof Menningarhús, Akureyri
20:00 Sniglabandið concert
Streamed live on Rás 2 between 13:00 and 15:00

26 SUN

Egilsstaðirkirkja Church, Egilsstaðir
20:00 Friðrik Ómar and Jógvan Hansen, 2000 ISK

OUTSIDE ART OPENINGS

Akureyri Golf Club, Akureyri

June 23
The Arctic Open
A Golf Tournament taking place under the summer solstice at the most northerly 18 hole golf course in the world, 65 49' north of the Equator in Akureyri.
Runs until June 25

Akureyri

June 17
Summer Festival of the Arts
Akureyri and north Iceland, Mid-June until end of August. Concerts, visual arts and etc.
Runs until August 28

Akureyri

June 17
Bíladagar
June Car Exhibition and various Car races.
Runs until June 19

Borgarnes

June 25
Village Festival
A Village Festival is held in honour of Þorgerður Brák, a famous Icelandic female hero who appears in Egil's Saga

Flóra, Akureyri

June 17
Local fact 4
Video-installation by artist Arna Valsdóttir.
Runs until August 4

Flóra, Akureyri

June 19
Another World is Plantable
Short documentary films followed by a discussion on urban gardening during times of social change, 1500 ISK

Grimsey

June 21
Summer Solstice Festival

Ráðhústorg, Akureyri

June 17
Icelandic Independence Day
A celebration at the Botanical Gardens in downtown Akureyri

Skaftfell, Seyðisfjörður

June 17
The Narrative Collection
A collection of narratives from inhabitants of Seyðisfjörður
Runs until August 13

Sláturhúsið, Egilsstaðir

June 17
Seasons (Vertíð)
Music, art and stage art.
Runs until August 13

Snorrastofa, Reykholtt

June 17
Mostly women in Populus Tremula
Women and one guy show their art.
Open between 14:00 and 17:00 daily
Runs until June 26

OUTSIDE ONGOING ART

Akureyri Art Museum

Within the Rose - Retrospective
Exhibition of paintings by award-winning artist Kristín Gunnlaugsdóttir
Runs until June 26

Boxi Myndlistarfélagsins, Akureyri

Group of MA students reunion

After 20 years since their first exhibition together, a group of artists reunite to show their works.
Runs until June 26

Fjörúhúsið, Hellnar (Snæfellsnes Peninsula)

Fiskur Sirkur
Collection of paintings by Spaniard Eduardo Perez Baca
Runs until June 30

Gamli Baukur, Húsavík

15:30 Comedy show about Iceland
Everyday

Gljúfrasteinn - Laxness Museum, Mosfellsbær

The home of Halldór Laxness, Iceland's beloved writer who won the Nobel Prize in Literature 1955. Open 09:00-17:00 daily

The Ghost Centre, Stokkseyri

Night at the Ghost Museum
Do you feel like a scary night in the Fisherman's hut inside the Ghost Centre? Only for brave people!

Ghosts and spirits of the South

Guided tour for groups -of ten people or more- through the lowlands south of Selfoss where many a ghost, spirit and other spiritual beings live

The Icelandic Settlement Centre, Borgarnes

The Settlement Exhibition
Tells the story of Iceland's settlement by Viking sailors who left Norway and

settled in Iceland

The Egils Saga Exhibition

The exhibition concentrates on one of Iceland's famous Viking and poet, Egil Skallagrímsson

Laxness Museum, Mosfellsdalur

Gljúfrasteinn was the home and workplace of Halldór Laxness (winner of the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1955)

On permanent view

LÁ Art, Hvergerði

Images of Þingvellir from various artists.
Runs until August 21.

Pompei of the North, Westman Islands

Excavations project at the site of 1973 volcanic eruption on the island of Heimaey

Reykjanes Art Museum, Reykjanesbær

On permanent view

Safnahús Museum, Westman Islands

This museum has mounted birds & fish, an aquarium, as well as a variety of rocks and minerals on display

Búrfell Plant, Þjórsárdalur

Geothermal Energy Exhibit
An interactive exhibit about geothermal

Sauðárkrókur Might Be The "Real" Iceland



Something that commonly comes up in conversation with tourists is the desire to see "the real [place name here]". This invariably means wanting to see a town, village or location that typifies the entire country, devoid of any tourist trappings or, hopefully, any tourists at all.

In Iceland's case, there are few places in the country—especially during summer—where you will find isolated, unspoiled pockets that tourists haven't extensively covered. Even in far-flung Breiðavík, where we were sure we'd be alone, there were lopapeysa-clad European tourists wandering around and taking photographs. Which isn't to say that tourists are a bad thing; I've made some great friends from tourists just passing through. My point is that tourists are a part of "the real Iceland", and any illusions that there is some no-foreigners-allowed hamlet somewhere in the country should be dispelled immediately.

That said, there are varying degrees of touristy-ness, and Sauðárkrúkur is a very un-touristy place to see (like most

places situated far off from Route 1 that aren't the Golden Circle). We stopped there on our way back to Reykjavík, more out of curiosity than anything else. What we discovered was a typical Icelandic country village sitting right on the water, one main street through the centre of town flanked by old houses and small businesses, light traffic, and surrounded on all sides by vast swaths of wilderness.

The town is the largest urban area in the Skagafjörður area, yet still maintains a sleepy, laid-back feel to it. We enjoyed having lunch at an old bakery on the main street, featuring giant bowls of soup, where you can sit by the window and watch time pass as people go about their daily lives. The more adventurous might want to check out the local horseback riding on offer (the region itself is the home of Iceland's country music heritage, so you may as well revel in that) or, in the winter, the skiing on Tindastöll.

Sometimes the main attraction of an Icelandic town is the town itself. Sauðárkrúkur is one such place.

Outside Reykjavík | Venue finder

Keflavík

Suðsuðvestur
www.sudsudvestur.is
Hafnargata 22
230 Reykjanesbær
421-2225

Græni Hatturinn
Hafnarstræti 96
600 Akureyri
461-4646

Borgarnes

The Icelandic Settlement Centre
www.landnam.is
Brákarbraut 13-15
310 Borgarnes
437-1600

Kunstraum Wohnraum
Ásabyggð 2
600 Akureyri

Mývatn

Mývatnsstofa
Hraunvegi 8
660 Mývatn
464-4390
www.visitmyvatn.is

Egilsstaðir

Sláturhúsið
www.slaturhusid.is
Kaupvangi 7
700 Egilsstaðir
470-0692

Seyðisfjörður

Skaftfell
www.skaftfell.is
Austurvegur 42
710 Seyðisfjörður
472-1632

Hvergerði

LÁ Art
www.listasafnarnesinga.is
Austurmörk 21
210 Hvergerði
483-1727

Akureyri

Akureyri Art Museum
www.listasafn.akureyri.is
Kaupvangsstræti 12
600 Akureyri
461 2610

Brákarhátíð

Viking Festival

in the village of Borgarnes
Saturday June 25th



Free all day events

Mud games 10.00 am

Marathon 11.00 am

Viking parade 13.30 pm

Events in the village

park from 14.00 pm

Boat tours 15.00 pm

Welcome to Borgarnes

just one hour drive from Reykjavík

Take road no 1 towards the North

For further information www.brakarhatid.is

or phone +354 437 1600



Hörgshlíðarlaug Is A Pearl Of The Westfjords

WHEN TALKING TO STRANGERS PAYS OFF



13

As we began heading south and east from the Westfjords to the “mainland”, intrepid assistant photographer Katharina Volgger told us there was a natural hot spring for bathing on a farm nearby. Now, hot bathing springs are all over the country, and some of them are located on private property. In other words, if you want to try them, you might have to roll on up to the landowner's home and ask permission to bathe there.

Knocking on the door of a private home, completely unannounced, and casually asking if you can take a bath in a hot spring on their property might seem a little intimidating to the average tourist, as it did for me at first, but I can safely assure you there's nothing to be shy about.

The farm is located on Route 633, which takes you out of Ísafjörður eastwards, a winding road that goes in and out of several fjords. Once you reach Mjóifjörður, look for the sign pointing to Hörgshlíðarlaug. Pulling to a stop beside the tiny house by the road that we guessed to be the owner's house, I was democratically chosen to knock on the door and ask permission.

It was a pleasant, clear day, and the area was imbued with the characteristic silence of the Icelandic countryside. Cautiously, I knocked on the door. It was answered seconds later by a giant of a man with wild hair and a barrel chest, wearing coveralls and rubber boots. The kind of guy you imagine breaking entire trees over his knee for his fireplace, or maybe heaving boulders at terrified villagers. Despite all appearances, Finnbogi was a soft-spoken and

gracious host, and when I asked if we could use his hot spring, answered immediately, “Yeah, yeah, enjoy it. Just be careful, it's pretty hot”.

The spring is fed by three sources—two for hot water, and one for cold—that empty into a stone enclosure beside a modest changing shed. Situated mere metres from the shore of the fjord, flanked on both sides by mountains, it is indeed quite the spot for relaxing in naturally heated water. Having forgotten to bring a swimsuit and not willing to go au naturel, I chose to stand by while photographer Maroesjka Lavigne and Katharina went in instead, and they testified that the water was indeed pretty hot, but not overpoweringly so. If you're on a long drive through the Westfjords, you must stop here.

Iceland's Past Lives On In Siglufjörður



14

Akureyri may be the capital of the north, but that doesn't mean it's the only thing to see in north-central Iceland. On the contrary, if you drive up the west coast of Eyjafjörður, you'll encounter quite a lot of natural beauty, culminating in the town of Siglufjörður, with its tumultuous and rage-inducing history.

A little background: Siglufjörður was pretty much like any other fishing village in Iceland until huge stocks of herring were discovered in its vicinity in the early 20th century. This sparked a boom time for the town, which swelled to about 3,000 permanent inhabitants and saw hundreds of ships from all over Europe docking in its port. Herring speculators—entrepreneurs who established businesses in the town—were revered by the people who fished, canned, pressed, ground and shipped the fruits of their labours overseas. Everything was chugging nicely along until the herring stocks dried up in 1969, at which point the speculators fled town, the ships stopped coming, and Siglufjörður essentially collapsed upon

itself. Today, barely 1,500 people call the town their home.

What makes this history even sadder is the fact that the speculators didn't exactly leave town poor. One story recounts how one herring speculator, many years after leaving behind a load of unpaid workers, was still rich enough to be able to settle salary debts out of his own wallet, if one of his former employees happened to bump into him on the streets of Reykjavík. The leftist in me naturally wondered why dude didn't just settle his unpaid salary debts all in one go—why did you need to physically find him on the street in order to get paid for the work you did? Funny how Iceland's rich really haven't changed their behaviour since.

In any event, Siglufjörður today is actually a gorgeous little town, and the star attraction—the Herring Era Museum—is a lot more fascinating than it might sound. There are three buildings, each painstakingly recreated to period detail. The main building, for example, featured the living quarters of the herring workers, brought vividly to life by countless personal touches—old

calendars still hang on the walls, bottles of cologne and booze from the time are here, the bunks are still made up with straw-stuffed mattresses, pantyhose from the period hang from twine, and so forth. You could spend literally hours wandering around in this place and still not catch every little thing. It really brought the era to life. The other two buildings similarly recreated the fishing ports and the herring factories respectively.

You don't need to be a history buff to enjoy the Herring Era Museum, although history buffs were surely have a field day at this place. Rather, this is the place to go to see Iceland's recent past come to living, breathing life, and it may just give you a deeper understanding of the country as a whole.

MARK YR. CALENDARS: Your next edition of GRAPEVINE: OUTSIDE REYKJAVÍK will hit the streets on July 29, accompanying issue 11.

VIKING

Best little concert venue in Akureyri

CONCERTS:
 Sat. 18. Jun. Eivör
 Sun. 19. Jun. Eivör
 Fri. 1. Jul. Baggalútur
 Sat. 2. Jul. Baggalútur
 Thu. 7. Jul. Kristjana Stefáns & Svavar Knútur
 Fri. 8. Jul. Varsjárbandalagið
 Sat. 9. Jul. Thin Jim

THE GREEN HAT AKUREYRI

For further information on upcoming events and concerts go to: www.facebook.com/graenihatturinn

The Image of Þingvellir

Works by 50 artists
1782-2011

Open daily 12am - 6pm. Adm. free

LISTASAFN ÁRNESINGA

LA ART MUSEUM in Hveragerdi, 40 min. from Reykjavík on the Golden Circle.

KUNG FU
STICKS + SUSHI

Kung Fu • Brekkugata 3 • Akureyri • Sími: 462-1400

Laxdalshús
Restaurant in the oldest house in Akureyri

Hafnarstræti 11,
telephone: 461-2900
laxdalshus@laxdalshus.is

www.hjabeggu.is

KAFFIKÖLT

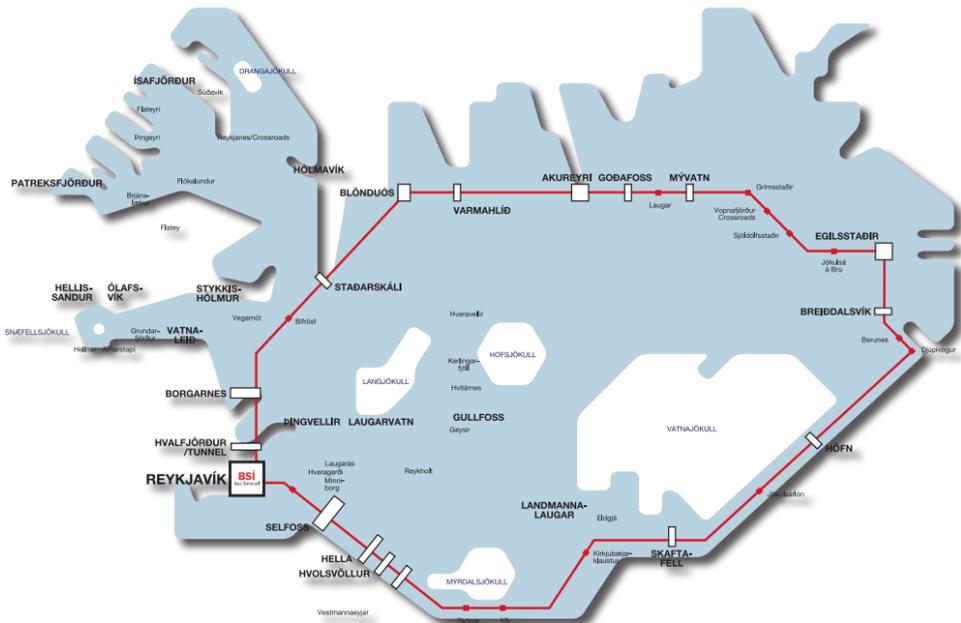
You'll feel right at home

Coffeshop and Icelandic wool

Hjá Þeggu

Geislagötu 10 | Akureyri | Tel: 578 4700

Enjoy Freedom and Flexibility With our Bus Passports



Full Circle Passport

The Full Circle Passport is our most popular passport. With it you can travel around Iceland's ring road with our scheduled busses. It is perfect for those who do not wish to plan too much ahead as it connects you with all the other bus routes available. Still, some of Iceland's most interesting locations are found on the no. 1 ring road. The passport takes you to Goðafoss, Mývatn, Skaftafell and Jökulsárlón just to name a few exciting destinations. At locations such as Reykjavík, Akureyri, Egilsstaðir

and Selfoss you can get connected with many tours and schedules taking you to all of which Iceland has to offer. You have a choice between all of our different schedules running along a particular route so you will often have a few different possible departure times further increasing your freedom while in Iceland. This is the perfect way to experience the most of Iceland with the freedom and flexibility of our bus network all the while being the most affordable way to travel around Iceland.



Single tickets

Day tours

Bus passports

NEW: Vestman Islands Day Tour from Reykjavík. Free pick-up at hotels and guest-houses in Reykjavík. More on www.sterna.is



Ticket Desk Reykjavík
BSÍ
101 Reykjavík
+354 551 1166

Ticket Desk Akureyri
Hafnarstræti 77
600 Akureyri
+354 551 1166

Book on-line at
www.sterna.is
sterna@sterna.is
We are on Facebook