



The REYKJAVÍK GRAPEVINE



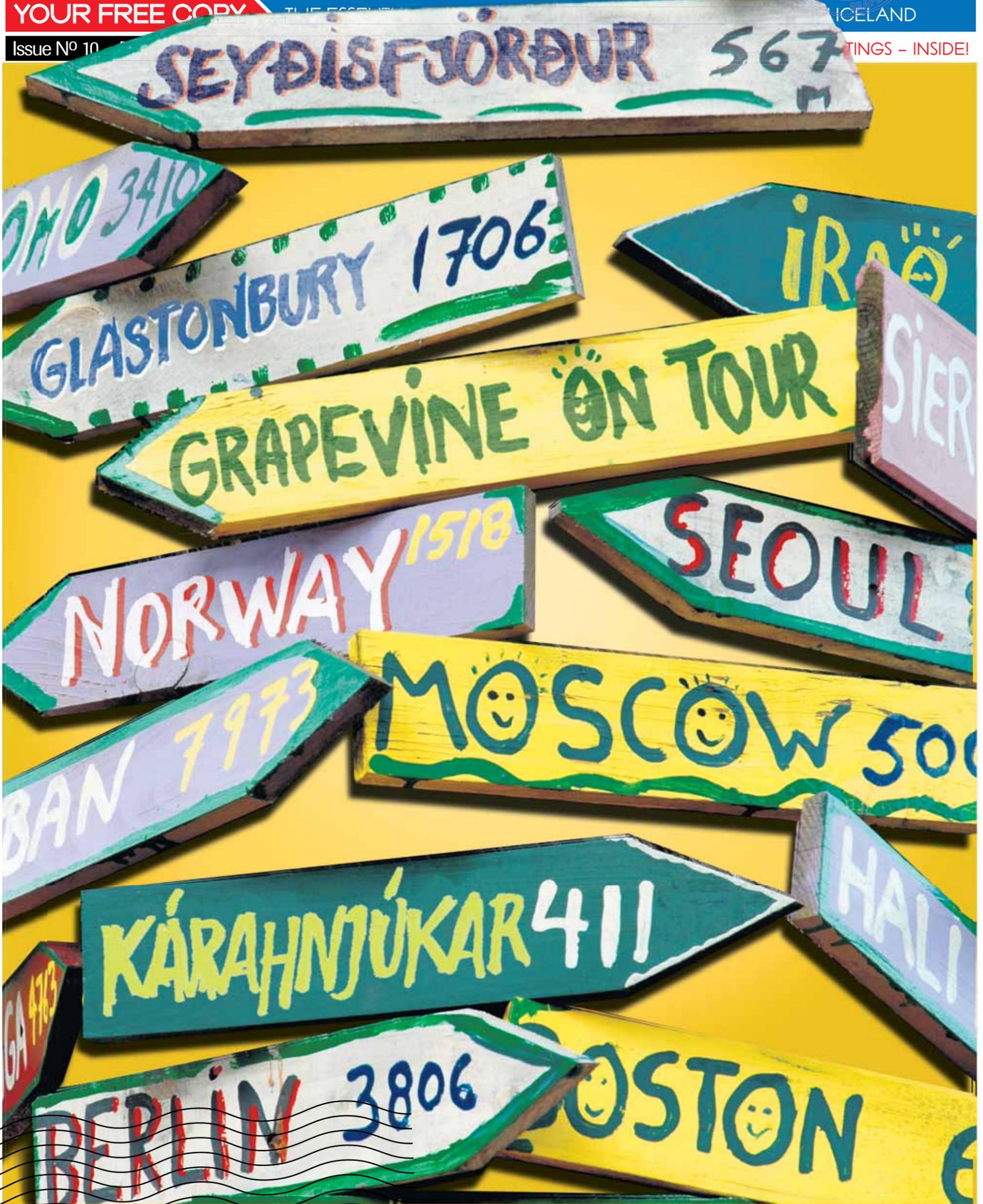
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THE ESSENTIAL

ICELAND

Issue No 10

THINGS - INSIDE!



Sigtryggur Baldursson Goes Glastonbury - Read The Legendary Drummer's Tour Diary - Björk Guðmundsdóttir Interviewed - New Music, New Methods, New Ways Of Thinking - Swimming All Over The Place - Rural Pools Rule! 

Haukur's 10th Editorial!

So we got this letter:

Dear editor,

Like all ordinary, decent visitors (and potential visitors) to your beautiful country, we are surprised and disgusted to see the widespread and quite unnecessary use of the 'F word' in your Reykjavík Grapevine.

Before you react with the 'F word' to denigrate us, and the other vast majority of foreign readers who agree with us (particularly older readers - the ones with the time and money to visit Iceland), just ponder how much you are going to need us tourists to boost your failing economy.

Also, your attempts to divert attention away from the continued disgraceful slaughter of whales ("Too cute to eat?" - issue no 8) by pointing to the slaughter of "cute" lambs and "clever" pigs are flawed. Why? Because it is no defence of anything to claim that there is something else bad or worse.

Is a murderer or abuser let off his crime by pointing out that other people are also murderers or abusers? Anyway "ugly" (to use your epithet) farm animals are at least reared for the purpose and do not require chasing with explosive harpoons to drag them to their deaths.

To attempt to justify whaling as "traditional" is also irrelevant. It was for long traditional to enjoy the beauty of wild birds and animals by stuffing them and displaying them in glass cabinets, and to publicly hang, draw and quarter criminals. Times and customs change and move on. We know better now. We are in the 21st century.

You scoff at foreigners' sentimentality, confusing it with compassion, decency and respect. Anyway, it is better to be labelled sentimental than sadist.

As for your faux pas in referring to the "sissy American tourist", cannot you realise the effect such language might have on the tourist trade you will increasingly need?

If this is your gratitude to visitors and your wildlife heritage, we don't know where we will be spending our money next year, but it certainly won't be Iceland.

Graham Bell
On behalf of the passengers of a cruise ship which circumnavigated Iceland in June 2009.

Dear Mr. Bell,

Thank you for your interest, and your letter.

Now, to address its contents:
Neither I nor anyone else in the Grapevine's staff has ever used the word 'Fuck' to denigrate any of our readers. If you'll find the word 'Fuck' in our paper, it is because someone from our stable of writers has deemed 'Fuck' the best word around to express whatever they are interested in expressing. We are not big

on censoring our writers - neither their opinions nor their vocabulary.

Now that you mention it, there were a lot of 'Fucks' in issue eight of the Grapevine. A brief glance through the paper shows the word 'Fuck' is used at least three times, once in a headline and everything.

I can agree that this is maybe too many 'Fucks' for the average decent and older and wealthy reader. We are sorry for that, but do remind you that you are free not to read our free paper. However, in light of your complaints, we have decided to try our best to not use the word 'Fuck' at all in this issue. So I hope that does you well.

Your next complaint seems to revolve around the views of a fairly recent addition to our writing staff (and one I am very excited to have on board, I might add), Ms. Hildur Knútsdóttir, who wrote the article "Too cute to eat" regarding the recent news that puffins are down in numbers as of late.

To paraphrase you: Ms. Knútsdóttir attempts to divert attention away from the continued slaughter of whales by pointing to the continued and large-scale slaughter of various other animals that is continually condoned by the Western nations that condemn whaling. Her argument is flawed because it's no defence of anything bad to point to something that's equally bad or worse. Furthermore, defending whaling by pointing to the fact that it is traditional is a flawed argument, because other things now deemed unacceptable are traditional, too.

Firstly, I would like to assert that Ms. Knútsdóttir is free to form and hold her own opinion. While I haven't been able to reach a solid stance on whaling (and in fact harbour some very strong doubts about the act), I happen to agree with the journalist that a lot of people's view of the act (including yours) is simplistic and hypocritical. Why the focus on whaling, if not for the reason that they're totally cute and smart (and I remind you - the whales being harvested are no longer considered endangered)? They probably mass farm pigs and chicken right near your house, and the mass farming of pigs and chicken is a truly deplorable practice. Mass-farmed chickens spend their whole lives crammed in tiny cages. There are all sorts of verified horror stories. At least whales get to enjoy a life of freedom before they're caught - I cannot say the same for the contents of your fridge (unless you are vegan, in which case I take it all back).

As for tradition: Americans and Canadians still harvest whale based on tradition (look it up). And have you even considered bullfighting? Sheesh. You're lucky Ms. Knútsdóttir didn't bring up the long-standing Western tradition of waging wars, of mass murder (lest we forget all the torture you guys seem to be into at the moment).

This is all beside the point, though. Agree with her or not, why should Ms. Knútsdóttir not be entitled to her opinion, and why should we refrain from printing it? Why should she not be able to point out that some of the nations and folks that criticize whaling continually support other very comparable and "equally cruel" practices? She makes an argument; she signs her name to it. If you disagree, write a real argument and send it in, I will gladly print it.

I do, however, agree that it's better being labelled sentimental than sadist. This is very true.

Lastly, our "sissy American faux pas" was written by our American intern. Neither she nor us as a publication like to make broad judgements on folks' character or intentions (unlike, say, your wealthy, normal self), but we will grant ourselves the rights to be amusingly and verbally annoyed at whomever we feel like. Be they wealthy and respectable or whatnot.

Besides all of the above, your entire point kinda disgusts me. Are you implying that because Iceland is currently undergoing economic hardship we be stripped of our freedom of speech, that we can no longer foster independent opinions? That we should be careful not to offend the rich tourists that might out of the benevolence of their hearts see fit to visit us and sprinkle some of their precious money around?

Good sir, I hope you do not reflect the majority of our "ordinary, decent visitors" - 'cause if you do, and we offend them away: good riddance, I say. What sort of colonialist douchebag are you, anyway?

We at the Grapevine do not represent Iceland as a whole, nor do we claim to. In fact, I hope nobody does (least of all our president). However, we are naturally grateful to every single one of you "ordinary, decent, wealthy visitors" to our country, and wish you all the best. But we won't change for you, and we will not become timid.

All my best, sincerely,

Haukur S Magnússon
Editor // Reykjavík Grapevine



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Köddi

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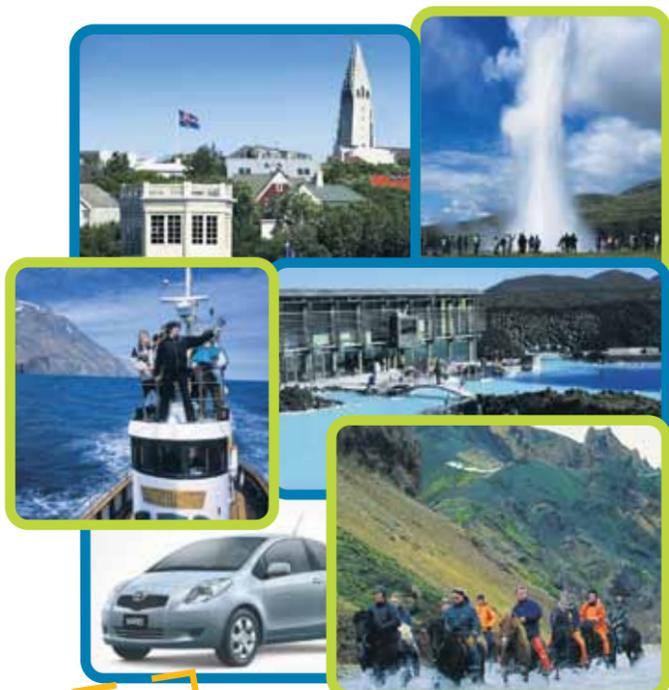
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Sour grapes and stuff

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

4 Letters

Hello there Grapevine,

I'm from a school called Bathgate Academy in Scotland. A couple of weeks ago a few of us came to visit your lovely country and did the Laugavegur Trek. We stayed in Reykjavik at the start and the end of the holiday, and on our second day in Reykjavik I discovered your newspaper. It's awesome! Why can't we have newspapers like yours? Ours seem incredibly dull compared to the Grapevine.

We've heard a lot about the crisis in Iceland at the moment, but keep going guys. You have a beautiful country full of wonderful people. I loved ice climbing on the glaciers and lazing about in the blue lagoon spa. Keep up the wonderfulness!

While we were staying at Reykjavik City Hostel we went to an amazing cafe called Just Food To Go. The chef, Stefan, had been having a bit of a hard time because of the financial crisis, but he was still cheery and doing a great job. If any of you are staying at the City Hostel get your bum over to Stefan's.

I'm afraid to say, that while in Iceland I learnt very little Icelandic. I do have one phrase for you though: Ne hoppipolla! Eg er vikingur! I hope that's right and doesn't turn out to mean something really offensive!

Thanks for a great newspaper :)
Imogen, UK

Dear Imogen,

thank you for the kind words about our paper. As for being awesome, and your newspapers not being awesome, well. I don't know what to say. We're not really a newspaper, for one. Also, I'm sure you've got some good papers over in Scotland. Scotland is so cool. Anyway, we try really, I guess that counts for something, and we are fortunate enough to have a dedicated staff of designers, photographers, writers and some of the best damn interns this side of whatever side we're on right now.

Now, as for your Icelandic slang. I really wish you wouldn't have written that. Esquire is crying as I type this, and I'm thinking of packing it in. Thanks a lot, Imogen.

Dear Haukur and Grapevine's staff,

First of all I intend to congratulate you all for the excellent job you do with this magazine. It's really helpful for us, young people and foreigners who are looking for some juicy news in an international language.

I'm writing this letter to you to ask your opinion (and possibly the one of other readers as well) about one issue: the attitude Icelanders show towards foreigners. It's known that Iceland and its inhabitants are peculiar in more than one trait, but it never occurred to my mind that racism was among them. Yet this seems to be the case.

Far from me any implication related to some sadly well known manifestations of the phenomenon. According to the Cambridge Dictionary of English, racism is defined as "the belief that people's qualities are influenced by their race and that the members of other races are not as good as

Sour grape of the month
A case of POLAR BEER for your thoughts.

We're not gonna lie to you: we really love us some beers. Some folks would call it a problem, but beer never gave us any problems. In fact, over the years, it's solved most of 'em. A frosty glass of cold, frothy, bubblicious, golden-tinted beer has consistently failed to let us down. In the immortal words of Homer J. Simpson: "Mmm... Beer..."

Now, since we're real pleasant and giving folks here at the Grapevine, we thought we'd share some of that wonderful POLAR BEER with you, our readers. Henceforth, until the end of days (or our Polar Beer- sponsorship program, whichever comes first), we will reward one MOST EXCELLENT LETTER with a case of the Polar Beer. You read right. A full case of beer. At your disposal.

Give us your worst: letters@grapevine.is



MOST AWESOME LETTER:

Dear Scumbag who stole my scooter from the garden behind my house last friday night,

If I ever find out who you are my father is going to remove your eyes and shove them up your ass so you, along with me can watch him kick the shit out of you.

Sincerely, Áróra.

Dear Áróra,

thank you for your lovely, threatening letter, and the accompanying lovely, threatening photograph. We are sure that the scumbag that was audacious enough to steal a young girl's scooter from the garden behind her house is trembling with fear right now, as he should be. Stealing is rotten, stealing from kids doubly so.

That said, we do hope you realise that violence is never the answer, and neither are threats of violence (even adorable threats of violence, such as yours). Us at the Grapevine sincerely hope you aren't being raised as some sort of George W Bush Jr. We also hope you find your scooter as soon as possible.

Also, Áróra, even though yours is our most awesome letters, we can't very well be bestowing cases of beer on minors such as yourself. That's why we've decided to keep your prize for you until you turn twenty. Give us a call when you get there.

the members of your own, or the resulting unfair treatment of members of other races". These are quite thought words, so I do not want to be misunderstood: I love Iceland to the point that I decided to move here even though the situation is currently not the best one, and I still strongly believe that Icelanders are wonderful people, like anyone else in the world. But I have been disappointed in more than one occasion. Just to report some facts: in late may I was looking for a new place where to live. I found an interesting advertisement written in Icelandic and, considered my decent knowledge of the language, I decided to write an e-mail avoiding to use English as a communication's problem-solver. After two days the owner of the apartment told me to meet him at the place for a visit and the contract's signature. There the problem began...He quickly understood from my pronunciation that I am not a native. He showed me the place anyway, but with an almost rude behaviour that I would have never imagined from the polite tone he used in his e-mails. Then he said he had forgot the contract home, and that we should meet after two days. That night I got an e-mail saying the place had been rented to someone else (does this tell you anything about "unfair treatment of members of other races"?)

Another fact is that since I got my job I have constantly been bullied by my boss. If there is something wrong, apparently I am the only one to blame. When I was once able to prove that a mistake had been made not by me but by another employee, he replied with a short: "Ha, do you think I will believe this? You are a foreigner!" ("members of other races are not as good as members of your own")

Sadly, I can also notice a certain degree of rudeness coming from young people. For the records, I can easily be taken as Icelandic because of my aesthetical apperance; the point is that anyone who might start a conversation with me somewhere, almost immediately backs up when he realize his "mistake". What then, am I not worth a chat only because I was born somewhere outside this island? Is there any Icelandic who might like someone even if his or her passport has another country on the cover?

I am sad about it, and I wish these things



came to an end. So what I wanted to ask you is: do you think I might have been extremely unlucky and crossed my path with a bunch of assholes, or will I really be isolated because of my racial difference? Shortly: what would you say about Icelanders' attitude towards foreigners?

Cheers,
Hanna (Netherlands)

Dear Hanna,

Thank you for your compliments, and your intriguing questions. You actually might be starting a conversation worth pursuing here.

Firstly, I encourage you reader types out there to respond to Hanna's queries with your own thoughts and observations. As a born and bred Icelandic, I am perhaps not the best person to make any sort of judgement on this. So come on, folks, what are your thoughts on Icelanders' attitude towards foreigners? Do y'all feel Hanna will be isolated because of her racial difference? Send 'em in.

As for my own thoughts on the matter, here they are: Yes, you have been unlucky and encountered a bunch of assholes. For one, I do not like grouping entire nations together and assigning them opinions, character traits, etc. I believe that to be boring and essentialist and a kinda... racist? I also happen to know for a fact that there is indeed a bunch of goddamn assholes in Iceland, as in any other country. I also know there is a great big bunch of really lovely, awesome people over here. But their awesomeness or assholiness has nothing to do with their nationality, the colour of the skin or their mother tongue.

Re: email by Graham Bell ? of June 28th

I was a passenger on the ship that sailed round Iceland. I would like to apologise and advise you that his comments regarding whales and puffins were not shared by all the passengers although his email appeared to indicate that

Sylvia Duckworth

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A Conversation With Björk



As part of the promotional campaign for the new Voltaic box set, Björk Guðmundsdóttir gave out several interviews to the local press. Grapevine was invited to participate, and we of course jumped at the chance. It's the Björk we love and respect, and when she speaks, we listen. Carefully. So we won't waste any more wordcount on introductions, we got 35 minutes with Björk, and the following details most of them.

ON VOLTAIC...

Congratulations on your new box set. It looks swell. Can you describe the process of making such a compilation? How involved are you – do you yourself choose everything that goes on them?

Well, I did when I made the live box set that was released six years ago or something. We'd recorded all the concerts for ten years, we had many hundreds of hours of recordings to go through, and we did, Ásmundur [Jónsson, head of Bad Taste/Smekkleysa] and I. It was a lot of work, but it fit me at the time, because I was enveloped in my nesting hormones. I was pregnant, and could turn into a librarian. That's not usually my strongest side; I am not a collector, that's not my thing. When I was done with that, I thought: 'OK, in

the future, I am not waiting ten years.' The Volta tour would be coming out in 2019, and that makes no sense. It's missing the point.

So I decided to do this as I went along, which is also the nature of the Volta project. Vespertine and Medúlla were total studio endeavours; they were worked on and toyed with for a long time. I wanted... when I made Volta, I hadn't toured for four years, and I wanted to go out. So Volta took a year to write and four years to tour. It's the first time I make a record like this. Usually it's the reverse. Three years crafting a record and then maybe touring it for five months. That's what I did with Vespertine; I put all emphasis on the creative space and writing, touring was like an afterthought.

But with Volta, I wanted to get out of the studio. I was stuck there, making a record that I knew wouldn't be good until after two years of touring. Initially after its release, I felt Volta was just OK, but the songs started coming together and by the end they had taken a shape that I liked.

Rock-animal mode

So you prefer the live versions on Voltaic over the studio ones?

In the Volta project, at least. It was that kind of experiment. I wanted to make raw music. The idea was all this tribal, rave something, battling for equality and

justice, standing on a mountaintop with horns, waving flags. It needed to be raw. It couldn't be a three-year studio record with doilies and patchwork.

So you were conveying a different emotion than on the previous two records? More on the physical or primal side of things?

Yes, yes, very much so. I wanted to do all the festivals and visit all the continents this time around. I had left them out for the decade prior. I hadn't been to South America and Asia for ten years, outside of Japan, and I thought I'd just, you know, go all the way with this. This might even be the last project where I'm this sort of rock-animal. Volta was sort of a rock-animal record.

ON HER NEXT RECORD, AND PAST RECORDS...

-Do you write music while touring? In rock-animal mode? That seems like it could be interesting to hear...

Well, I don't usually write when I am touring. I keep trying, and I do travel with equipment to do so, but it doesn't happen. Partly because you're inhabiting that other world that comes with being on tour. Also, as a singer you are sort of an athlete; you have to tend to your body, eat right, take a

massage after the long flights. You turn into a racehorse that needs to be maintained and stay in shape – which is fun, but often frustrating. You'll just have to focus on that, so the other animal in you suffers.

I often write melodies on tour, in my head, I always write the melodies first. We also worked a lot on the arrangements for the other songs, we always rehearsed during soundcheck, we'd practice and add new songs to the program. The only way to survive two years on the road was to keep adding new songs to the programme, right up to the very last concert. Even if it was only one song per month, it really saved you; there was always something fresh to tackle. We studied the arrangements and changed them, and we had many options for doing so. We had a drummer and all these newfangled electronic instruments to work with, like computers and the Reactable.

The Reactable is an amazing tool, and similar developments in the world of electronic instruments have made it so that you can now create electronic music using your right brain hemisphere. Right now, you don't have to program a song for ten years; you can make a whole record using this movement [waves hand]. Like with the Reactable, I don't know if you saw the tour, but we used the first working model in the world. Using it is just remarkable, everything is like playing chess: The beat is here [gestures to her coffee cup], the bassline is here [points to a glass of water], you move them around in relation to one another and then you add more objects. Or pound on the console.

This is such an exciting development; we now have around twenty different ways to make electronic music live. People think it's just 'Press play', but it's not at all. It's never the same two times in a row, the way we're now doing it. Now you really have more options for live music than with traditional instrumentation. All these new programs that nerds are making in their bedrooms are just crazy, that you can operate by moving your hand, pouring water between containers to set the filters on the synths...

The promise of a thousand possibilities
Is this something you will employ on your next album?

Can you smell it? Yes, I am excited about this. It's more complicated than pouring water around, of course, but all these programs are very exciting and bring with them the promise of a thousands unexplored possibilities.

What are you thinking in terms of the next record? Not so much in how it sounds, but in terms of themes, underlying concepts, emotional spectrum and ideas. I've experienced each of your records as examining certain concepts or thoughts, Volta being

CONTINUES ON PAGE 32

Voltaic: What's In The Box?

Björk is an exceptionally prolific artist, and her vault of must-haves and curiosities is larger than most. Indeed, the Voltaic box is packed with goodies. The basic set has a CD of live performances from the Volta tour, deemed by many to be superior to Volta itself. It has a DVD of live performances. And another DVD. And another CD. And some more stuff. There's also a triple vinyl + DVD version and a limited edition CD version. Check out the basic one:

Disc One – CD – Songs from the Volta tour performed live at Olympic studios

Disc Two – DVD – The Volta tour

Disc Three – DVD – The Volta Videos

Disc Four – CD – The Volta mixes



Volta Tour Screenings At Háskólabíó

The Volta tour DVD that comes with the Voltaic box is a pretty sweet deal. It features an entire concert from the tour shot in Paris, France, where Björk and her tight ensemble perform Volta tunes and various re-arranged favourites (including Medúlla favourite Who is it?) at a hall packed with admirers. The latter half of the DVD features her super-exclusive 2008 concert at Reykjavík's Langholtskirkja, an intimate and moving concert that is a must-see for any Björk fan.

As your great luck has it, you now have the opportunity to experience the Volta Tour film on the big-screen, in high quality surround sound, no less. The Grapevine is proudly co-sponsoring screenings of the Volta tourfilm at the Háskólabíó movie theatre for a limited time.

Experience the Volta tour at Háskólabíó in July, Saturdays at 16:00 and Wednesdays at 18:00.

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Tales From The Tour | Sigtryggur Baldursson

Glastonburied With Emiliana Torrini

Iceland's most literate drummer's notes from the road



Love and hate. Looks like it's going to rain again. Torrentially. That's nothing new, seeing that it usually rains at Glastonbury. Still people go there in ever increasing numbers.

I was mildly exited when I heard Emiliana Torrini was playing Glastonbury this June, since this meant that I would be gracing that oldest and biggest of English summer festivals with my presence for the first time. I am her drummer for the summer, so to speak.

Our festival run started in June and will take us to the end of the summer, zigzagging Europe like mad, jumping trains and planes with a bunch of guitars and musical trinkets.

Now, truth be told, I can't stand ruddy muddy festivals. I don't like the thought of being wet and miserable in a tent with thousands of other miserables and sharing the sodden condition is very little consolation to me. Sod the whole thing. It's hit and run for me, even though its Glastonbury, the granddad of all festivals in England.

Even though I am leaving early Saturday morning, I can't skip the chance of seeing a few cool things since I will be there for the Friday night. Jumping the boat early Saturday morning come hell or high water.

The rest of the band are staying until Monday to revel in peace and love, mud and beer and God knows what else but me, no sir, I won't have any of this peace love shit, sex drugs and mud or whatever you call it.

Those days are over for me.

Pilton Pop

The Glastonbury Festival was founded by Michael Eavis at his Worthy farm near Glastonbury in 1970. It was originally called the Pilton Pop festival and only 1500 people turned up to pay the admission fee of one pound, but by the following year it had turned into the Glastonbury Fayre and featured the likes

of David Bowie, Traffic and Fairport Convention.

Yet while Glastonbury still resonates with historical associations of Druidic rituals and free love, these days it has morphed into a smart operation, still donating all the profits to charities. Indeed, it has had to in order to thrive in an increasingly sophisticated and global live music industry, where juggernaut multinational promoters such as Live Nation and AEG Live battle for market share. Glastonbury's size, scope and history make it the bellweather event for the British festival season.

This year we have the North Americans storming the festival, with Neil Young and Bruce Springsteen headlining the Pyramid stage on Friday and Saturday. Brit pop's resurrected messiahs, Blur, are headlining Sunday. I will be well away by then.

The sweet smell of death

We arrive on Friday morning from Leeds on our bus and my first notion of the place is that I hear voices through my slumber in my bunk and figure that we are pulling into the festival grounds. If you sleep on a bus for a while, you can detect when you are on a gravel road through your slumber. Then the smell hits. I'm thinking this place smells like shit and in reality, we are parked next to the staff toilets behind the Park Stage on the south side of the Glastonbury site. The fumes are filtering into the bus aircon system and gracing my sensitive, half slumbering nose with their presence. I get the feeling I am in a coffin; this place smells like death.

I peek out of my bunk and growl, "are we here?" only to hear someone say, "yeah! and it's raining." I fall back with a sarcastic giggle, I already hate the place.

I get up and fetch my pass and laminate and stuff and God knows all sorts of trinkets and yes, it is raining and muddy everywhere. I go see Lay Low open up the park stage at 11 and there

are actually people there apart from us. Somehow, I find that weird, but I shouldn't. She is wonderful as usual, and I'm starting to warm to this, no more toilet smells; I am looking over the city of tents and towers that is Glastonbury and it is actually pretty impressive.

I meet Emiliana and the boys at two to go and play at the BBC enclave down by the Pyramid stage. We are to do a stripped down version of Jungle Drum, which has now reached no. 1 in Germany and is poised to do damage to charts elsewhere, though God knows whether the Brits will ever get excited about it. They really do have their own agenda when it comes to pop music, and are not going to let the Germans tell them what is cool. Oh no. On the way down in the Land Rover through the mud encrusted paths, word reaches our tour manager that Emiliana is being bumped up to headline status at some of the German festivals we are doing in July and she looks worried.

Not all musicians want to be pop stars. Funnily enough.

Paging Dr. Freud

The BBC stage where they do interviews and the odd musical performance is a TV studio on site, complete with outdoor and indoor stages and lots of wooden mushrooms (paging Dr. Freud), all very psychedelic and grrrrroovy. We play outside since the sun just decided to honour our presence and came out from behind the clouds to bathe us in its glow. It's actually steaming hot now, and all the rain is evaporating.

Then it's back to the Park Stage to get down to some setting up and soundchecking, which we shake back in the Land Rover to do. It is funny to watch a little sunshine making a big difference in the way a crowd looks as we drive through the grounds. The drummer and singer from Supergrass are playing before us on the Park Stage with a friend of theirs on bass doing cover versions of



80's pop stuff. They are having fun but I'm finding it rather sad. I'm not big on 80's nostalgia; I was there and like to remember it like it was.

There is a changeover while our stuff is rolled onstage and plugged in and I'm trying to talk to the monitor engineer who says a lot of yes, but I have this hollow feeling he is really not listening to what I'm saying. Poor man must have a lot to do or so it seems. It's now just past five and we are going on stage at 5.15.

The monitors take a while getting ready, but finally we are on stage and the crowd gathers to hear; the bowl in front of the stage fills up with people. The set starts off pretty easy but soon picks up and ends with a bang and it's over... we're off stage and it's all over with. Much like teen sex, I'm told.

No hate in my heart

Now is the hard part – packing up after festival – because behind the curtains are risers with drums and keyboards that have to be stripped post haste for next band. This operation is still a one-roadie thing, so I am packing drums while sweating like a pig after the show. No wailing groupies waiting backstage with drugs and debauchery. Now that would be hard work. This is easy.

They do have a charming backstage bar at the Park Stage where they serve

up some good local ale, so I am feeling rather perky when we trek on down the muddy path all the way to the Pyramid Stage to see Neil Young at 10 o'clock.

For some odd reason it is way past ten when we get there and Neil has been playing for a while. Good thing he got warmed up for our critical ears... Not quite, we hang on to every word he says and are singing along to most of his tunes except of course the ten minute guitar solos in 11 time. Well, I do remember singing along to that as well. You see, by this time my resolve towards the damn festival ghost had all but dissolved and I was, dare I say, having a blast and when Neil did Heart of Gold for his encore, it was an unexplainable phenomena to be part of that sea of people on a very communal high. At that moment I really felt that I GOT the festival vibe, and some. No hate anywhere in my heart.

Virtually cured of my sarcasm, I made quite a few new friends that night after the Neil Young show. I don't hate this place at all.

I actually managed to catch my cab at 6 in the morning, the train back to London and the plane back to Iceland, which was, I'm not sorry to say, close to a miracle.

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AH 62	The Highland Road - Glaciers, waterfalls and hot springs	95 €	90 €	14.400 kr
AH 63	The Silver Circle	140 €	125 €	20.000 kr
AH 64	The Highland Route & Golden Circle Evening Tour	130 €	115 €	18.400 kr
AH 65	The Platinum Circle - Three in one	175 €	160 €	25.600 kr

Tours guided in German 2009				
Tour Code	Tour Name	Rack Rate	Special Offer	ISK Rate
AH 217	Besuch eines isländischen bauernhofs / Visit to an Icelandic farm	79 €	60 €	9.200 kr
AH 35	Südküste und Jökulsárlón Gletscher Lagune / South Coast and Jökulsárlón	189 €	140 €	22.400 kr
AH 10	Stadtrundfahrt / Greater Area Reykjavik Sightseeing	39 €	30 €	4.500 kr
AH 225	Stadtrundfahrt und Blaue Lagune/ City Sightseeing and The Blue Lagoon Direct	69 €	40 €	6.500 kr
AH 61	Die Saga Route / The Saga Trail	80 €	75 €	12.000 kr
AH 62	Die Hochland Route - Gletscher, Wasserfälle und heiße Quellen / The Highland Road Glaciers, waterfalls and hot springs	95 €	90 €	14.400 kr
AH 63	Der Silberne Kreis / The Silver Circle	140 €	125 €	20.000 kr
AH 75	Walbeobachtung / Whale Watching	49 €	45 €	7.500 kr
AH 234	Perlen der Südküste / South Coast & Waterfalls	129 €	90 €	14.200 kr
AH 212	Der Goldene Kreis / The Golden Circle Classic	79 €	60 €	9.200 kr
AH 30	Südküste und Thorsmörk / Thorsmörk and The South Coast	129 €	90 €	14.200 kr

Rates in EUR and ISK, valid from June 2009				
Tour Code	Tour Name	Rack Rate	Special Offer	ISK Rate
AH 10	Greater Area Reykjavik Sightseeing	39 €	30 €	4.500 kr
AH 11	Gullfoss & Geysir Express	69 €	50 €	7.600 kr
AH 12	The Golden Circle Classic	79 €	60 €	9.200 kr
AH 13	Golden Circle Evening Tour	79 €	60 €	9.200 kr
AH 15	Iceland from Below	79 €	60 €	9.200 kr
AH 18	The Blue Lagoon Direct to Keflavik airport	33 €	20 €	3.400 kr
AH 19	The Reykjanes Peninsula	59 €	45 €	7.000 kr
AH 21	Iceland from Below & Blue Lagoon direct	100 €	80 €	12.500 kr
AH 22	Reykjanes Peninsula and Gullfoss & Geysir	129 €	95 €	15.000 kr
AH 23	City sightseeing and Gullfoss & Geysir	99 €	70 €	11.000 kr
AH 24	The Blue Lagoon and Gullfoss & Geysir	99 €	70 €	11.000 kr
AH 25	City sightseeing & Blue Lagoon	69 €	40 €	6.500 kr
AH 27	The Viking Horse Riding tour and Gullfoss & Geysir	119 €	85 €	13.500 kr
AH 28	The Blue Lagoon Direct from Keflavik airport	33 €	20 €	3.400 kr
AH 29	The Blue Lagoon Direct	33 €	20 €	3.400 kr
AH 30	Thorsmörk and South Coast	129 €	90 €	14.200 kr
AH 31	The Viking Horse Riding Tour & Blue Lagoon Direct	89 €	60 €	9.500 kr
AH 32	Landmannalaugar by bus	139 €	95 €	15.300 kr
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AH 75	Whale Watching	49 €	45 €	7.500 kr
AH 78	Whale Watching & The Blue Lagoon to Keflavik Airport	82 €	65 €	10.300 kr
AH 79	Whale Watching & The Blue Lagoon Direct	82 €	65 €	10.300 kr
AH 88	ATV Blue Lagoon Direct to Keflavik Airport	125 €	85 €	13.500 kr
AH 89	ATV Blue Lagoon Direct	125 €	85 €	13.500 kr
AH 140	Golden Circle Super Jeep Tour	249 €	220 €	35.000 kr
AH 142	4X4 Iceland Adventure	149 €	130 €	21.000 kr

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Business (ha ha ha) | Jonathan Baker Esq.

“My Ka-róna” Commerce and Currency of Iceland



Money, money, money is certainly funny, or in Iceland's world at least. The local currency – known as the króna – has a fluctuating exchange rate that tends to differ on a weekly basis; up and down, stronger and weaker, fuller and bleaker. Mostly down, weaker and bleaker, as of late. But you get the idea.

Since the króna plummeted at an alarming rate seemingly overnight from last October, times have been good for tourists to visit, buy things, get drunk or just to gloat about their stronger currency – the British Pound, Yankee Dollar, the Euro, whatever.

Apart from the recent downfall, Iceland's history of currency and commerce is a full and rich tale of progression and valour worthy of its own saga.

The Birth of Trade

The evolution of Icelandic currency has changed since ‘way back in the day’ when precious items such as silver, homespun cloth and even cows were the main circulation of currency between the 9th and 14th centuries. In fact cows became the most common value system for importing/exporting livestock and goods – prices were based on the cow equivalent. Like a beer would cost an udder, or something.

As times progressed so did the trading and fish over overtook those poor cows as the standard value system – manly due to the avalanche of foreign merchants stopping by at Iceland's numerous docks in the late 14th Century. The pricing equivalence between the aforementioned methods just became ridiculous. Take a look: one cow equalled six ewes (sheep) which equalled one hundred and twenty ells of homespun, and which then equalled two hundred and forty fish. With the impending invention of shopping malls, iPods and coffee houses, a new form of currency and trade had to be established.

Welcome the Crown

The Danish Coinage Act of 1873 abolished all previous forms of currency in favour for the decimal system and the Króna was born. The first denominations of notes – issued in 1885 by Landssjóður Íslands – were of 5, 10 and 50 Krónur. 1922 saw the introduction of Iceland's first coin, the aurar, which commenced

in the values of 10 and 25 pieces. 100 aurar pieces made up to 1 króna, similar to the modern equivalent of the pence or cent. These were followed in 1925 by denominations of 1 and 2 króna pieces and in 1926 by 1, 2 and 5 aurar pieces.

Come the early 1960s, three banks were in production of printed money in paper forms, each contributing their own denomination into the cocktail of monopoly – Ríkissjóður Íslands distributing one króna notes and Landsbanki Íslands chucking in 25, 100, 500, 1000 and 5000 notes.

Like all great blockbuster movies, the sequel tends to be a lot more confusing and tedious than the first. Same for which could be said about the ‘second wave’ of Icelandic króna in 1981. A revaluation from the old 100 króna now becoming worth 1 new króna was bewildering to say the least.

Króna coins now became produced in denominations of 1, 5, 10 and a 50 piece in 1987. The 2000 denomination of Króna was also introduced, but is no longer used in main circulation – now brandished as “tourist money”, meaning that foreign exchange booths are more likely to dispense the notes than ATMs are. The introduction of the 100 Króna piece in 1995 brought the demise of aurar and eventually it became obsolete in 2003 – it was most unquestionably the end of an eyrir.

God Save The Króna

A lot has changed since the early days of commerce in Iceland. The frequent use of debit cards for purchasing quality items has cancelled out most usage for small coins, as it's often typical to see lonely króna pieces dispersed across the streets of Laugavegur – along with the vomit from a heavy weekend. Could this be said for the UK and the States too?

Well, in the United Kingdom, for the value of a Pound you can grab yourself a few cans of non-branded baked beans and a loaf of chemically altered bread. Maybe a can of strong supermarket cider and a packet of ‘beef flavour’ corn snacks or even a plastic photo frame.

For a dollar, you can only grab mainly food related items. Especially cheeseburgers from a clown fronted chain fast food eatery or various confectionaries from vending machines. Or even practical uses like to topping up a parking meter.

One hundred Króna will get you six plastic bags from your local convenient store, a tiny chocolate bar depending on where you shop or a small carton of Svali also depending where you shop. According to most folk, the best way to spend your golden crown is a small tub of flavoured skyr from Bónus. ☘

JONATHAN BAKER ESQ.
HAILEY LOMAN

To some, the Króna may look similar to the well-known ‘pretend money’ dealt out during a popular economical domination board game. However with up to 12 security features printed on each note, this physical form of the Króna is surely no fugazi. Have you ever wondered what the difference in the notes detail and complexity are? Let's take a gander.



VALUE:
500 Krónur
OBVERSE PRINT:
Jón Sigurðsson was leader of the Icelandic Independence movement in the 19th Century. He believed in freedom of the individual, the need for the country to be independent, respect for the cultural and religious traditions, especially the preservation of the Icelandic language and no doubt, keeping its own currency.
REVERSE PRINT:
Jón Sigurðsson at his writing desk, with tapestry and other belongings.
TYPE OF PAPER:
Made of raw cotton.
COLOUR:
Red.
DATE ISSUED:
1981.
SIZE:
145 x 70 mm.
WATERMARK:
Portrait of Jón Sigurðsson.
BLIND RECOGNITION FEATURE:
One vertical line is intaglio-printed on the obverse.



VALUE:
1000 Krónur
OBVERSE PRINT:
Lutheran Bishop Brynjólfur Sveinsson who helped to build the church Brynjólfskirkja in the village of Skálholt – and has a beard shaped like a scrotum. The written denomination is in the same typeface inscription as the baptismal font of Brynjólfskirkja.
REVERSE PRINT:
A cross-section and portrait of Brynjólfskirkja. At the side is an image of the Madonna gold ring owned by Bishop Brynjólfur Sveinsson.
TYPE OF PAPER:
Made of raw cotton.
COLOUR:
Purple.
DATE ISSUED:
1984.
SIZE:
150 x 70 mm.
WATERMARK:
Portrait of Jón Sigurðsson.
BLIND RECOGNITION:
Two vertical lines are intaglio-printed on the obverse.



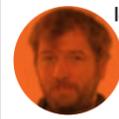
VALUE:
2000 Krónur
OBVERSE PRINT:
Slap bang on the front is the mug shot of Jóhannes Sveinsson Kjarval, one of Iceland's most famous artists. Kjarval was once criticized due to his unconventional blend of realistic landscapes and mythical subjects, but he was well respected enough in the end to be featured on the note. Even though it's a note no one likes.
REVERSE PRINT:
Jóhannes's painting ‘Yearning for Flight’ and his drawing ‘Woman and Flowers’.
TYPE OF PAPER:
Made of raw cotton.
COLOUR:
Yellow, Green and a bit of Red.
DATE ISSUED:
1995.
SIZE:
150 x 70 mm.
WATERMARK:
Portrait of Jón Sigurðsson.
BLIND RECOGNITION:
A triangle is intaglio-printed on the obverse.



VALUE:
5000 Krónur
OBVERSE PRINT:
Illustrated is Ragnheiður Jónsdóttir. Ragnheiður was the daughter of the priest Jón Arason and wife of two consecutive Bishops – Gisli Þorláksson and Einar Þorsteinsson (not at the same time, obviously). The lettering is copied from the Laufáskirkja alter cloth at the National Museum of Iceland.
REVERSE PRINT:
The reverse depicts Ragnheiður instructing two girls in the art of embroidery.
TYPE OF PAPER:
Made of raw cotton.
COLOUR:
Blue, purple and green.
DATE ISSUED:
1986.
SIZE:
155 x 70 mm.
WATERMARK:
Portrait of Jón Sigurðsson.
BLIND RECOGNITION:
Three vertical lines are intaglio-printed on the obverse.

Opinion | Valur Gunnarsson

Where is the Icelandic Aristotle?



Iceland only seems to be large enough to accommodate one, or at best two, points of view at a time. While our Scandinavian

cousins were busy inventing model societies that stood somewhere between the two extremes of American Capitalism and Soviet Communism, and achieved a wide consensus among their populations in doing so, Iceland was deeply divided between left and right. Mid-century newspapers seem almost comical to us now in their fervent Cold War rhetoric, but how much has really changed?

A wound that will never heal

In the Post-war era, you were either opposed to or in agreement with the US military presence, and the debate took the form of sloganeering when at its best and teargas at its worst. This rift has never quite healed. In the past decade, no neutral ground seems to have been found between conservationists who are often portrayed as being in principle against modernity, and industrialists who seem to want to dam every river, waterfall or hot spring they can find. In political discourse, you seem to have to be either for or against nature, which is quite a remarkable feat of oppositional thinking. When faced with the issue of joining the European Union, this problem becomes apparent yet again. On the one hand you have people who are portrayed, Cold War style, as traitors who want to sell Iceland's independence to foreigners. On the other hand, you have people who are portrayed as wanting to sever all connections with the outside world. About the actual pros and cons of joining the EU, we hear very little.

Tap water journalism

As usual, the media is at least partially to blame. Icelandic news programmes and papers are run on a shoestring budget by all international standards. Investigative journalism is both expensive and time consuming. The cheapest option is what has quite appropriately been called “tap water journalism.” You get two people with opposing views, and then you turn them on and off like hot and cold water. With no one in a position to present the actual facts, political debate is quickly reduced to the level of a football game with no referee where everyone simply cheers their side reduction ad absurdum. Aristotle said that for every virtue there are two vices, both located at opposite ends of the spectrum. He would no doubt say that those who see the EU as the devil incarnate as well as those who see it as the answer to all our prayers are equally wrong. The answer, no doubt, lies somewhere in the middle. Only by examining things from there can we truly see what is the right path. Tap water actually works best when hot and cold are mixed together. How much of each should be the subject of political debate, not either or. Even when, as with the EU, one must eventually decide one way or another. ☘

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RE-08 - 09:00
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SAT

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When Batman Met Robin



All Star Batman & Robin: The Boy Wonder

Frank Miller and Jim Lee

Frank Miller's new take on the Boy Wonder's origins takes a few chapters to get used to. Maybe because it takes the story a few chapters to actually begin. But mainly because you've never seen the caped crusader like this. We all know he's crazy. That's his shtick. A crazy crimefighter chasing crazy criminals. But in this extravagant epic, he's just weird. He constantly refers to himself as the "goddamn Batman," has outdoor sex with other sexy vigilantes (with masks on) and he laughs, yes, he actually laughs, out loud - while he beats his victims to a bloody pulp. Isn't that supposed to be the M.O. of another certain Gotham psycho? Maybe he's just trying to out-flake the other flawed superheroes in the book (including a sexist Wonder Woman, Superman the

control freak and Green Lantern, the douchebag).

Robin is kidnapped by Batman on the night of his parents' murder, thrown into the bowels of the batcave and made to stay there for days without bread and water. That's child abuse, isn't it? Well, it's for his own good. The boy needs to be toughened up if he's gonna spend his next years running around the big city, fighting the scum of the earth in his undies.

Miller's Sin City-esque dialogue sounds a bit strange up against Jim Lee's Image-esque artwork (which is flippin' gorgeous, by the way, and makes the whole purchase worthwhile, whether you like the story or not). But that too, will grow on you. Some hardcore batfans will hate this thing. Others will realise that it's actually a dark comedy, and as such, quite entertaining. 🍷

HUGLEIKUR DAGSSON

Not The Best Comic Ever



Scott Pilgrim's Precious Little Life Vol. 1

Bryan Lee O'Malley

Welcome to Toronto Canada, the home of Scott Pilgrim, unemployed twenty-something bass guitarist of Sex Bob-Omb. When we first join our main character he is rebounding with a high-schooler. Soon he meets the rollerblading (yuck) delivery girl Ramona and falls in love. There is only a minor problem. Before they can get together he has to fight her seven evil martial arts/mystical power ex-boyfriends. The first evil ex is supported by a group of bat-winged cheerleaders.

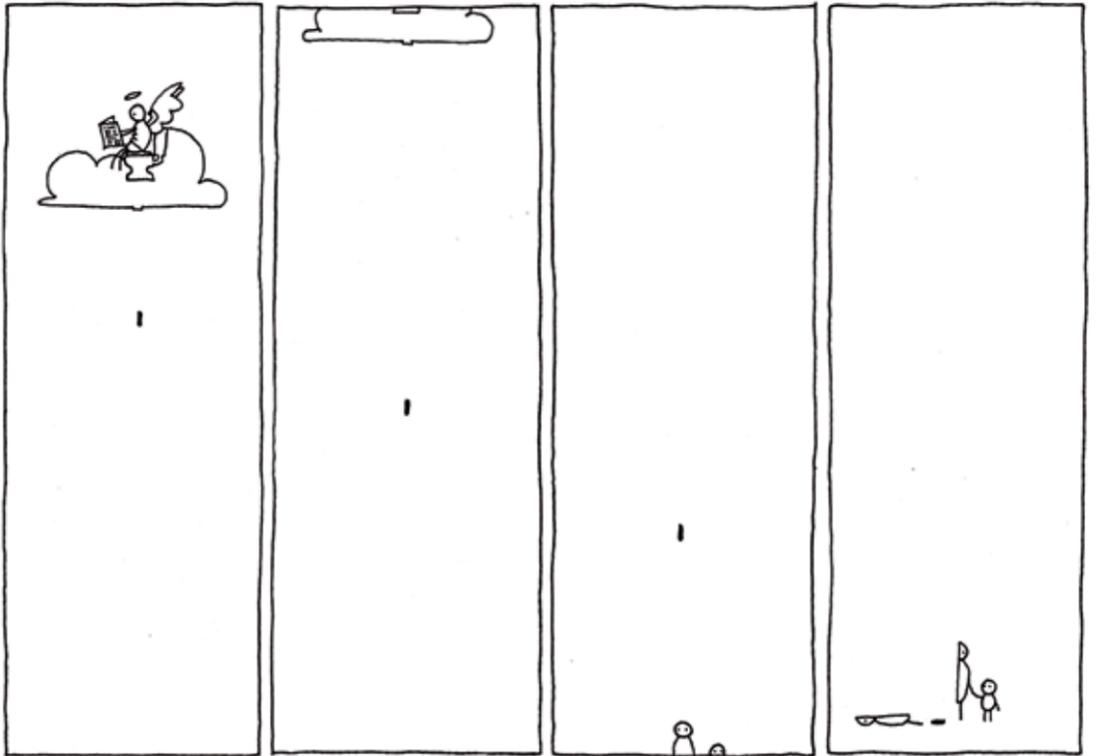
The book is full of entertaining conversations between Scott and his friends and if you like Chynna Clugston-Major's "Blue Monday" you'll love these series. If you kind of hate Chynna's forced wittiness you will be relieved that Pilgrim and pals are a bit more relaxed in the witty department.

The Scott Pilgrim series are being transformed into the movie: "Scott Pilgrim vs. the World" directed by Edgar Wright (Shaun of the Dead) and starring the awkwardly friendly Michael Cera (Superbad).

To be quite honest, the movie sounds more exciting than the remaining 5 books, but maybe that has more to do with the appealing combination of Edgar Wright and Michael Cera than the first book being boring. This is not the best comic ever but by far not the worst. Maybe a bit like the country of Canada. Anyway, it's very popular you know, so there must be something to it... right? 🍷

LÓA HJÁLMTÝSDÓTTIR

— by Hugleikur Dagsson



— by Lóa Hjálmtýsdóttir



— by Bent



— by Elo Vázquez and Óttar Norðfjörð



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Grapevine's taxi driver

Tales from the Cab Side...



Tonight, as opposed to those covered in previous columns, is wrapped in a cloak of boredom and meagre turnover. Stranded at a slow procession of differing taxi stands throughout the greater Reykjavík area, end of the month depleted wallets and the exam season conspire to rob my ilk and I of our livelihood. Neal Stephenson comes to the rescue in the form of *The Diamond Age*; *A Young Lady's Illustrated Primer*, whilst in the background Neurosis lulls me into contemplative submission teetering on the borders of LaLa land.

The late spring evening drifts uneventfully into a light shade of darkness and unfolds with a two o'clock sunrise ripe with prank orders and un-lucrative sprint distance fares.

The customary post midnight rush won't pick up and I'm reduced to cruising and poaching middle-aged prey in the more fertile dinner party infested suburbs. The middle aged notoriously cannot hold their liquor and the seething bickering of an après dinner party couple, one of whom which has inevitably over imbibed, lends it self to a fare less rancid only to a heard of menopausal females all atwitter with the roaring rambunctiousness of a girls night out.

Among the same old comments along the lines of me being young enough to be the son of a drunken heifer, said heifers pitch beer-goggled remarks about my perceived handsomeness and then, at my failure to smile and rejoice, the cheerfully inebriated invariably turn to bitchingly berating me for not brimming with a festive spirit.

The herds, oblivious to anything but reminiscing in shrill shrieks about girls nights of yore, pay up and

disperse at such dens of desperation as *Players* in a manner eating away at the hour as greedily as they did in slowly amassing in the vehicle from tardy goodbyes at their abandoned dinner parties.

As the notion of punching out early is grabbing hold, the front passenger door is swung open and Hank Moody (an alias of course) plants his lanky self in the shotgun seat. Hank is, as usual, brimming with animated stories and seemingly more anxious to disperse jokes and good humour then to get home and pass out. Hence I employ him for comic relief until the point that coincidence floats us a fare in the vicinity of his address. We then tour the city night performing the *Moody Show* on stretches of street as far as his home in Kópavogur. Still, Hank's deadpan delivery along with his scathing doses of sarcasm often fails to elicit much cheer from my ride sharing customers, so we mete ourselves the largest shares of laughter once offended customers have paid up and alighted.

After an odd hour or two of sowing un-PC jokes and reaping all shades of offence, we leave a threesome of youngsters uncomfortably re-evaluating the sexual nature of their friendships and – having depleted Hank's stock of insults – call it a night.

☞ -"TRAVIS BICKLE"

Culture | New documentary

Before Björk There Was...



It has always been an Icelander's greatest dream to be accepted by big city folk. The Sagas are full of stories of Icelanders' triumphs abroad, be it at the court of the Norwegian king or the Byzantine Emperor. These may have been a tad embellished, as reports of Icelanders' triumphs in the last few years certainly were. It was artists such as Sigur Rós and Björk who were the first Icelanders in modern times to really conquer the world. But long before them, a man by the name of Sveinn Kristján Bjarnarson had New York at his feet. No one, however, seems to know about him.

Early 20th Century quarter life crisis

Now that Iceland's reputation is in tatters, it is a welcome opportunity to revisit one of our countrymen's more successful exploits. In the documentary "From a Turf Cottage to the Cover of Time," filmmaker Hans Kristján Arnason does just that. At the age of 27, having what would now probably be called a quarter life crisis, Sveinn knocked a few years off his age, passed himself off as being born in the USA and changed his name to Holger Cahill.

As such he became director of the prestigious Museum of Modern Art in New York City and supervised a program to help starving artists during the Great Depression. Now that depression is upon us again and artists are starving even more than usual, it is a worthwhile reminder of how even the Americans thought is necessary for the state to chip in to save the arts.

Cahill is also credited for helping to move the world capital of visual arts from Paris to New York. Whether this was a good idea is another matter, but probably inevitable. If Cahill was the "pull" effect of moving visual arts across the Atlantic, Hitler was most certainly on the "push" end of things.

Art in the time of depression

Nevertheless, Cahill deserves credit for his work as a real patron of the arts who cared equally much during bust or boom. The story is told in a straightforward documentary style, which is almost a relief these days. It often seems to be the case, especially when dealing with the visual arts, that the filmmaker sees himself more as artist than chronicler, with the inevitable result that the point gets lost along the way.

Hans Kristján and filmmaker Guðmundur Bjartmarsson resist all such temptation, instead concentrating on the story at hand. The film includes interviews with surviving family members and art historians. The full version was debuted at the Gimli film festival in Winnipeg in late June, having received rave reviews in Fréttablaðið. The DVD is available in Reykjavík bookstores and select music stores.

☞ -VALUR GUNNARSSON

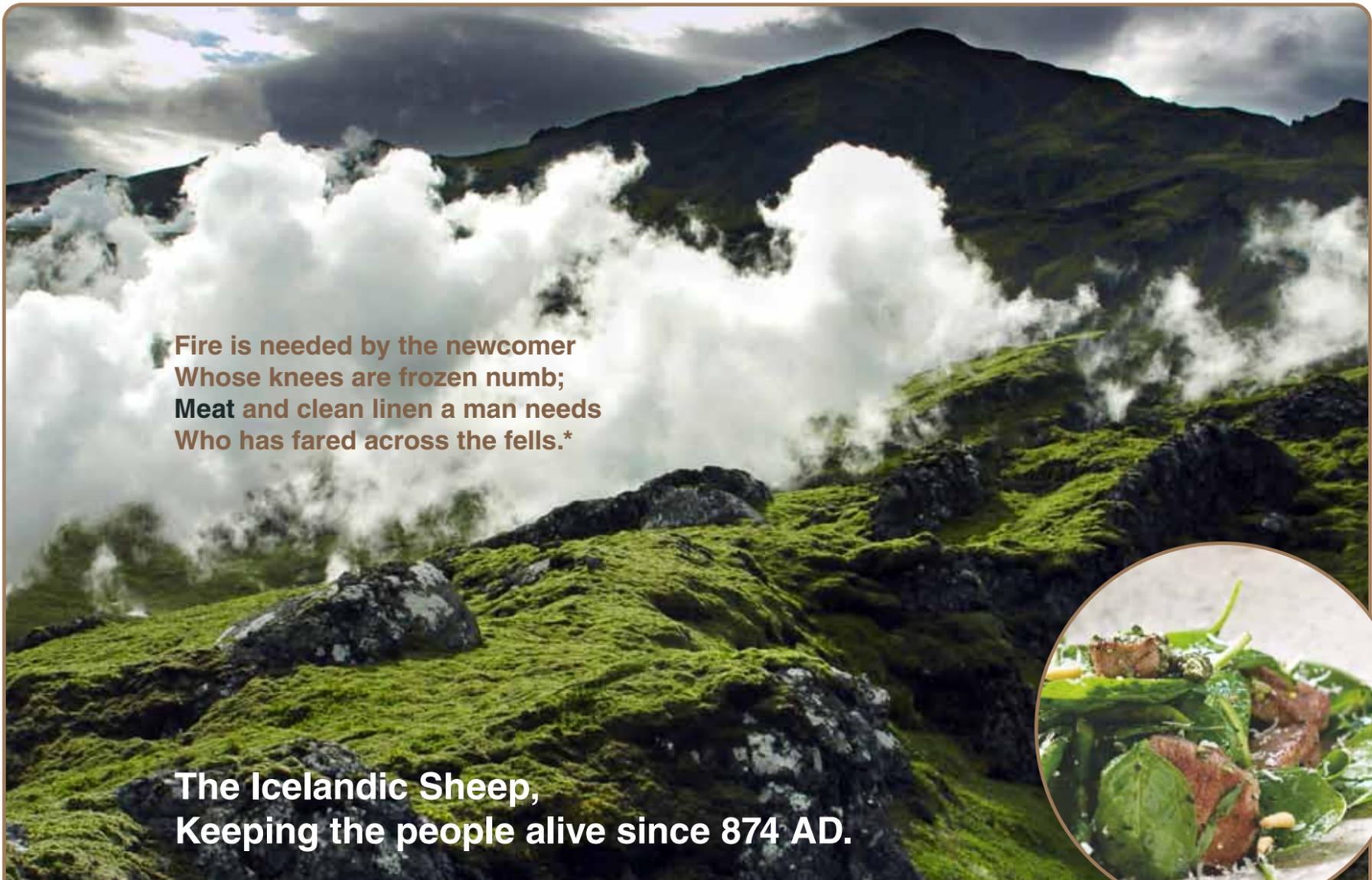
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Radio To The Other Side

In search of the Real McCoy

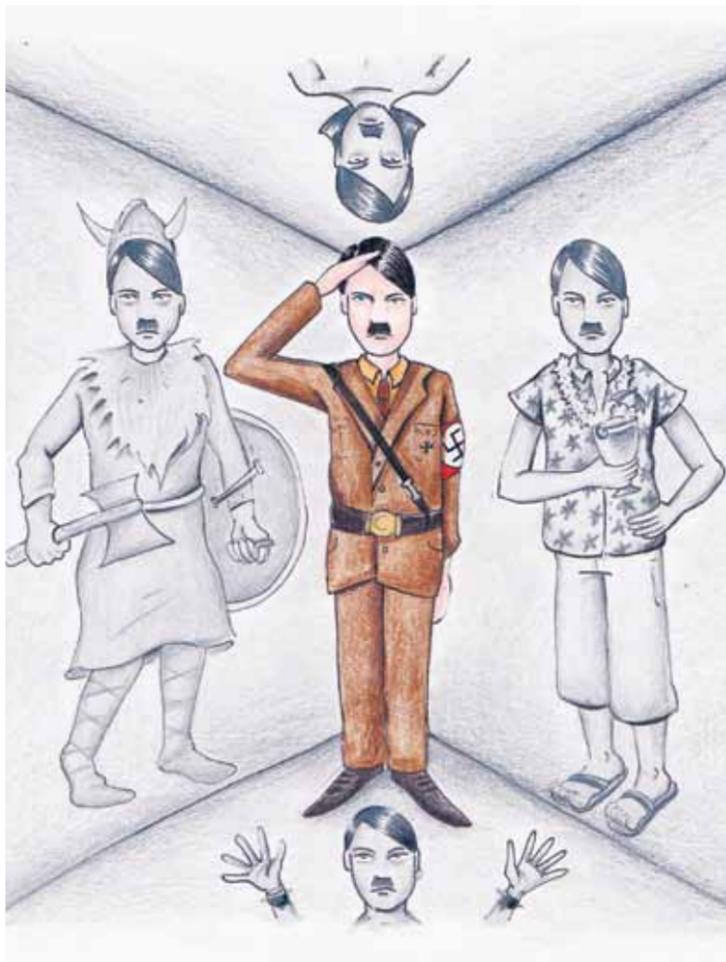
Words

Marc Vincenz

Illustration

Inga María Brynjarsdóttir

Believers come in all shapes and forms and, mostly, they lead quite unsurprising, even mundane lives. For some, talking with the dead, a hidden being, or sharing life-light with the Cosmos, is as ordinary as driving a car to work or taking a stroll down Laugavegur. And it isn't the ones who wear mad flowing costumes and flowers in their hair that you have to watch out for, it's the ones you least suspect: the lawyers, doctors, politicians, and housewives, plenty and plenty of housewives—some desperate, others less so—but all with a special connection to the world beyond



I'm sitting in what doubles as a séance parlour in the Icelandic Elf School on the third floor of an office building in downtown Reykjavík. The room, hardly large enough to swing a black cat in, is crammed to the gills—there must be close to seventy people. There is someone from virtually every walk of life here: from the Goth teenager with the Ankh tattoo to the Don Juan retiree in the tweed jacket. The majority are women over sixty, mostly widows. One of the looks over at me and says:

'So, have you seen Them before?'

There's a long moment of hush. I do of course know what she's talking about, but I hesitate. I don't like to lie; yet in the scheme of the supernatural what counts as a lie and what doesn't? It's all about perception, isn't it?

'I mean a spirit,' she says after my long silence.

I nod, smile feebly and make to write notes. Actually, I'm doodling in the margins; spirally things that look like little black holes. I daren't look up until Magnús Skarphéðinsson, leader of this

motley crew at the Reykjavík Paranormal Investigation Society, arrives. A shiver runs down my spine. Perhaps they see ghostly apparitions in here all the time. Magnús has to give everyone a run for their money. You can't have a séance without the promise of something interesting happening. That's why, I guess, there are cameras all over the room; why calming music is being piped in, and why Magnús has donned a jacket and tie.

First, to get everyone in the right mood, Magnús cracks all sorts of jokes, then proudly recounts a story he told recently on his radio show; all the while Hildur Clausen, the medium, sits there slumped as if she is going into trance. He strikes me almost like a vicar addressing his flock. After a couple of prayers—or rather respectful incantations for the dearly departed—candles are lit. Magnús has his congregation right in the palm of his hand.

Ten minutes of silence seem like half an hour and then, as if by magic, precisely at the appointed minute (I notice Magnús check his watch), Hildur is channelling Ólafur Tryggvason. Most of the questions are posed by Magnús himself. Meanwhile, the fingers of his right hand, deftly poised

'Ólafur says Adolf was not really such a bad guy,' my neighbour and appointed translator whispers in my ear. 'He was a young soul; he had a lot to learn. He was seduced over to the dark side by the aliens that live on the Grey Planets.'

on a remote control, switch from Verdi to the Celtic pipes of Enya. Unlike Guðbjörg, another medium/channeller whom I have spent time with, Hildur doesn't really appear to be any different from when I saw her in the reception around an hour ago. When I witnessed Guðbjörg enter a trance, she visibly looked and talked like an entirely different person—even the tone of her voice went down to a low baritone.

The room itself is crammed to the rafters with books, all sorts of tomes of the unexplained, myths and legends, demons, UFOs and other unlikely phenomenon. It seems to me that Magnús possibly has the largest library on the paranormal in all of Iceland. I am wondering if he has read them all when suddenly the question and answer session with Hildur/Ólafur starts to take an unexpected turn. Apparently, from what I can gather, Ólafur is quite familiar with Adolf Hitler; it's not quite clear if they've taken spiritual tea together, but he has often conversed with him. Perhaps since Ólafur was a doctor—rather than say, a garbage man—before he joined the spirits, people take him at his word. They are, after all, the words of a man of science.

Until now, Magnús and Ólafur have been rambling on about the so-called soul thread which, as I have mentioned before (see Transcendental Iceland Part 3), appears to be exceedingly prevalent in New Age explanations of the soul and its interconnectedness with the Universe.

'Ólafur says Adolf was not really such a bad guy,' my neighbour and appointed translator whispers in my ear. 'He was a young soul; he had a lot to learn. He was seduced over to the dark side by the aliens that live on the Grey Planets.' He's taking notes too. He's completely and utterly serious. 'You know Adolf wanted to be an architect, but could not live out his dream,' he says.

'And for that, he became the Beast of Berlin?' I want to ask. Once or twice, I can swear I catch a glimmer of a smirk on Hildur, then Magnús's, face. Not wanting to disturb Magnús's train of questioning—he becomes visibly quite upset if he is interrupted—I pass two hand-written questions through my neighbour. They are questions about Hitler that most people would not know

the answer to. They are never raised.

Apparently, according to the spirit of Ólafur, everyone is connected through this silver umbilical cord, which starts at the seat of the soul and spreads like a spider web into the universe and into all 10 billion dimensions on 15 billion worlds (he's quite specific about the numbers), but also to multiple alter egos. This means there's something like at least a few billion Hitlers out there and, according to statistical plausibility, at least one of them became a successful architect. I guess in that universe, there was no Albert Speer.

All of us, you and I included, have multiple-selves living alternative lives in parallel worlds. Sometimes, Ólafur says, it can happen that you meet yourself—one of your alter egos; in that case, stay well clear. If you touch yourself, you may well disappear in a blinding flash of light. I make a note to check some of the more recent Big Bang theories—cutting edge physics talks about 'super strings' being the undercurrent of the universe. Strings and threads and webs...hmm.

After the séance, Magnús invites me to join them all in homemade pancakes. I decline the invitation, but can't resist asking one more question:

'So how far away is the next planet with life?'

'Ah,' says Magnús, popping a hefty piece of pancake smothered in strawberry jam into his mouth, 'Ólafur told us a couple of weeks ago. It's not far, only 15 light years away, and it looks precisely like Earth.'

Outside the stars are blinking, I light a cigarette and notice just to the right of the Big Dipper, there is a small group of stars; if you were to connect them like dots, they might almost look like a swastika. ☹

1. Infinite universes contain infinite Hitlers. They're all douchebags.



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“Criminal” Immigration Officials Still At Large

In recent months, the treatment of refugees in Iceland and the failure of the authorities to uphold the domestic and international refugee law has finally come under some scrutiny. At the heart of the matter is the principle of equality or the lack thereof, not just in the treatment of refugees as second-class citizens, but also in the strange legal immunity that only government officials (and bankers) seem to have developed.

If the average citizen steals a chicken from the supermarket, they can expect to face the legal consequences. Government immigration officials, however, can blithely ignore supposedly binding refugee legislation, and continue to walk the streets. Just as with the economy busting bankers, it seems that the more spectacular one's crimes, the less likely one is to be brought to account for them. Perhaps the only way to protect decent society from such dangerous offenders is to lure them through the turnstiles at Bónus with the hope that, in a moment of madness, they may pilfer some poultry. Unfortunately the actions the immigration directorate go beyond mere petty theft or even bureaucratic incompetence involving several breaches of national and international law

Words

John Boyce,
Jórunn Helgadóttir
Guðjon Abbes

Illustration

Lóa Hjalmtýsdóttir

In March, the current Minister of Justice made a public show of meeting with refugees to hear their grievances. At this meeting, Ragna Árnadóttir pledged to apply fair and just procedure. However, as the months go by and little changes, it begins to look more and more like a cynical public relations exercise. And speaking of going through the PR motions, Björg Thorarensen, the head of the committee on refugees, recently turned down a request for a meeting with several individuals who have been working tirelessly in support of the refugees. Refusal was on the bizarre grounds that the committee had not planned on meeting with “agents of the refugees,” an entirely sensible policy only if one's central aim is to avoid informing oneself on the issue for which you have been made responsible, for fear you might actually be forced to do something about it.

This Pontius Pilate approach to public policy is also evident in the sham report produced recently for the Ministry of Justice on the thorny issue of returning refugees to Greece, the principal land route for refugees into Europe. Sending refugees back there under the third country rule has long been controversial due to appalling conditions and lack of legal protection they face there. Many are simply imprisoned before being returned to their country of origin

without any semblance of due process. The report claims that conditions have improved, and to the intense surprise of nobody, recommends returning Icelandic refugees there. Back in the real world, the EU officially rebuked Greece less than a month ago, for failing to meet minimum standards of care for refugees. Cited in particular was a detention centre originally built for 280 people that currently houses almost 2000.

Just last Sunday, in a dawn raid, Greek police demolished an illegal migrant camp, in what the Red Cross described as deliberate attempt to terrorise the occupants. The camp had been in existence for almost thirteen years, the direct result of Greek refusal to establish proper procedures for dealing with immigration and asylum. At the end of the day, the refugee issue in Iceland comes down to political expediency, the golden rule of politics that transcends the conventional political spectrum. Refugees have no votes, no family connections, no influence, and, ultimately, no political capital.

All of which brings us to Dostoyevsky, who wrote that the ultimate yardstick of a decent society was the way it treats prisoners, its most powerless and vulnerable members. Such a litmus test could equally apply to refugees, in which case it is a test that this Republic has thus far miserably failed.



1. The law clearly states that a refugee has the right to be informed on every aspect of their case and the “rights” to which they are entitled in Iceland in a language they can reasonably be expected to understand. In clear legal breach, refugees receive most relevant papers, and even deportation orders, in Icelandic. Such theoretical rights are rendered worthless if the relevant information is disseminated in a language obviously incomprehensible to its recipients.

2. For years, Iceland has successfully managed to evade its fair share of responsibility for European refugees by invoking the third country rule, whereby a refugee can be returned to the original country through which they entered Europe. Under the Dublin Convention, however, if the third country does not make an official request, within three months, to the original European country of entry to take back the refugee, then the refugee becomes the responsibility of that third country. In such circumstances, a refugee in Iceland having come from Denmark, for example, would then have the right to have their case heard in Iceland. In flagrant breach of this internationally binding agreement, Iceland routinely returns refugees months, and in some cases years, after the deadline has expired.

3. Both the Dublin Convention and United Nations directives stipulate that illegal entry by refugees should not be held against them, or prejudice their case. However, in a cynical attempt to tarnish the reputations of refugees in the eyes of the public, the recently departed head of the immigration directorate, Haukur Guðmundsson, disclosed to the press that some of the refugees had made it to Iceland using false papers. As well as being a clear breach of the law guaranteeing refugees' right to case confidentiality, it is also the most idiotic of counter-intuitive statements. Of course they got here using false papers: if they were in possession of genuine ones, they wouldn't be refugees in the first place!

4. When not breaching the letter of the law, the immigration directorate busies itself breaching its spirit, with vindictive raids on the refugee hostel in Keflavík and deportation operations on ten minutes notice, despite the right of refugees to at least query their deportation order (in the unlikely event they would actually be able to read it!).

5. Under refugee law, it is also illegal to deport refugees en masse, as each have the right to be treated as an individual case. Apparently undeterred by such minor legal details, Haukur Guðmundsson was on the verge of kicking out a group of five refugees until the minister for justice, Ragna Árnadóttir, stepped in ordering a temporary stay on the deportation order. After effectively turning a blind eye to the goings on for years, the Ministry of Justice, the ultimate authority in these matters, finally seemed to have become engaged on the subject.

¹ Laws and regulations on language barriers being broken: Article 24, chapter V of Laws on Foreigners (Lög um útlendinga); Article 57, chapter IX of Regulation on Foreigners (Reglugerð um útlendinga); Article 5.2 of the European Convention on Human Rights; Article 3.4, chapter II of the Dublin Convention.
² Laws and regulations on informing being broken: Article 25, chapter V & Article 30, chapter V of Laws on Foreigners; Article 57, chapter IX and article 64, chapter XI of Regulation on Foreigners. Article 3.4, chapter II of the Dublin Convention (Council Regulation (EC) No 343/2003 of 18 February 2003).
³ Article 17.1, chapter IV of the Dublin Convention.
⁴ Dublin Convention, article 9.5 chapter III and article 31 of the Appendix on Refugees of the UN Human Rights Convention.
⁵ Article 18, chapter IV of Laws on Rights and Duties of Employees of the State (Lög um réttindi og skyldur starfsmanna ríkisins). (According to the 38th article of VII, chapter of the same laws the director of the institution (Haukur Guðmundsson) is responsible for its service to be in accordance with law and what is to be expected of the institution. If it is not the Minister of Justice (Ragna Árnadóttir) has the authority to reprimand or to dismiss the director.
⁶ Breaking article 13 of the European Convention on Human Rights.
⁷ Article 4 of State Laws on the European Convention on Human Rights.

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23:00 DJ Simon GorillaFunk.
- Café Paris**
22:00 Cocktail Night.
- Celtic Cross**
01:00 Live Music.
- Cultura**
20:00 House DJs.
- Dubliner**
22:30 Live Music.
- English Pub**
22:00 Live Music.
- Grand Rokk**
22:00 Troubadour Night.
- Hemmi og Valdi**
23:00 Live DJ.
- Hressó**
22:00 Napóleon.
- Jacobsen**
00:00 Maggi Lego and Pedro Speh Lisboa Underground.
- Kaffibarinn**
23:45 DJ KGB.
- London/Reykjavik**
00:00 Andri Ramirez .
- Nasa**
23:00 Familjen.
- Prikió**
22:30 Live Music
- Rósenberg**
21:00 Gylfi Ægisson.
- Sódóma Reykjavík**
20:00 Elín Ey, Adda, Heiða Dóra, María Magnúsdóttir, Songbird, Uni.

18 SAT

- B5**
23:00 DJ Jay Oh!
- Celtic Cross**
01:00 Live Music.
- Cultura**
22:00 House DJs.
- Dubliner**
22:30 Live Music.
- English Pub**
22:00 Live Music.
- Hemmi og Valdi**
23:00 DJ Ugly.
- Hressó**
22:00 Penta.
- Jacobsen**
00:00 Krooks and Árni Sveinsxx.
- Kaffibarinn**
23:45 Mór & Nielsen.
- Kaffi Hjómáland**
20:30 Mamas Jam Boys.
- London/Reykjavik**
00:00 Frigore or Paul Moritz. .
- NASA**
00:00 Techno.is Presents Marco Bailey.
Entrance: 1500ISK.
- Prikió**
22:30 DJ Danni Deluxxe.
- Q-Bar**
23:00 Porno Night with Dj Shaft and Gestir.
- Rósenberg**
21:00 Varsjarbandalagið.
- Sódóma Reykjavík**
22:00 Jet Black Joe.

19 SUN

- Dubliner**
22:30 Live Music.
- Hallgrímskirkja**
17:00 International Organ Summer feat. Andreas Sieling, organist of Berlin Cathedral.
Entrance: 1500ISK.
- Prikió**
22:00 Hangover Cinema with FREE POPCORN.
- Q-Bar**
23:00 Open Decks.
- Reykjavík Cathedral (Domkirkja)**
17:00 Pianist Mark Damisch.
- Rósenberg**
21:00 Andrea Gylfa and Eddi.

20 MON

- Dubliner**
22:30 Live Music.
- Kaffi Hjómáland**
20:00 Audiobook Night.
- Kaffi Zimsen**
21:00 2 for 1 BEER!
- Nordic House**
20:00 Pianist Mark Damisch.
- Prikió**
22:30 DJ House.
- Rósenberg**
21:00 < 3 Svanhvít.

21 TUE

- Dubliner**
22:30 Live Music.
- Prikió**
22:30 Beatdown Night with Introbeats and Gestir.
- Q-Bar**
23:00 Youtube night with Unnur Andrea.
- Rósenberg**
21:00 Mogadon.

22 WED

- B5**
23:00 DJ Beatur.
- Dubliner**
22:30 Live Music.
- Jacobsen**
00:00 Late Hour Night feat Oli Ofur.
- Kaffi Hjómáland**
18:00. Ghetto Yoga followed by Alana at 20:15.
- Hallgrímskirkja**
12:00 Lunchtime concert Feat Chamber choir Schola Cantorum Reykjavicensis. 1000ISK.
- Prikió**
22:30 Arnar.
- Q-Bar**
23:00 Pub Quiz.
- Rósenberg**
21:00 Bob Haley.

23 THU

- B5**
21:00 Live performance by Þrjár Raddir.
- Cultura**
22:30 Live DJs.
- Dubliner**
22:30 Live Music.
- English Pub**
22:00 Live Music.
- Hemmi og Valdi**
23:00 Live Electro.
- Hressó**
22:00 Acoustic Böddi and Davíð.
- Jacobsen**
00:00 Kiasmos Live Set and Orange Asli Live Set.
- Kaffibarinn**
23:45 Maggi Legó.
- Kaffi Hjómáland**
17:30. Ghetto Yoga followed by Esoteric Gender at 20:00.
- Prikió**
22:30 DJ Húsins.
- Q-Bar**
23:00 Circus Night.
- Reykjavík Cathedral (Domkirkja)**
12:15 Lunchtime concert feat. Organist Guðný Einarsdóttir. Hosted by the Society of Icelandic Organists in collaboration with the Friends of the Arts Society in Hallgrímskirkja. Entrance: 1000ISK.
- Rósenberg**
21:00 Danny Pollock.
- Sódóma Reykjavík**
21:00 Okí Doki present For a Minor Reflection, Rökkuró and Agent Fresco.
Entrance: 500ISK.

Music & Entertainment | Venue finder

Amsterdam Hafnarstræti 5 D3	Dubliner Hafnarstræti 4 D3	Nýlenduvörurverzlun Hemma & Valda Laugavegur 21 F5
Apótek Austurstræti 16 E3	English Pub Austurstræti 12 E3	Næsti Bar Ingólfstræti 1A E5
B5 Bankastræti 5 E4	Glaubar Tryggvagata 20 D3	Óliver Laugavegur 20A F5
Babalú Skólavörðustígur 22 F5	Grand Rokk Smiðjustígur E5	Ólstofan Vegamótastígur F5
Batteri Hafnarstræti 1-3 D3	Highlander Lækjargata 10 F3	Prikió Bankastræti F5
Bar 11 Laugavegur 11 E5	Hressó Austurstræti 20 E4	Q-Bar Ingólfstræti 3 F4
Barbara Laugavegur 22 F6	Hverfisbarinn Hverfisgata 20 E5	Rósenberg Klappastígur 25 F6
Bjarni Fel Austurstræti 20 E4	Jacobsen Austurstræti 9 E3	Sódóma Reykjavík Tryggvagata 22 D3
Boston Laugavegur 28b F6	Kaffi Hjómáland Laugavegur 23 F6	Sólón Bankastræti 7A E4
Café Cultura Hverfisgata 18 E5	Kaffi Zimsen Hafnarstræti 18 E4	Thorvaldsen Austurstræti 8 E3
Café Paris Austurstræti 14 E3	Kaffibarinn Bergstræðastræti 1 F5	Vegamót Vegamótastígur 4 F5
Balthazar Hafnarstræti 1-3 D3	Karamba Laugavegur 22 F6	
Celtic Cross Hverfisgata 26 E5	London/Reykjavík Tryggvagata 22 D3	
Dillon Laugavegur 30 F6	NASA Þorvaldsenstræti 2 E3	

- Grand Rokk**
22:00.
- Hemmi og Valdi**
23:00 Grapevine Grassroots followed by DJ Ugly.
- Hressó**
22:00 Dalton followed by DJ Elli.
- Jacobsen**
00:00 Damien Eie and Sexy Lazer.
- Kaffibarinn**
23:45 Gísli Galdur.
- London/Reykjavík**
00:00 Ghozt's Birthday Bash.
- Prikió**
22:30 House band and Danni Deluxee.
- Q-Bar**
23:00 Árni Sveins
- Rósenberg**
21:00 Live Music.

25 SAT

- B5**
23:00 DJ Einar.
- Celtic Cross**
01:00 Live Music.
- Cultura**
22:00 Live DJs.
- Dubliner**
22:30 Live Music.
- English Pub**
22:00 Live Music.
- Hemmi og Valdi**
23:00 Live DJ.
- Hressó**
22:00 Ímynd followed by DJ Elli.
- Jacobsen**
00:00 Daniel Howe, DJ Jack Schidt, Superdiskant.
- Kaffibarinn**
23:45 Sexy Lazer.
- London/Reykjavík**
00:00 TBC.
- Prikió**
22:30 DJ Gísli Galdur.
- Q-Bar**
23:00 DJ Kári.
- Rósenberg**
21:00 Live music.
- Sódóma Reykjavík**
00:00 Kimi Records present FM Belfast, Sudden Weather Change, Skakka-manage, MIRI and Swords of Chaos.
Entrance: 1500ISK.

26 SUN

- Dubliner**
22:30 Live Music.
- Hallgrímskirkja**
17:00 International Organ Summer Feat Douglas Cleveland (Seattle, USA) 1500ISK.
- Prikió**
22:30 Hangover Cinema with FREE POPCORN.
- Q-Bar**
23:00 Open Decks.
- Rósenberg**
20:00 Sunday Parlours, Mysterious Marta, Ivar. 1000ISK.

27 MON

- Dubliner**
22:30 Live Music.
- Kaffi Hjómáland**
20:00 Audiobook Night.
- Kaffi Zimsen**
21:00 2 for 1 BEER!
- Prikió**
22:30 DJ Old school G Bastard.
- Rósenberg**
21:00 Joni Mitchell concert.

28 TUE

Dubliner
22:30 Live Music.
Kjöt og Kunst (Hveragerði)
21:00 Sunday Parlours, Mysterious Marta, Ivar.
Prikið
22:30 Skate Night with skate videos and live DJ.
Rósenberg
21:00 Þrjár Raddir amd Beatur.

29 WED

Bæjarbío (Hafnarfjörður)
20:30 Amiina + Seabear. Entr 1500ISK.
Dubliner
22:30 Live Music.
Kaffi Hjómálinn
18:00. Ghetto Yoga followed by Alana at 20:15.
Hallgrímskirkja
12:00 Lunchtime concert Feat Chamber choir Schola Cantorum Reykjavicensis. 1000ISK.
Prikið
22:30 Live Music.
Q-Bar
23:00 Pub Quiz.
Rósenberg
21:00 Guðbjörg and band.

30 THU

B5
23:00 DJ Sensual Seduction.
Bar 11
21:00 PORQUESI.
Dubliner
22:30 Live Music.
Cultura
22:00 House DJs.
English Pub
22:00 Live Music.
Hressó
22:00 Húkkara Ball with Dalton.
Kaffi Hjómálinn
17:30 Ghetto Yoga.
Prikið
22:30 DJ Dr. House.
Q-Bar
23:00 Circus Night with Thor.
Reykjavík Cathedral (Domkirkja)
12:15 Lunchtime concert Feat. Organist Marteinn H. Friðriksson. Hosted by the Society of Icelandic Organists in collaboration with the Friends of the Arts Society in Hallgrímskirkja. Entrance: 1000ISK.
Rósenberg
21:00 Live music.



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Goodwill Hunting

By Jonathan Baker Esq.

Pianist Mark Damisch

Reykjavík Cathedral Domkirkja 🕒 17pm

Nordic House at 🕒 20pm

"It's a beautiful country!" proclaims Chicago based Pianist Mark Damisch, who is embarking on a 25-day tour across Europe and stopping by to perform two special and unique concerts over two separate days here in Iceland. The first concert will be held at the Reykjavík Cathedral Dómkirkja on the 19th of July and then on the 20th at the Nordic House, Sturlugata 5.

This is not the first time Mark Damisch has performed in Iceland – he first performed back in 1977 at the Keflavík NATO base to boost the morale of the US troops then stationed there. Now, 34 years later, he has returned with his two daughters to help improve the relationship between Iceland and the States once again.

Unlike celebrities such as, say Chris Martin or Bono, Mark Damisch has raised the awareness of charity and political profiling through music most of his life without accepting anything in return, apart from the respect of his peers. Humbly stating "We don't take any money for the concerts, we pay our own way."

Mr. Damisch first began arranging and performing concerts in 1975, touring Eastern Europe, Western Europe and the Soviet Union promoting goodwill and international relations. He has performed in Hanover, West Germany; the Houses of Friendship in Moscow, Kiev and Leningrad, Soviet Union; Schiller College in Strasbourg; and the University of Dijon, France. The Hanover Zeitung newspaper nicknamed him the "young ambassador" and described the tour as "enjoyable and accomplished."

For his 2009 concert series – sponsored by the United States Embassy – not only will he be visiting Iceland, he will also be spreading his compassion at the Museum des Beaux Arts, France; the City of Montlouis sur Loire, Luxembourg; and finally in Paris at the American Cathedral.

Each performance will comprise of four different yet compelling compositions reproduced by Mark and his two daughters. These being Debussy's staccato 'Golliwogg Cakewalk,' Chopin's pensive 'Waltz No.10 in B Minor,' Gershwin's 'Piano Composition' and Beethoven's liberating 'Sonata No.23 in F Minor.'

As Mark Damisch's first tour programme stated in1975: "Our prayer is that people everywhere will learn from each other's differences, heal each other's wounds, promote each other's progress and benefit from each others mistakes." So stop by and have some of that, if you're in the area.



Reykjavík Cathedral Dómkirkjan

Lækjargatu 14a 🕒 12pm

The Society of Icelandic Organists host a series of lunchtime concerts over the summer months of July and August. These performances are held at the Dómkirkjan Cathedral in downtown Reykjavík at 12:15 every Thursday. This month's sequence of concerts include organist Guðný Einarsdóttir on the 23rd of July and fellow Icelandic organist Marteinn H. Friðriksson on the 30th of July – admission is 1000 ISK. Why not enjoy some wonderful and inspiring music, lounge in the green of Austurvöllur and bask in the glorious sunshine downtown. **JB**



Sódóma Reykjavík

Tryggvagatu 22 🕒 21pm
500ISK

It's really not that often a whole evening captures your attention quite like the one at Sódóma Reykjavík on July 23rd. The fine people of Okí Doki present three top-notch acts all with a reputation for incredible live shows. For a Minor Reflection bring a dose of enchanting post-rock, the sultry musings of Rökkurró will leave you unnerved and jazz metal outfit Agent Fresco are guaranteed to get you moving hard – that's if you can keep up with the freaked-out time signatures. The night will kick off at 21:00 and admission is a measly 500ISK. **JB**

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- ÍSAFJÖRÐUR
- HUAMMSTANGI
- REYKJAVÍK

The bands!

- FM BELFAST
- REYKJAVÍK!
- SKAKKAMANAGE
- LÉTT Á BÁRUNNI
- PRINS PÓLÓ
- SWORDS OF CHAOS
- SUDDEN WEATHER CHANGE
- MIRI

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OUTSIDE REYKJAVÍK

Grundarfjörður
Kaffi 59
July 22 *Kimi Records Summer Tour*
FM Belfast, Miri, Skakkamanage, Sudden Weather Change
8pm
Admission: TBA

Ísafjörður
Edinborgarhúsið
July 23 *Kimi Records Summer Tour*
FM Belfast, Miri, Skakkamanage, Sudden Weather Change
8pm
Admission: TBA

Hvammstangi
Café Siróp
July 24 *Kimi Records Summer Tour*
FM Belfast, Miri, Skakkamanage, Sudden Weather Change
10pm
Admission: TBA

Akureyri
Græni Hatturinn
July 17 *Jagúar*
10pm - ?
Admission: 1500 ISK

July 18 *Ragnheiður Gröndal*
9.30pm - ?
Admission: 1500 ISK

July 21 *Guðrún Gunnarsdóttir*
9pm
Admission: TBA

July 24 *Pursaflokkurinn*
10pm - 01am
Admission: 2800 ISK

July 30 *Mannakorn*
9pm - ?
Admission: TBA

Ketilhúsið
July 17 *Opera singer Claudia Kunz and pianist Ulrich Eisenlohr*
12.00am - ?
Admission: TBA

July 30 *Quartett Jussanam da Silva*
21.30pm - ?
Admission: TBA

Húsavík
Gamli Baukur
July 18 *Lírukassinn*
Björn Jörundur, Valli Sport
10pm-03am
Admission: 1500ISK

July 19 *Kimi Records Summer Tour -Sudden Weather Change, Reykjavík!, Swords of Chaos*
8pm
Admission: 1500ISK

July 20 *Troubadour Kiddi Halldórs*
22pm
Admission: 0 ISK

July 21 *Hundur í óskilum*
22pm
Admission: 0 ISK

July 22 *Hvanndalsbræður*
22pm
Admission: 0 ISK

July 23 *Pórir // My summer as a salvation soldier*
22pm
Admission: 0 ISK

July 24 *S.O.S. & Ina Idol*
23pm
Admission: 0 ISK

July 25 *Björbandið*
23pm
Admission: 0 ISK

July 26 *Violinist Hjörleifur Valsson*
3pm
Admission: 0 ISK

Egilsstaðir
Valaskjálft
July 17 *Ljótu Hálfvitarnir*
11pm - 03am
Admission: TBA

Seyðisfjörður
Herðubreið
July 17 *Kimi Records Summer Tour*
Sudden Weather Change, Reykjavík!, Swords of Chaos, Miri, Króna, Björt, Prinsinn & Bárán
20pm
Admission: TBA

Grapevine events July

10 Nýlenduvörverslun Hemma og Valda
9pm
gogoyoko Presents:
Grapevine Grassroots
Johnny Stronghands
Doddi
FREE SHOW

10 Rósenberg
9pm
FTT and Grapevine presents
Bubbi
Hafðis Huld
FREE SHOW



The Foghorns, Benni Hemm Hemm

Grand Rokk ☺ 21pm

Sometimes you just want to kick back with a beer and listen to some high quality tunes without all the bullshit. The Foghorns have it covered with their folksy jams. The band - a beloved mainstay on the Reykjavík scene a couple of years back, until they relocated to the US of A - are making their return to Reykjavík to celebrate the release of their fifth album, A Diamond As Big As the Motel 6, written and recorded in the American Northwest. The Foghorns are a tried and tested live band, their melodies are sweet and the accompanying lyrics (by former Grapevine editor-slash-legend Bart Cameron) make the mix one not to be missed.

Also performing at the show is the one and only Benni Hemm Hemm, who has long since ensured his status as one of Iceland's favourite musicians. The show will be held at Grand Rokk, July 29th, at 9 p.m. Sit back and enjoy the music - this night is not to be missed. **JG**

17 - 19
July July

22 - 25
July July



Prepare Yourself Iceland **KIMI records**
By Jonathan Baker Esq.
15. - 25. JÚLÍ 2009

Kimi Records' Summer fun tour

Reykjavík! *Sudden Weather Change, Swords of Chaos, Miri, Króna, Létt á Bárinni, Prins Póló, Björt, FM Belfast and Skakkamanage.*

All across Iceland

Part One ☺ 20pm

Part Two ☺ 20pm

1500ISK per show

So summer is finally here; everyone's favourite time of year. Let's eat lots of ice cream and drink lots of beer. Oh man, I'm incredibly sorry for that cheesy intro, but we are just so excited for this years Kimi Records' Summer fun tour!

Claiming to be way bigger than last years (and it is), the tour is now split into two separate parts with numerous bands from the Kimi Records' alternative label. We catch up with part one today - Friday July 17th - at Herðubreið in Seyðisfjörður - in association with the annual LungA festival, also featuring Miri, Króna, Létt á Bárinni, Prins Póló and Björt - followed by a stop at Kaupvangur in Vopnafjörður on Saturday 18th and then finally on Sunday July 19th at Gamli Baukur in Húsavík.

Expect an energetic three days with Reykjavík!, Sudden Weather Change and Swords of Chaos for part one; no doubt resulting in a frenzy-packed explosion of screaming people, flying microphone stands, hopefully, various forms of bodily fluids.

After a few days rest, part two continues to destroy Iceland by spreading sunshine and terror at Kaffi 59 in Grundarfjörður, Wednesday July 22nd; Thursday July 23rd at Edinborgarhúsið in of Ísafjörður; and then on to Kaffi Siróp in Hvammstangi n Friday July 24th.

These final dates will be your opportunity to wind down just a little with the popstastic electro crooners FM Belfast, the delicate affections of both Miri and Skakkamanage, and the hardworking Sudden Weather Change.

All of this excitement ultimately leads up to the big one at Sódóma Reykjavík on Saturday 25th July - where the party really goes down! Sudden Weather Change, Skakkamanage and Miri will all be joined by the crazy Swords of Chaos for mass musical debauchery and carnage. Sweet.

All shows cost 1500ISK and begin at 20:00.

Art | Venue finder

101 Gallery
Hverfisgata 18A | **F6**
Thu-Sat 14-17 and by appointment
www.101hotel.is/101hotel/101gallery/

Artótek
Tryggvagata 15 | **D5**
Mon 10-21, Tue-Thu 10-19, Fri 11-19, Sat and Sun 13-17
www.sim.is/Index/Islenka/Artotek

ASÍ Art Museum
Freygata 41 | **G10**
Tue-Sun 13-17

Árbæjarsafn
Kistuhylur 4

The Culture House
Hverfisgata 15 | **F6**
Open daily 11-17
www.thjodmenning.is

Dwarf Gallery
Grundarstígur 21 | **H8**
Opening Hours: Fri and Sat 18-20
www.this.is/birta

The Einar Jónsson Museum
Eiriksgata | **G9**
Tue-Sun 14-17
www.skulptur.is

Fótógrafi
Skólavörðustígur 4a | **F7**
www.fotografi.is

Gallery 100°
Bæjarháls 1
www.or.is/Forsida/Gallery100/
Open weekdays from 08:30-16:00

Gallery Auga fyrir Auga
Hverfisgata 35 | **G7**

Gallery StartArt
Laugavegur 12B | **G7**
Tue-Sat 1-17
www.startart.is

Gallery Ágúst
Baldursgata 12 | **F9**
Wed-Sat 12-17
www.galleriagust.is

Gallery Fold
Rauðarástígur 14-16 | **J9**
Mon-Fri 10-18 / Sat 11-16 / Sun 14-16
www.myndlist.is

Gallery Kling & Bang
Hverfisgata 42 | **G7**
Thurs-Sun from 14-18
this.is/klingogbang/

Gallery Turpentine
Ingólfstræti 5 | **F7**
Tue-Fri 12-18 / Sat 11-16
www.turpentine.is

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 | **E6**
www.hithusid.is

i8 Gallery
Klapparstígur 33 | **G7**
Tue-Fri 11-17 / Sat 13-17 and by appointment. www.i8.is

Living Art Museum
Vatnsstígur 3 - **G7**
Wed, Fri-Sun 13-17 / Thu 13-22. www.nylo.is

Lost Horse Gallery
Skólastræti 1 | **F6**
Weekends from 13-19 and by appointment on weekdays.

Hafnarborg
Strandgötu 34,
Hafnarfjörður

The National Gallery of Iceland
Frikirkjuvegur 7 | **E8**

Tue-Sun 11-17
www listasafn.is

The National Museum
Suðurgata 41 | **C9**
Open daily 10-17
natmus.is/

The Nordic House
Sturlugata 5 | **C11**
Tue-Sun 12-17
www.nordice.is/

The Numismatic Museum
Einholt 4 | **K9**
Open Mon-Fri 13:30-15:30.

Reykjavík 871+/-2
Aðalstræti 17 | **D6**
Open daily 10-17

Reykjavík Art Gallery
Skúlagata 28 | **H6**
Tuesday through Sunday 14-18

Reykjavík Art Museum
Open daily 10-16
www listasafnreykjavikur.is

Ásmundur Sveinsson Sculpture Museum
Sigtún Hafnarhúis
Tryggvagata 17 | **E5**
Kjarvalsstaðir
Flókagata | **K11**

Reykjavík City Theatre
Listabraut 3

Reykjavík Maritime Museum
Grandagarður 8 | **C3**

Reykjavík Museum of Photography
Tryggvagata 16 | **D5**
Weekdays 12-19 / Sat-Sun 13-17
www.ljosmyndasafnreykjavikur.is

Sigurjón Ólafsson Museum
Laugarnestangi 70



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National Museum of Iceland

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Winter
(September 16th - April 30th)
Daily except Mondays 11-17



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Numismatic Museum



The Central Bank and National Museum of Iceland jointly operate a numismatic collection that consists of Icelandic notes and coins, foreign money from earlier times, especially if mentioned in Icelandic sources, and more recent currency from Iceland's main trading partner countries. A selection from the numismatic collection is on display in showcases on the ground floor of the Central Bank's main building.

Situated in the Central Bank's main building in Kalkofnsvegur 1, Reykjavík. Open Mon.-Fri. 13:30-15:30. Free admittance.



VÍKIN MUSEUM CAFÉ
Traditional Icelandic delicacies!

OPENING HOURS:
Summer (June 1st - September 14th)
Daily from 11am to 5pm
Winter (September 15th - May 31st)
Tuesdays - Sundays from 1pm to 5pm



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WWW.SJOMINJASFN.IS

ART

GALLERIES & MUSEUMS

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How to use the listings

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

OPENING

JULY

18 4pm

Ráðhús Reykjavíkur

A Lost Horse Gallery presents Matthew James, who will be exhibiting his resin paintings. The opening will be from 4pm to 6pm.

23 9pm

Batterið

Stand-up Comedy ft. Lieven Scheire

Lieven Scheire, from Belgium, will be headlining. Two Icelandic comedians, Sveinn Waage and Rökkvi Vésteinsson will be doing the supporting acts. All the acts will be in English. Entrance is 1000ISK.

ONGOING

ASÍ Art Museum

Current exhibitions:
June 27 - Aug. 23

Summer Exhibition - Works from the collection

Chosen paintings from Jón Stefánsson, Jóhannes Sveinsson Kjarval, and Svavar Guðnason.

The Culture House

Permanent exhibitions:
Medieval Manuscripts
March 28 - Jan 10 2010

ICELAND::FILM

This exhibition traces for the first time the development of Icelandic filmmaking from its origins around 1904 to the year 2008.

The Library Room.

Current exhibitions:
June 05- August 07

Nordic Book Binding

This exhibition features 89 hand-crafted bindings by 91 bookbinders, as two are made in collaboration. All participants bound the book 'Northern Wind,' with poems by 18 contemporary Nordic poets and graphic drawings by Icelandic artists.

Sheepskin, Saffian and Shirting

A related exhibition to Nordic Book Binding, it shows the tools and equipment used in book binding.

Exhibition Series:

Paintings by Hulda Viljálmsdóttir.

The Einar Jónsson Museum

Permanent exhibition: **The work of sculptor Einar Jónsson.**

Gallery Agust

SHARP

Artist Andrea Maack introduces her third perfume, Sharp, in an exhibition

that explores aspects of the fashion industry while still connecting to the art world.

Gerðarsafn Art Museum (Kópavogur)

June 27 - Aug 31

The Kópavogur Art Museum Summer Exhibition

Gerðuberg Cultural Centre

Boginn Gallery: The Land in Colour
Popular artist Guðráður Jóhannesson exhibition of landscape paintings.

Gljúfrasteinn Laxness Museum

Gljúfrasteinn was the home and workplace of Halldór Laxness (winner of the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1955) and his family for more than half a century. It has now been opened to the public as a museum, unchanged from when Laxness lived there.

Hafnarborg Centre of Culture and Fine Art (Hafnarfjörður)

Current Exhibitions:

June 24 - August 3

Collectors' Collections

An exhibition celebrating the 100th anniversary of Dr. Sveirrir Magnússon, founder of Hafnarborg. On this occasion selected art works from the original collection at the Centre will be displayed along side the art of other leading collectors.

i8 Gallery

Current Exhibition:

June 19 - July 31

Anthony McCall and Finnogi Pétursson

The artists present their installation works.

Living Art Museum

Throughout July - Exhibitions from Runo Lagomarsino, Yiva Westerlund and Olivia Plender.

National Gallery of Iceland

Hidden Treasure: Treasures In Public Possession?

Works from the three Icelandic state-owned banks' collections, along with some works from the National Gallery.

The National Museum

Permanent exhibition:

The Making of a Nation

Heritage and History in Iceland is intended to provide insight into the history of the Icelandic nation from the Settlement to the present day.

Jan 31 - Nov 30.

Encounters.

Archaeological excavations at many locations around Iceland have been funded by Kristnihátíðarsjóður (the Millennium Fund). Finds from some of these excavations are on display in an exhibition suitable for the whole family.

The Numismatic Museum

Permanent exhibition:

The Central Bank of Iceland and the National Museum of Iceland jointly operate a numismatic collection consisting of Icelandic notes and coins.

Reykjavík 871 +/- 2

Permanent exhibition:
The Settlement Exhibition

Reykjavík Arts Festival

May 16- August 02

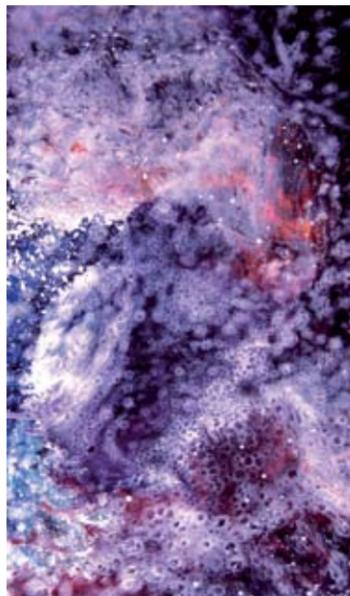
Stray Beacons

Ásdís Sif Gunnarsdóttir, Curver Thoroddsen, Icelandic Love Corporation and Unnar Örn exhibits their works in lighthouses around Iceland. See artfest.is for more info.

Reykjavík Art Museum

Asmundarsafn

May 2- April 30 2010



Matthew James

Resin Paintings Exhibition

Ráðhús Reykjavíkur, Tjarnargötu

11, 101 Reykjavík

4pm

Many artists work for years to become masters of a solitary craft, while others have the ability to move in to different artistic realms. One such artist is Matthew James, who will be exhibiting at Ráðhús Reykjavíkur. A sculptor by trade, his experience with different materials in casting, such as resin, crossed over in to his painting projects. The Lost Horse Gallery presents a collection of his resin paintings, and the opening will be held at 4 p.m. on Saturday, July 18th. **JG**

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16. May - 29. August 2009



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Reykjavik Museum of Photography

Tryggvagata 15, 6th floor · 101 Reykjavík ·
Tel: 411 6390 · www.photomuseum.is
Opening hours 12 -19 Mondays - Fridays
13-17 Weekends · ADMISSION FREE



THE LAST VIKING SHIP



Farsaell, or "Bon voyage" had disappeared in the sand and was almost ruined when rescued from oblivion in 1962. One of the last shipbuilders, who still knew the ancient building methods, rebuilt it to its former glory, but died a year later. "Bon Voyage" was built in 1915, just before the sailboats became extinct. But now you can touch "Bon Voyage" at Eyrbakkai Maritime-museum.



HÚSID Á EYRARBAKKA
The Southcoast Museum

Open May 15th - Sept. 15th: 11 - 18. Other times by arrangement. | www.husid.com

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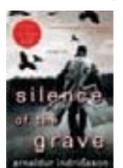
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THE ENGLISH PUB

at Austurstræti 12



MAP

Places We Like

1 Kaffi Hljómalind

Laugavegi 23

The only true activist-friendly, community servicing co-op in town, Kaffi Hljómalind lends a breath of fresh air and a welcome alternative to Reykjavík's beer-stained, decadent cafés. Offering up a fare of vegetarian-to vegan friendly courses, some pretty good coffee and an awesome selection of tea. As well as a free, anarchist library. What else do you need? SKK

2 Á Næstu Grösum

Laugavegi 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. HSM

3 Babalú

Skólavörðustíg 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. CF

4 Ban Thai

Laugarvegur 130

Even though the service at Ban Thai may get a little flaky, the food is always to die for and the place also offers a very pleasant dining atmosphere that puts you right in a comfortable Thai sorta mood. It's really Reykjavík's only "fancy" Thai restaurant. Ban Thai has remained a true Reykjavík treasure for the longest time, and is truly one that should be celebrated. HSM

5 Kaffitár

Bankastræti 8

Kaffitár on Bankastræti is a comfortable little café with a great selection of coffee, tea and baked goods on offer. Since Kaffitár is also a big-name Icelandic roasterie the caffeinated beverages on the menu are quality. The wi-fi makes this a nice place to sit and chill with your laptop as well. CF

6 Jacobsen

Austurstræti 9

A fairly new venue in town, Jacobsen is owned by some nouveau riche Swedes, and has been providing a non-stop party over the last few months. Besides its importing foreign big-shot DJs and other niceties, it is probably most appreciated for its loooong hours; it doesn't matter if you stop partying at 2AM or way-too-much AM, Jacobsen is always forking out shots and cocktails. SKK



7 Deli

Bankastræti 14

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

8 Kisan

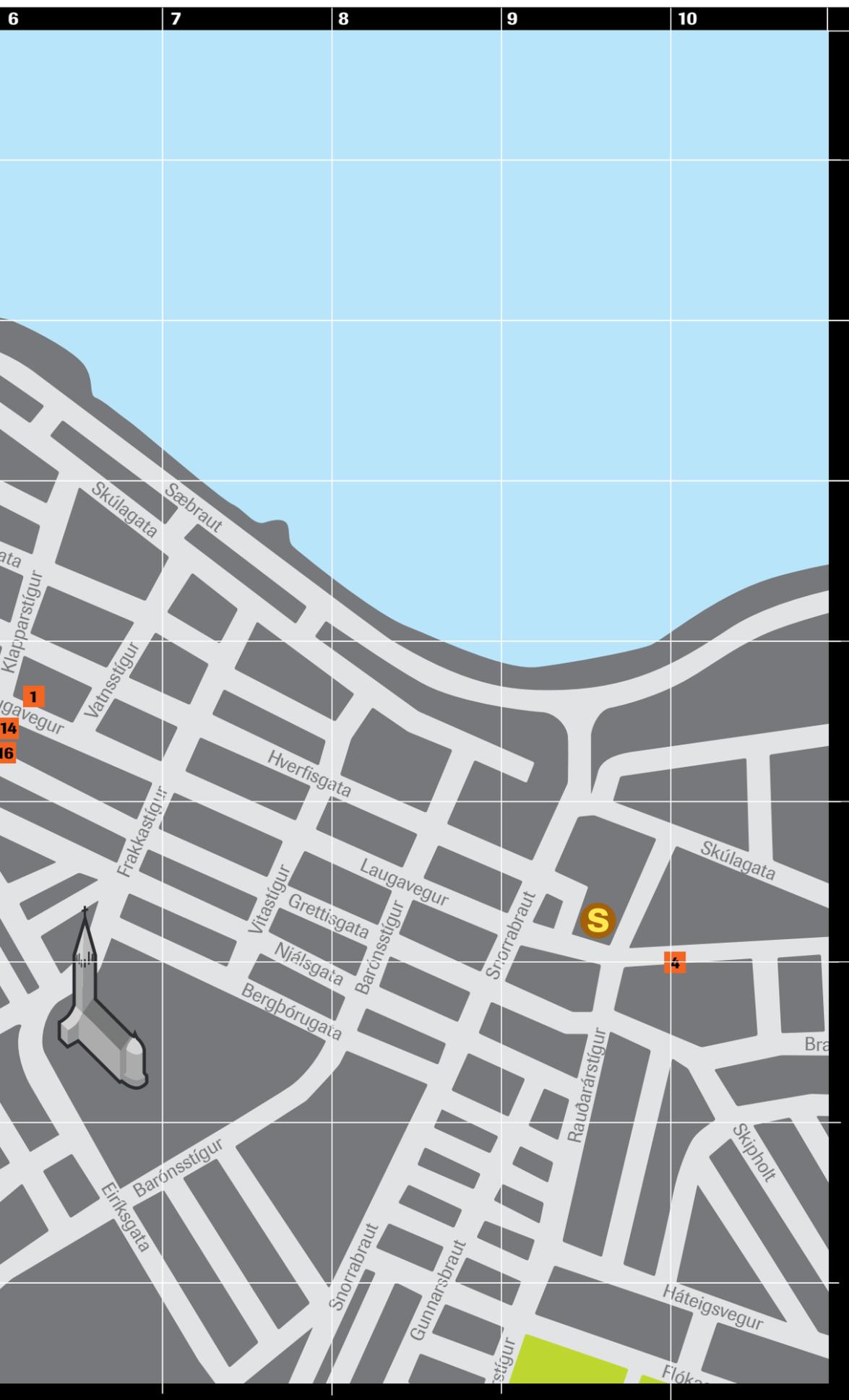
Laugavegur 7

This store is incredibly cool. It's stocked with really unique and quirky clothes, outerwear, accessories and handbags, plus they have an adorable section of kids clothes, kitschy vintage toys and books and even interior design items. Wicked place; definitely worth a visit. CF

9 Café Haiti

Tryggvagötu 16

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



13 Kornioð

Lækjargötu 4

How about filling your face with cakes at the delightful Kornioð. They taste so good, you would gladly push your own mother over for even the slightest of sniffs. Not a sweet tooth? Well, try their delectable sandwiches then, I recommend the egg and bacon ciabatta! At only 590ISK plus all the Pitu Sósa you could dream of, what more could you ask for on your lunch break? JB

14 Karamba

Laugavegi 22

New hotspot in town Karamba is a colourful and eclectic bar on Laugavegur with a comfortable atmosphere, typically great music and a chill crowd. This is a good place to relax or to do some serious drinking or to relax. Plus, their decors are done strictly by Grapevine-friendly artists, such as Lóa (who does our comics), Hagleikur Dagsson (who illustrates the monster column) and Bobby Breiðholt (who's done a lot of nice illustrations for us); they are truly a sight to behold. CF

15 Sushimiðjan

Geirsgötu 3

This is a seriously great place to grab a quick and quality sushi lunch. Pre-prepared boxes of maki and nigiri are reasonable priced and really well made, amply filled with deliciously fresh ingredients. The indoor seating area is limited to some stools and outward-facing wall-mounted tabletops but there are a couple of tables and chairs set up outside the front door for those wanting to watch the ships and tourists in the harbour while they eat. CF

16 Barbara

Laugavegi 22

At Laugavegur 22, above Karamba, Barbara serves up a lively atmosphere for Reykjavik's gay community and anybody else who just wants to dance and have a good time. The first level is made for dancing and is often packed with sweaty bodies, while the second level of the bar offers a place to sit, drink and chat and another in which to smoke. CF

17 OSUSHI

Lækjargötu 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.

18 Q-Bar

Ingólfsstræti 3

Situated on Ingólfsstræti, Q-Bar provides a warm welcome to you with rainbow colours and open arms. A roomy venue with more than enough to swing a cat around or to swing yourself whilst boogeying the night away to some of the finest DJs in Iceland. We especially enjoy large beers for the merry price of 350ISK every Sunday. JB

10 Sódóma Reykjavík

Tryggvagötu 22

Newly opened Sódóma on Tryggvagötu is already a hit with party crowds and gig-goers alike. An extensive venue, filled with reasonably priced beverages and reasonably good looking people. Some of Iceland's finest musical ventures have played in recent months, and their schedule looks promising too. Also, make sure to visit their men's room for a glance at the "Pissoir of Absolution". JB

11 Sægreifinn

Verbúð 8, Geirsgata

Down by the Reykjavik harbour, Sægreifinn fish shop and restaurant is truly a 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 the best lobster soup we've ever tasted. Good food and welcoming service make this place a must-try. HSM

12 Prikioð

Bankastræti 12

Prikioð is one of those places that shape-shifts. It's a warm café with photographs of their senior frequenters on weekday mornings, a hung-over hangout on weekend afternoons, and during nights it's filled to the brim with what remains of Iceland's hip hop scene. Go there in daytime for the cheap burgers; enter at night for some OTT hip-hop debauchery, old skool and the latest bangers alike. SKK

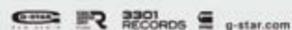


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ART GALLERIES

- continued -

Rhyme - Works by Ásmundur Sveinsson and contemporary artists

This exhibition showcases contemporary artists that tackle similar issues as Ásmundur did in his time, but in the context of a new age.

Reykjavík Art Museum Hafnarhús

May 28- August 23.

Possibilities

Works by 10 Guðmunda Kristinsdóttir Art Prize winners.

May 28- August 29 2010

Erró- Portrett-

A dedication to Erró.

Reykjavík Art Museum Kjarvalsstaðir

May 15- August 30

The House of Una And West 8th Street

The life of Icelandic artists Louisa Matthíasdóttir and Nína Tryggvadóttir and their connection with artists from Iceland and New York.

May 09- August 30

Kjarval and Animals

An exhibition focusing on Kjarval's depictions of animals.

May 15- August 30

Icelandic design, furniture, architecture and product design.

Reykjavík Maritime Museum

Current Exhibitions:

Living Museum by the Sea; Arterial for Country and City; From Poverty to Abundance; The Shark - Light and Life Energy; Hidden Craftsman.

The Reykjavík Museum of Photography

Current Exhibitions:

May 16 - Aug 30

Life is not just a game- it's a bed of roses...

Show curated by Guðmundur Oddur Magnússon and Guðfinna Mjöll Magnúsdóttir.

July 2 - Aug. 25

Natural Beauty

Photographer Stefán Steinn displays his photographs of nature in its simplest forms.

Ásmundur Sveinsson Sculpture Museum

Permanent Exhibition:

The Shape of Line.

A new retrospective of works by Ásmundur Sveinsson. The exhibition focuses on abstract works from 1945 onwards.

May 01- April 30 2010

RHYTHM- Ásmundur and Our Age

This exhibition showcases contemporary artists that tackle similar issues as Ásmundur did in his time, but in a context of a new age.

Borgarnes

The Icelandic Settlement Centre Permanent exhibitions: The Settlement of Iceland; The Saga of Egill Skalla-Grímsson.

Current theatre productions:

Brák - a monologue by Brynhildur Guðjónsdóttir
Mr. Skallagrímsson - a monologue by Benedikt Erlingsson
Storms and Wars - a monologue by Einar Kárason

Stykkishólmur

Library of Water

Permanent Exhibition:

Roni Horn installation. The artist has replaced stacks of books with glass columns containing water gathered from Iceland's glaciers and glacial rivers.

Akureyri

Kunstraum Wohnraum

July 5 - Sept 20

Exhibition by Guðrún Vera Hjartardóttir

Seyðisfjörður

Bókaverzlun Seyðisfjarðar

July 16 - July 19

Lífsmörk // Sign of Life (part of L.U.N.G.A. Festival)

Exhibition of works by Gunnar Helgi Guðjónsson, Harpa Dögg

Kjartansdóttir, Ingunn Fjóla

Ingbórsdóttir, Þórdís Jóhannesdóttir,

Kristjana Rós Guðjónsen, Ólöf

Dómhildur Jóhannesdóttir & Sigurrós

Svava Ólafsdóttir.

Hveragerði

LÁ Art

May 2 - June 28

"Flashes in the moment of Danger"

An exhibition of works by 8 artists.

Gamla Bakarið Life (part of L.U.N.G.A. Festival)

July 16 - July 19

We Go Places

Exhibition by Guðmundir Ingi Úlfarsson

& Mads Freund Brunse.

Skafthell

June 21 - August 31

Exhibition by Kristján Steingrímur Jónsson

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**Hidden Treasure:
Treasures in Public
Possession?**

The National Gallery of
Iceland, Fríkirkjuvegi 7, 101
Reykjavík

July 10th–October 18th, Open
weekdays ☺ 8am – 4pm

The National Gallery of Iceland
explores the interesting life of a piece
of art, specifically art that ends up
in public hands. Their exhibition,
Hidden Treasure: Treasures in Public
Possession? exhibits works that
are in ownership of the three state
banks, Landsbanki, Kaupthing and
Íslandsbanki. These pieces of art
have rarely been viewed, and will
contribute to the understanding of
the progression of Icelandic art over
the past two centuries. Undoubtedly
treasures, the pieces add a new
perspective to what was once hidden.
JG



Encounters

National Museum of Iceland,
Sudurgata 41, 101 Reykjavík
Museum hours:

☺ 10am – 5pm

Encounters – at the National Museum
of Iceland – focuses on archaeology
in Iceland. Funding was received
from the Icelandic Millennium Fund
to excavate areas of historical interest
throughout the country. The beginning
of the excavation also correlated
with the anniversary of Christianity in
the country, so there was a focus on
religious history. The exhibit is the result
of these findings, and includes a range
of artefacts, from household items to
jewelry. Skeletons and larger structures
such as buildings were also unearthed.
The exhibit will continue to run at the
museum until November 30th.



Dirty

Kristján Steingrímur Jónsson "Places"

Skaftfell Gallery & Bistro, Seyðisfjörður

☺ 20.06.2009 – 31.08.2009

So the exhibit is dirt? Well, yes. But it's so much more. In Skaftfell's main gallery
Kristján Steingrímur presents his audience with samples of the earth from some of
the places he has been – Tokyo, London, New York, Copenhagen, Akureyri, etc. –
placing them adjacent to one another to highlight the contrast in colour and texture
and, in doing so, capturing and documenting the natural essence of major cities
throughout the world. Kristján Steingrímur's work on display is a juxtaposition in
itself, with nine square canvases neatly aligned three-by-three on one wall and a
mixture of earth splattered energetically and seemingly without order on another
wall in the space and up onto the ceiling. The work makes the audience think about
their geographical situation in relation to other parts of this world. All with a little
dirt.

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www.sudsudvestur.is
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www.hafnarborg.is
Strandgata 34
220 Hafnarfjörður
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Borgarnes
The Icelandic Settlement Centre
www.landnam.is
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Stykkishólmur
Vatnasafnið / Library of Water

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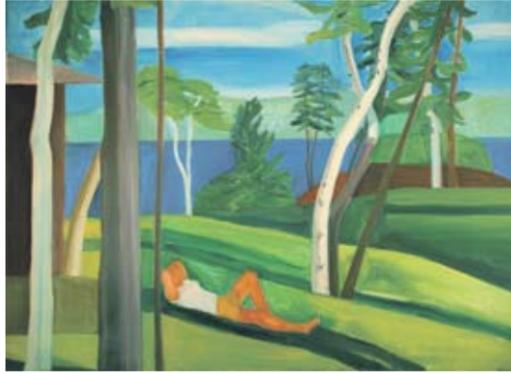
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Listasafn Reykjavíkur
Reykjavík Art Museum



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to West 8th Street
15 May – 30 August 2009

Louisa Matthíasdóttir.

Kjarvalsstaðir
Flókagata, open daily 10–17

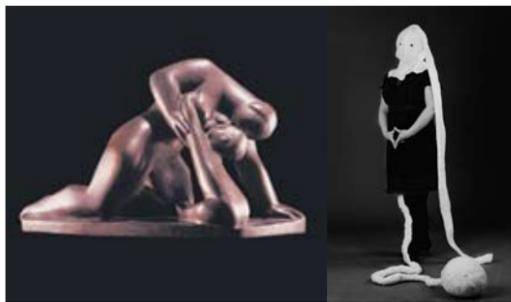
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Hafnarhús
Erró – Portraits
28 May 2009 – 13 August 2010

Hafnarhús
Tryggvagata, open daily 10–17
Thursdays 10–22



Erró.



Ásmundarsafn
Rhyme
1 May 2009 – 30 April 2010

Ásmundur Sveinsson.
Eirún Sigurðardóttir.

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FOOD

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REVIEWS



Fishmarket

Adalstræti 12
www.fiskmarkadurinn.is
Lunch weekdays 11.30 AM to 2 PM; dinner 6 to 11.30 PM.

What we think: A fun concept and a chic setting, but our trip to the market was hobbled by inconsistencies.

Flavour: Iceland meets Asia

Ambiance: More New York than Reykjavík

Service: From charming to sketchy



Market Woes

Opened in 2007, Fishmarket has already collected a Conde Nast Hot table listing, a Food and Wine Go list mention and a strong reputation among the locals.

From fish skin in the rail to bamboo on the walls and a playful and ambitious Icelandic-Asian fusion menu put together by the 27-year-old head-chef and co-owner Hrefna Rósa Saetran, Fishmarket is definitely chic.

There is a raw bar for sushi and a robata grill, “the Cadillac of grilling”, originating from Japan and fuelled by Japanese charcoal. Despite the name, the carnivore will not starve either. There is both a bar and extensive wine list too, though we chose to drink water throughout the meal.

I started off with a sushi selection (2500 ISK), an ample plate of maki, nigiri and sashimi from the raw bar. The fish was fresh, but the bland rice and too generous a covering of sauces and roe did not do the flavours justice. My date chose squid tempura (2700 ISK) from Höfn in Hornafjörður. The squid was delicious, it was of wonderful texture and neatly presented on a rice-cooker-grid-type of a thing. The tempura batter, though, was a little on the heavy side.

I had redfish with scallops and pecan pesto (3900 ISK) as a main course. The redfish was well prepared, but the scallops were gluey, merely inspiring the thought: “I am chewing

on a dead mollusc here.”

My date chose monkfish and monkfish cheeks deep fried with water spinach, camembert and noisette sauce (4600 ISK). The cheeks were fantastic and the spinach good, the camembert and monkfish filo pastries bad. The whole dish was ruined by its presentation. The deep valley shaped bowl allowed the liquid from the spinach to soak and ruin the pastry and batter of the monkfish and cheeks, leaving a soggy swamp of a dish.

For dessert, we shared a Snickers cake (1900 ISK), kitschy and good, and my date gulped down a muddy espresso – a sad regular even in the greatest of restaurants, though it was served to us with aplomb by young charmer Tommi.

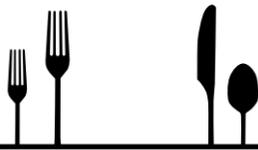
Over the course of the visit we were served by five different staff members with varying levels of professionalism, from Tommi the redeemer and the lovely head waitress to stumbling performances from the others.

All in all, Fishmarket’s atmospheric setting, ambitious menu and the concept raise expectations high, but our visit was plagued by constant little misfires. Next time, I will try the tasting menu (8900 ISK, served for whole table only), which has gathered praise from left and right.

✎ SARI PELTONEN

Food & Drink | Venue finder

3 Frakkar Baldursgata 14 F9	Brons Pósthússtræti 9 E6	Grillhusid Tryggvagata 20 E5/ E6	Kaffitár Hafnarstræti 8 F6	Pizza King Hafnarstræti 18 E6	Sushibarinn Laugavegur 2 F7
Aktu Taktu Skúlugata 15 K8	Café Cultura Hverfisgata 18 G6	Habibi Hafnarstræti 20 D5	Kaffivagninn Grandagarður 10 D1	Pizza Pronto Vallarstræti 4 D6	Svarta Kaffi Laugavegur 54 H8
American Style Tryggvagata 26 E5	Café Loki Lokastígur 28 G9	Hamborgarabúlla Tómasar Geirsgata 1 D5	Kebabbhusid Austurstræti 2 E6	Pizzaverksmiðjan Lækjargötu 8 E6	Sægreifinn Verbuð 8, Geirsgata D5
Argentina Steakhouse Barónstígur I8	Café Paris Austurstræti 14 E6	Hilolla Batar Ingólfstorg D6	Kofi Tómasar Frænda Laugavegur 2 F7	Prikið Bankastræti 12 F6	Tapas Vesturgata 3B D5
Austurlanda-hraðlestin Hverfisgata 64A H7	Café Roma Rauðarárstígur 8 J9	Hornid Hafnarstræti 15 E6	Krua Thai Tryggvagata 14 D5	Ráðhúskaffi Tjarnargata 11 D7	Thorvaldsen Austurstræti 8 E6
Á Næstu Grösom Laugavegur 20B G7	Domo Bingholtstræti 5 F7	Hótel Holt Bergstaðarstræti 37 F7	La Primavera Lækjargata 2A E6	Santa Maria Laugavegur 22A, F7	Tiu Dropar Laugavegur 27 G7
B5 Bankastræti 5 F6	Einar Ben Veltusundi E6	Humarshusid Ammatmanstígur 1 E7	Lystin Laugavegur 73 H7	Segafredo Lækjartorg E6	Tivoli Laugavegur 3 F7
Basil & Lime Klappargstig 38 G7	Eldsmiðjan Bragagata 38A G9	Hressó Austurstræti 20 E6	Mokka Skólavörðustígur 3A F7	Serrano Hringbraut 12 I3	Vegamót Vegamótastígur 4 G7
Babalú Skólavörðustígur 22A G8	Fiskmarkaðurinn Aðalstræti 12 D6	Icelandic Fish & Chips Tryggvagata 8 E5	Nonnabiti Hafnarstræti 9 E6	Silfur Pósthússtræti 11 E6	Við Tjörmina Templarasund 3 E7
Balthazar Hafnarstræti 1-3 D6/E6	Geysir Bar/Bistro Aðalstræti 2 D6	Jómfrúin Lækjargata 4 E6	O Sushi Lækjargata 2A E6	Sjávarkjallarinn Aðalstræti 2 D6	Vitabar Bergþórugata 21 H9
Bæjarins Beztu Tryggvagata E6	Garðurinn Klappargstig 37 G7	Kaffi Hjómaland Laugavegur 21 G7	Pisa Lækjargötu 6b E6	Sólón Bankastræti 7a F6	



Open Sesame

Ali Baba

Veltusundi 3B (by Ingólfstorg)

Opening hours: 11-24 on weekdays; 12-05 on weekends.

What we think: The new fast food favourite

Flavour: Middle-Eastern

Ambiance: Fast and functional with a fountain

Service: Very good



Opened in May, Ali Baba has quickly gathered a reputation as the good new kebab place.

The Middle-Eastern menu is short and straight-forward: a handful of kebab portions (a döner spinning in the back of the desk), falafel, hummus and the eternal fries and a burger; all portions priced below 1000 ISK with photos printed on A4s to illustrate – no worries of buying a pig in a poke here.

The place, more inviting than the façade lets one hope for, is spotlessly clean.

There are seats, a fountain and a view over Ingólfstorg for dining in.

I chose the falafel (800 ISK) served in a shawarma, an Arabic wrap-shaped sandwich. It was not too dry, not muddy, perfectly spicy—one of the best falafels I have eaten so far. My kebab-cavalier's arais maria (900 ISK) melted in the mouth. They had a slightly sinful and highly comforting greasiness to them, yet they were thin enough to cause guilt of a committed crime. The portions are prepared in front of you of fresh, made with inviting ingredients.

On a second visit I had hummus (500 ISK) with fries (350 ISK), a classic if graceless combination. The hummus is good and mild in flavour and comes in generous portions—perfect for a picnic lunch at the close by Austurvöllur square with a bigger entourage—as do the fries (350 ISK).

My date stuck to kebab; the shiri Kebab roll (900 ISK) with meat tasted of star anise and followed the same high standard as the rest of the foods.

Cheap, delicious, fast, Ali Baba is a new favourite for a quick bite. But when it comes to what makes the food so good—spices, sauces and other secrets to the Ali Baba flavours—the owner's lips stay sealed. "Not telling you" he says and smiles.

☺ -SARI PELTONEN

COFFEE

1 Café Haiti

Tryggvagata 16
The coffee is plain excellent, the atmosphere enticing and the price is right. These are some of the reasons why Café d'Haiti is one of Grapevine's favourite downtown cafés. Café d'Haiti inhabits a tiny space next to Krau Thai on Tryggvagata. It's almost hidden. So if you haven't tried their coffee yet, we do recommend you take a walk down to the harbour and taste a cup.

BREAKFAST

1 Grái Kötturinn

Hverfisgata 16a
Super relaxed and cosy diner/café below street level. This place makes the best hangover breakfast ever – the truck: a hefty plate of bacon, eggs, pancakes, syrup and the like, all fried to perfection – and any-other-day breakfast as well. It's a nice and relaxing place to eat and increase your caffeine intake and chill with friends or with some reading material.

2 Kornid

Lækjargata 4
No time to sit down for a leisurely breakfast? Pop into Kornid on your way to work, school, or anywhere else, for some delicious pastries to start your day in a sweet and delicious way. If you have a hunger that no single pastry could satisfy this place also has a selection of sandwiches – like the bacon and egg ciabatta – to fuel your body. There's often a bunch of other hungry folks with the same idea, but the line-up always moves fast.

BEER

1 Karamba

Laugavegur 22
Relatively new hotspot in town Karamba is a colourful and eclectic bar on with an über comfortable atmosphere, typically great music and a chill crowd. This is a good place to relax or to do some serious drinking or to relax. Plus, their decors are done strictly by Grapevine-friendly artists, such as Lóa (who does our comics), Hugleikur Dagsson (who also does our comics) and Bobby Breiðholt (who's done a lot of nice illustrations for us); they are truly a sight to behold.

2 Kaffi Zimsen

Hafnarstræti 18
This is a great place for beer. They have specials on the stuff pretty much every night of the week – two for one on Mondays! – and they're the only joint in town offering those self-serve 3 litre beer towers if you're drinking in a group or really thirsty or a fan of buying your beer in bulk. Plus, if you like to sit while drinking your beer, Zimsen has lots of chairs and roomy booths for your lounging pleasure.

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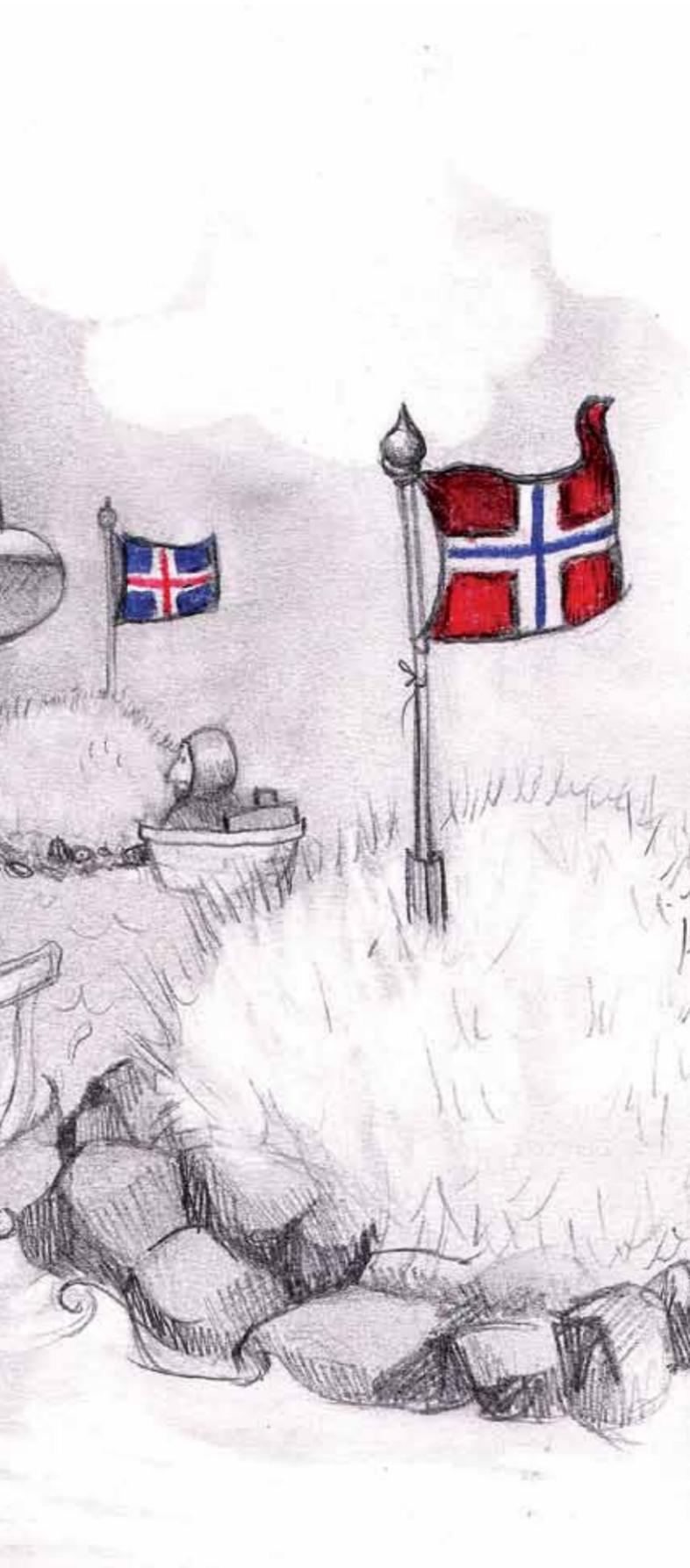


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Björk Sigur Rós Megas og Senubjófarnir **Gus Gus**
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Hermigervill Evil Madness **Dj Musician** Bang Gang
Kid Twist Ólafur Arnalds Sprengjuhöllin **Mr. Silla**
Skátar **Sin Fang Bous** Agent Fresco Retro Stefson
Pornopop Singapore Sling **Nico Muhly** Agent Fresco
Benny Crespo's Gang Mínus Joensuu 1685 **Nolo**
Hudson Wayne Skakkamanage **Mark Noseby** Nóra
Disenchanted Kimono Mammút Swords of Chaos
Dead Skeletons **The Go Go Darkness** Ghostigital
Orrustubjarki Bob Justman Slugs The Way Down
Trabant **Weapons** Hjálmar Swive Celestine Hellvar
Sudden Weather Change Retron **Steve Sampling**
Surf City Leaves Didda **Egill Ólafsson** Jeff who?
Gazelle **Rúnar Júlíusson** Slow Blow Reptilicus
Hilmar Örn Hilmarsson **Lights on the Highway** Nestor
For a minor Reflection dr. Spock Beatmakintroopa

Asylum Seekers In Norway

Can we learn from our ancestors' descendants?



Words

Zoë Robert

Illustration

Lóa Hjálmtýsdóttir

Our arrival on a Saturday afternoon at a reception centre for asylum seekers on the outskirts of Trondheim, Norway's third largest city, is met with mixed reactions. The grounds of the Sandmoen centre are empty; all activity seems to be taking place in the recreation room where a group of men are playing pool. We're here to learn about the situation of asylum seekers in Norway, but some of the residents we meet are uneasy about our visit; others are only too willing to have their stories heard.

The treatment of asylum seekers is a contentious issue and one which has received significant attention on a local level in Iceland in recent months. A comparison with Norway (see graph) reveals that in 2008 Norway granted asylum at three times the rate of Iceland and positive decisions overall per 1,000 inhabitants at almost 30 times the rate. Both countries rejected applications in more than half of cases. While Norway processes cases more swiftly, the processing time in Iceland is getting shorter.

Most of the individuals we spoke with at the centre in Trondheim are outspoken about their situation: frustrated, even angry, about how their applications are being handled others have given up on being granted permission to stay. Ubayo, a young man from Nigeria, is the first to approach me when I invite everyone to be interviewed. He is vocal about his criticism of the authorities' handling of his case, and is confused as to why he and some of his fellow countrymen have not been granted asylum. "Some people cannot go home because of what is chasing them. Somebody who is running for his life doesn't have any hope in the future to go back home," Ubayo says. "You are here to settle down, to begin a new life [...] and now they want to send you back. You go crazy," he adds.

Later, one of the residents shows us the buildings in which they live. Here we meet Belise, a softly spoken young woman from Burundi, who invites me inside. She shares her roughly 20m² room (comprised of a bathroom, kitchen, living and sleeping areas) with another woman. The room seems fairly standard for hostel-style accommodation but Belise says it's difficult to share the small space with a stranger for any extended period of time.

Next we speak to Atif, the young Afghani man who lives next door. He invites us to his room for tea, where his English-speaking friends join us. They are keen to tell us how they ended up in Norway, more than 5,000 kilometres from their home.

Rashid, one of Atif's friends, fled eastern Afghanistan five years ago. His application for asylum has been rejected. However, he ignored the Directorate of Immigration's instructions to leave the country; instead he continues to live in Norway without a permit, staying with Norwegian friends who also offer him occasional work.

"One year has passed so I am a little bit brave now," he says when asked whether he worries about the police deporting him. "All the time I am thinking about the future it's not a life," he adds.

Norway wants more restrictions

While the asylum seekers we speak to say that they haven't had any negative experiences with locals, the few people we speak to in Trondheim are apprehensive about the number of asylum seekers arriving in Norway, particularly in light of reports of asylum seekers linked to criminal activity in the country. A survey by Nordic broadcasting companies released in April found that Norwegians were the most negative towards refugees and wanted the most restrictions out of the Nordic countries.

Gunn Hilde Garte, director of the reception centre in Trondheim, says that it usually takes a while for people to accept the idea of living in an area with asylum seekers.

"Reception centres tend to cause some negative reactions among the locals in the beginning, but after a while people learn that there is nothing to fear and that the camps can be a good thing for the community."

Unlike most of the others we meet, Abu who arrived from Palestine five months ago is optimistic about his future, despite not having yet found work. "Norway is a good country. It's cold sometimes, all the time actually, but it's OK. I feel good for my future here," he says.

Lengthy processing time a problem

While the reception centre staff in Norway and the Red Cross and others in Iceland organise regular social activities for asylum seekers, the Icelandic Red Cross Project Manager for Refugees and Asylum Seekers, Atli Viðar Thorstensen, emphasises the importance of providing asylum seekers with opportunities to work or study, arguing that the lack of activity can lead to depression among asylum seekers.

"If people are rejected and they are sent back to their country of origin then it is bad if they have been waiting for a couple of years and are not able to do anything—no work, no education, no Icelandic courses no nothing. It means that people will get depressed and it will be more difficult for them to return to their country of origin and face life there."

Asylum seekers in both Iceland and Norway can apply for a temporary work permit on the condition that they can either document their identity or present it as "highly likely."

However, according to Thorstensen, the Directorate of Labour in Iceland has been stricter when granting work permits over the last few months, presumably following the surge in unemployment in Iceland, and gives preference to nationals of countries within the EEA.

Both countries apply Dublin Regulation, Norway suspended transfers to Greece

Haukur Guðmundsson, Director of the Directorate of Immigration until the end of May, says that the low number of cases accepted by Icelandic authorities can partly be attributed to the country's geographical location. As asylum seekers cannot travel directly from conflict zones to Iceland, the country is unlikely to be their first port of entry into Europe, meaning that the Dublin Regulation can be applied to many cases.

While Thorstensen agrees, he says that some challenge the use of the Dublin Regulation as an explanation for the low percentage of positive decisions. "People have been speculating that the refugee definition is interpreted more narrowly in Iceland than in other countries, [but] I don't know about that."

While signatories to the Dublin Regulation are not obliged to send asylum seekers back to the country responsible for their application, both Norway and Iceland do so in almost all cases.

The UNHCR urges European countries not to return asylum seekers to Greece under Dublin and has strongly criticised Greek asylum and detention policies.

Earlier in the year, Iceland reversed the decision to send back a group of five individuals to Greece. The Alþingi general committee however concluded this week that although a Ministry of Justice's report found that there were "serious flaws" in the treatment of asylum seekers in Greece, the conditions in Greece are improving and Iceland could consequently continue to send refugees to the country. Norway on the other hand announced last year that it had temporarily suspended the transfer of asylum seekers to Greece.

Six hundred and eighty asylum seekers arrived in Iceland between 1990 and 2008. Two received refugee status, 66 were granted protection on humanitarian grounds and three were granted refugee status on family reunification grounds. Iceland falls well short of the Norwegian, and more importantly, European, rate of granting asylum seekers refugee status.

The asylum seekers we spoke to were seeking a new life in Norway, but their stories of hope, frustration, and desperation are echoed in Iceland and elsewhere. According to the UNHCR, 383,000 applications for asylum were submitted worldwide in 2008. The responsibility to protect those at risk must be shared. Norway and Iceland both experienced a significant increase in arrivals in 2008. Norway struggled to accommodate new arrivals, and while improvements have been made, a greater devotion to resources to cope with the increase and to also reduce processing times, particularly in Iceland, is needed.

*Names of asylum seekers have been changed. 🍷

2008 Statistics Comparison between Norway and Iceland

Norway, like Iceland, is a non-EU Member State and a signatory to the Dublin Regulation.

	ICELAND	NORWAY
Number of arrivals	14,431	76
Number of arrivals (per 1,000 inhabitants)	3.1	.03
Number of arrivals (ranking among European countries)	3rd	20th
Increase 2007-2008	120%	80%
*Applications processed by Directorate of Immigration	7,442	20
*Positive decisions (per 1,000 inhabitants)	.635	.022
*Average processing time (months)	7.5	12-24 ¹
Donations to UNHCR 2008 USD	61, 048, 237, rank 6th	100,000, rank 67th

Decisions on fully examined cases according to outcome 2008 (%)		
Refugee status (EU average in 2008 = 13%)	14%	5% ²
Protection on humanitarian grounds	11%	30%
Other protection	16%	-----
Rejected	59%	65%

¹ Excluding Dublin and Family Reunification cases, as well as those who had their cases withdrawn
² Average for recent years according to Icelandic Directorate of Immigration
³ Not including applicants granted refugee status on grounds of family reunification (FR). In 2008, three individuals were granted refugee status on FR grounds and permitted to join their family member who had received refugee status in Iceland. In Norway 3,536 family immigration permits were issued to individuals who were to be reunited with persons of "refugee background." Not processed as application for asylum as in Iceland.
Sources: Eurostat, Norwegian and Icelandic Directorates of Immigration, Icelandic Red Cross and UNHCR.

The History of Icelandic Rock music: Part 6

Hljómar Invent Icelandic Pop



During 1967 and '68, Hljómar were once again the major band in Iceland. After the band's failure to break through (both internationally and locally) with their "difficult" experimental rhythm & blues (as Thor's Hammer, later recognised as one of the best music made in Iceland during the sixties), the band set out to play more "comfortable" pop music. The plot worked out fine. The band quickly gained back their earlier popularity and Svavar Gestis decided to finance a Hljómar album for his SG imprint. This eponymous Hljómar album was to become the first Icelandic modern pop album.

joint effort with Guðlaugur Bergmann, who had run Reykjavík's hippest fashion store, Karnabær, for two years, the band went to Sweden as ambassadors of Icelandic pop and fashion. "The band tends to bring together the traditional Icelandic way and the world of pop," wrote Morgunblaðið, adding: "Hljómar will all be dressed in sheepskin-vests. Knitted sock-shoes, caps, etc. will be brought along. Hljómar have arranged ancient Icelandic rhyme motifs and added into their music and the langspil (ancient Icelandic instrument) will be taken along."

The trip didn't do much, neither for Icelandic fashion nor Hljómar. The band was offered a support slot for The Spencer Davis Group though, but the members didn't think that was good enough. For their second album (also eponymous, but later referred to as Hljómar II), the band added Shady Owens to the line-up. Shady was a 19-year-old daughter of an American soldier and Icelandic mother, and had stayed in Iceland for a while, singing with Öðmenn. She had a wonderful voice and sang the Icelandic lyrics with a charming American accent. The album was recorded in London in a record-breaking 35 hours (their first LP had taken 16 hours). Sixteen session musicians played on the album, including keyboardist Nick Hopkins, who had just played on "Revolution" for The Beatles. The album had six original songs by Gunnar Þórðarson on Side 1 and six cover versions on Side 2. Soon after the album's release, Gunnar admitted regrets for including the cover songs. The album cost much more than SG had intended and sold less than the first album. A lawsuit ensued which ended in Hljómar having to pay SG back for the extravaganza.

The band had to be flown to London, as Iceland's recording studios at that time were deemed "not good enough." Hljómar recorded twelve songs. Five songs were new originals, three by Gunnar Þórðarson, one by Þórir Baldursson, and one by Dátar's Rúnar Gunnarsson. The rest of the album featured cover versions of foreign hits with Icelandic lyrics, often by Þorsteinn Eggertsson (who also drew the album's cover). During the trip to London, the band stocked up on the newest threads from hip shops on Carnaby Street. An Icelandic TV special was made with the band lip-synching to the songs dressed to the gills in hippie gear with flowerpots dangling from their guitars. Hljómar had obviously seen The Beatles' performance of All you need is Love as their appearance looked similar, with young hip people sitting around, including members of Flowers and other bands, grooving convincingly to the music.

Hljómar played relentlessly at dance balls all around Iceland. The band rarely performed their own songs but mostly cover versions of recent international hits. These balls had little to do with love and peace. Rúnar Júlíusson, the beloved singer and bassist, had originally been prone to shyness, playing with his back to the audience. Now he had turned into a wild animal on stage. He jumped, climbed, dived, even stripped on stage. His stage act was legendary and hasn't been matched since. The guests didn't come for any peace crap either. The drunk and horny crowd often tore down the places to the pounding backdrop of Hljómar's music. A legendary ball in Sandgerði in 1968 ended in a riot after the band stopped playing at two o'clock instead of four as promised. Chairs, windows, glasses and bottles were smashed, leaving the place in ruins.

As the hair and beards grew longer and the general rock direction got heavier and more progressive, Hljómar's pop direction started to date fast. Hljómar's primary competition had been psychedelic pop band Flowers, and within that band, too, some wanted to move on to play a different kind of music. The band members – especially the two Gunnars (Þórðarson from Hljómar and Jökull Hákonarson, the drummer from Flowers) – discussed a liaison, often in privacy at discothèque Las Vegas on Grensásvegur. The conclusion was Trúbrot, Iceland's first "super-group". We'll get to that next time.

✎ - DR. GUNNI

By Dr. Gunni, based on his 2000 book Eru ekki allir í stuði? (Rock in Iceland). A revised update of the book is forthcoming in 2010.

Sheepskin vests for world domination
Dreams of world domination were re-kindled when Hljómar tried to break into the Scandinavian market in 1968. In a

1. Late period Hljómar

The line-up that made the second album in 1968: Gunnar Þórðarson, Engilbert Jensen, Erlingur Björnsson, Rúnar Júlíusson and Shady Owens.

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Dj Cuellar
Pedro Seph Underground

Saturday 18. july

Live Music
Krooks
DJ Árni Sveins
Hugarástand

Wednesday 22. july

Late Hour Party
DJ Óli Ofur

Thursday 23. july

Kiasmos Live Set
Orange Volante Live Set

Friday 24. july

Live Music
Company B
Raggi Kvikindi
Sexy Laser

Saturday 25. july

Super Discant
Daniel Howe
DJ Jack Shidt

Wednesday 29. july

Late Hour Party

Thursday 30. july

Casbah Opening
Private Party

LABOUR DAY WEEKEND

Friday 31. july

Jacobsen Underground
Session No. 1
DJ Yamaho

Saturday 1. august

Live Music
Steriohypnosis
Reptilicus
AMFJ

Sunday 2. august

Jacobsen Underground
Session No. 2
DJ Thobbi
Captain Fufanu

Jacobsen

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Jamie Oliver's Diary



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On Tour | Grapevine Goes Eistnaflug Rock Festival - Part One

Sunlit Halls



Eistnaflug (translated 'Flight of the Testicles', 'TestFest', or, worst of all, 'Flight of the Testes') is a metal festival held annually in the small eastern Icelandic fishing port of Neskaupstaður. The Grapevine, diligent as always in the monitoring of high culture, sent an observer to bear witness to the drunken insanity that occurs when pretty much all of Iceland's metal subculture gathers in a tiny town to watch thirty bands play the most extreme Iceland has to offer musically. The observer, as fate would have it, was me.

To best capture the impossibly chaotic and unpredictable nature of Eistnaflug, or indeed any large outdoor music festival, I have decided that an ad verbatim, unabridged and uncensored transcription of the A6 Moleskine notebook I acquired somewhere and jotted down random observations in would be the best way to re-experience the festival. They are however, for the reader's convenience, proofread.

Bear in mind that the following opinions expressed are not necessarily truths, nor even opinions I hold today. I feel, however, that this makes them all the more effective: an account written after the fact would only be tainted by wisdom I've gained or lost since, and would be too focused on discerning a purpose to all the lunacy I experienced. Not one word has been added or omitted.

Thursday, 9th July.

The first fourteen notes are not timed, but they were taken, to the best of my recollection, between 4:30 and 7:30 P.M. All other untimed notes are impossible to place correctly.

Senior citizens: "Heavy metal." There is cold beer at the back of the car. (Ford Focus) Everywhere is warmed by sunlight shining through windows.

I watch first band Skitur play. There are 33 people in the room. Everyone outside is too drunk to communicate; inside, everything is too loud. Some guy's girlfriend pushes his hand away as he tries to hug her. They walk towards the bar.

Skitur is asked for an encore, but the singer needs to take a piss. The afternoon sunlight is intensely uncomfortably bright outside. The

bouncer thinks my notebook is alcohol. We exchange awkward grunts.

Everyone is drunk and half-naked and everyone reeks of sweat. I lie and smoke a cigarette in some grass. Someone quotes HAM's version of Airport.

"Ég fíla þessar kringumstæður þar sem að fólk tjaldar bara til að geyma draslið sitt í og sefur bara þar sem það deyr."

It's ten to seven and someone falls over drunk and vomiting. The sun beats down hard. It's so impossibly beautiful here and I don't understand this place.

It's only the first day and already the consistency of crumbling, dry mud permeates everything. Tomboys are everywhere.

It's 19:35 and we're debating whether or not someone's shitty Peruvian reggaeton sounds Japanese. Everyone is drunk.

It's 20:01 and the campsite applies temporary tattoos to each other. The sun drops behind the mountain.

It's 20:17 and the sky is incredibly blue. I'm thinking of going to see a band or two. Someone is throwing up close by. The hollow crunch of someone stepping on a beer can has become commonplace. Almost none of the girls are wearing bras. A circle of garbage has begun to form between the tents.

My photographer groans multiple times as he takes a sip of whiskey, as if he's been stung by something. The dusk shadows the mountain in an indescribably intricate way. No-one notices. Someone notices a slab of barbecue is on fire.

21:03 and everyone smells of campsite undergrowth. People are lying down on the pavement. I reach the venue and everyone is sweaty and disgusting and happy. A band has just finished. Someone feeds his girlfriend pizza. I look at someone's face too long, I have to nod to them. Do it twice, I have to talk to them.

I stand around a car that has Butthole Surfers blaring out of the stereo. Another car, a moving one with a local driving, beeps at a drunk guy with a guitar case. The shadow of one mountain moves over another. A girl dances atop a Toyota SUV and the car alarm goes off. She skitters into a

crowd. No-one believes I am who I say I am and some girl says she was born in '98.

I stand alone and drink beer by the venue entrance. I think Plastic Gods are playing. Punk may not be sexual, but metal is. "I'll give you 1000 ISK for a blowjob," someone says to a girl. Plastic Gods are hypnotic and amazing in every way imaginable. The bass strap comes loose in one song. No-one cares. The bassist screams into his mike. The most interesting music in Iceland is played here three days a year. Everyone here knows that. I'm on my way to the pier to piss off of it, and someone yells at me, "Hey do you have a light?"

"No, I don't smoke anymore."
 "Really? Not even... magic?," he says, brandishing a very long rolled-up cigarette.

"Uh... yeah, sure, I smoke magic."
 It's 22:56 and I'm higher than god. The music drones on inside, but my beer is too valuable to pour out, so I'm stuck outside for now. A guy smacks my ass as he passes me and I spy my photographer stumbling over the street with some rolling tobacco. I enter the venue and a band is trying very hard.

"Who is this?," I ask someone.
 "I don't know."

They speak accented English as they leave the stage. I ask someone else. I can't hear a word he says. I ask again.

"Actress. From Germany."
 "Okay."
 A pause.

"Thanks," I add. I stand by the exit. Every five minutes, somebody hugs someone they haven't seen for years. It's 23:53 and I've sort of lost track of events. I run out of the venue and walk around town.

Friday, July 10th:

0:34. I sit in my tent and debate whether or not to leave it again. Someone calls my name; it's for someone else, just a coincidence. There are more single girls here than last year. Someone talks about Star Wars, someone else keeps yelling my name. I think I'm about to leave my tent.

01:14 Someone is breakdancing atop the lavatory crate. He falls off. Everyone cheers.

It's 01:52 and I return to the lavatory crate. 4 people are camping out on top of it, hurling obscenities at passerby. Everyone is listening to metal.

The time is indeterminate. I can't find my allergy medication and my hangover shows no mercy. I'm going back to sleep.

Read the stunning conclusion to Sindri's Eistnaflug coverage in our next issue.

✍ SINDRI ELDON
 📷 LYMIR



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Pools, Tubs, Cheese Containers – YES!

I get a kick out of swimming pools. Hiking tours, road trips or countryside family journeys should all be tied together by visiting a pool of some kind. A long bath in a desolate, small hot water pool in the middle of nowhere is simply the best way to relax before hitting the road again. Dipping into a pool, soaking in a tub, this is what makes a perfect trip.

In Iceland, finding a place to swim is incredibly easy. According to www.sundlaugar.is (they claim to list all known pools in the country), Iceland has 130 official swimming pools. A wider spot on the road is usually a sign that a swimming pool is close by. In fact, it is almost impossible to find an Icelandic gathering of more than, say, eight buildings where you won't be able to take a swim or soak in a relaxing hot water pool.

The rule of thumb is that wherever there is a block of houses, there is a swimming pool. What is even better, though, is how easy it is to find a hot water pool outside the residential areas – as long as you know where to look.

Not to put down the Blue Lagoon or Jarðböðin in Mývatn, I still go for an isolated, peaceful hot water pond in the middle of the Icelandic countryside over a fancy, jam-packed water park where you are marked by a plastic band attached to your wrist. Every time.

In my opinion, the most inviting pools are the desolate ones. Imagine floating about in hot water whilst gazing at the cold, stormy ocean roaring just a few metres away. This particular view from a pool is the best one in the whole country and can be found in the Westfjords, right at the end of a narrow bumpy road. Another extremely pleasant swimming pool is located in a green valley in the middle of nowhere, a few kilometres outside the nearest village Vopnafjörður, just waiting for passers-by to stop and dive in.

It is not at all rare to be the only visitor in many of these pools. This is ideal. Moreover, whether you are an early bird or a night person, these pools are almost always open. When you go, please remember to leave some change in the donation pot – a few hundred Icelandic krónur isn't a lot to part with in exchange for a unique swimming experience. These donations are used to keep the pool and its surroundings in good condition. Giving donations to the villages' swimming pools also means you can come back and re-live the wonderful experience.

When in Iceland, go swimming. On your tour around the country, you should try out at least some of the following places.



Photo: Björgvin Hilmarsson

KROSSNESLAUG

Where: Norðurfjörður, in the north part of the Westfjords. Krossneslaug is at the very end of road number 643. Drive carefully – the narrow sandy road from Hólmavík up to Norðurfjörður has a lot of curves and is quite bumpy...

How to get there: Follow the road after Norðurfjörður camping area and gas station all the way to the end. You can't miss it; the pool is right next to the sea.

Amenities: Showers, toilets and changing rooms. The site has no electricity though, so if you are a late visitor and you've missed the midnight sun, remember to pack some candles with you.

Special: Candlelit swim in a peaceful pool right next to a stormy sea – need I say more? This is easily the most romantic swimming pool in Iceland.



Photo: Jón Sigurðarson - www.vopnafjordur.is

VOPNAFJÖRÐUR

Where: Around seven kilometres north from Vopnafjörður village in Northern Iceland.

How to get there: When driving along road number 85, you come across the pool in the valley of Selárdalur.

Amenities: Showers, changing rooms, toilets. During summertime, there is an attendant that cares for the site. Outside the official opening times, remember to leave an entrance fee in the donation box.

Special: Perfect spot to either take a swim in the big pool or relax in the hot ponds. The atmosphere in the green valley between the mountains is nice and quiet. An average visitor to the site is a villager from Bakkafjörður or Vopnafjörður. Random travellers rarely come across the place as the pool is not situated next to the main road, road number one. But believe me, the pool itself and the surrounding landscapes are worth taking a detour from the ring road.



Photo: Björgvin Hilmarsson

OLD CHEESE CONTAINERS

Where: In the most fun town of Northern Iceland: Húsavík.

How to get there: The cheese containers are located a kilometre away from the town centre. Drive along the road Höfðavegur out of town and then take a right turn on to a smaller road, leaving a quaint-looking lighthouse to your left.

Amenities: Changing rooms and showers.

Special: This is the ultimate second-hand swimming pool: the two hot water pools have originally served as cheese containers for a cheese factory, and the changing rooms are built into an old cargo container. The hot water, very rich in minerals, comes straight from the ground. So if the pools are empty, the tectonic plate movements are to blame; the water may dry up after earthquakes. This happens occasionally.



Photo: www.gusti.is

TÁLKNAFJÖRÐUR HOT POOLS (FREE OF CHARGE)

Where: Located a few kilometres outside the charming village centre of Tálknafjörður in the ever so beautiful West Fjords.

How to get there: Drive along Strandgata until you see a red-roofed cottage on your right.

Amenities: Modest changing rooms. The pools usually have some algae in them, but not to worry – it won't do you any harm!

Special: According to the locals, this is the best spot to see the northern lights in the wintertime. When the weather gets really harsh and snow covers the village, the feeling of putting on your trunks and jumping into the hot pool is incredible. It is just you alone accompanied by the cold wind, beautiful mountains and the comforting hot water. ☺

✉ SATU RÁMÖ

Thank God For Hot Water

The Reykjanes Pool and some of what makes life bearable



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One of this country's best redeeming qualities are the pools of hot water found sprinkled all over it. Those pools somehow manage to make life on the edge of the inhabitable world somewhat bearable-to-goddamn awesome when all else fails, especially when temperatures drop below sub-zero and an endless winter takes hold of the heart. They are also pretty great during summer, when those dark days seem like a distant, repressed memory. We treasure every single one of the geothermal pools, quaint hot tubs and glorified puddles sprinkled all over our small rock in the North Atlantic, and so should you.

All of those pools are special, all of them offer something to love; the modern concrete and glass constructs with their fishtank steamrooms and suburban families, the indoor pools and their ambitious architecture, the barren wasteland screaming ocean end-of-the-world three-person decaying concrete tubs. All of them do, yet some of them stand out, earning a very special place in travellers' hearts, haunting their dreams and demanding repeat visits. One such pool sits on the Reykjanes peninsula, not the one with Keflavík in it, the one that rests firmly on one of the Westfjords' many jagged corners.

This is not the first article we publish about the pool at the Reykjanes resort, and it probably will not be the last. No amount of words or pictures could possibly capture it in optimal conditions. Its raw concrete structure (re-done this summer) fits surprisingly well with the area's rugged geography, underwater wooden benches provide a place to rest and contemplate the warm water blending in with the clear, clean sky, the sometimes angry ocean or the

mountains looming afar.

The pool itself is an Olympic-sized outdoor affair. It is Iceland's biggest hot tub by all accounts – the hot geothermal water making it way more suitable for floating around and forgetting whatever ails you than engaging in any Olympic-style activities. It was built in 1934 to replace the older (1889) rock-and-dirt-based model, remnants of which are still visible. It was until recently Iceland's 'longest' swimming pool; although it was originally meant to be a modest 25-metre length the builders apparently got the measurements wrong. The geothermal heating results in a comfortably inconsistent average temperature and a warning sign graces its banks: pool may be extremely hot, patrons enter at their own risk.

The charmingly rustic hotel/campsite usually offers the kind of peace and quiet most tourists will happily travel across continents to reach, and you start wondering why the resort is one of Icelandic tourism's best kept secrets.

Floating in the pool during sunlit summer nights invites many a curiosity (it officially closes at 23:30, but the resort folks don't seem to mind if you loiter around forever); I have had several close encounters of the bird kind while resting my laurels there, a redshank or whippoorwill landing on the water's smooth surface to rest along with me and share a few tweets. All sorts of birds seem to know about this place, and they seem to like it.

Boil your senses away, douse them with beer and you will understand exactly what they mean. Soak yourself for hours. You can ponder eternity, or you may engage in conversation with drunk tourists, should you find yourself in their company.

✉ HAUKUR S MAGNÚSSON
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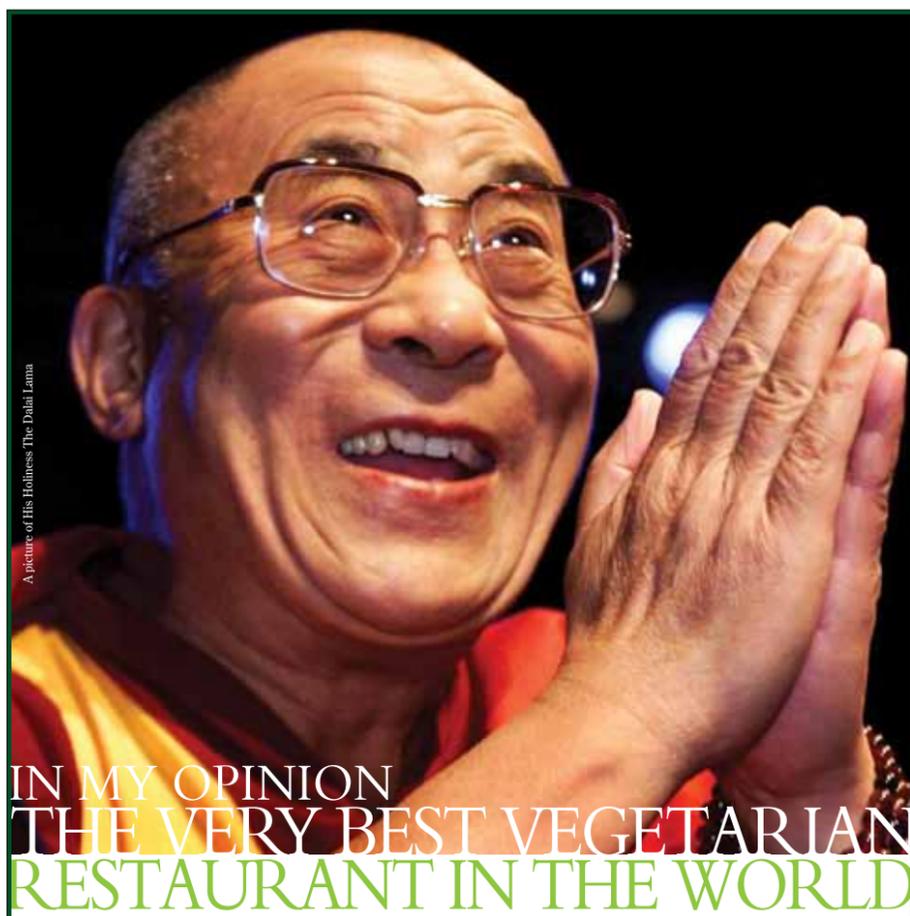
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... and on his farm he had some lettuce. E-I-E-I-O.

Surviving a weekend WWOOFing in Egilsstaðir



Working the land. Hoeing the weeds from deceptively long rows of lettuce and parsley. I'm in Egilsstaðir, in the far east of Iceland. As far away from Reykjavik as I can get without leaving this island. WWOOFing.

This is hard work. Not hard in the sense of it being physically demanding – though my right arm is rather sore from repetitive motions of circling the hoe under and around every individual vegetable in the bed for hours at a time – it's hard in the sense that I'm not accustomed to being so entirely alone with my thoughts. An experience like this really drives home the sad reality of my life of distraction. Distracted by the internet. Distracted by my iPod. Distracted by constantly being surrounded by people and noises and images and flash and bang and ohh and ahh.

It's easy to act and do when you've no time to think things over. It's terrifying to have a bank of three hours, just you and a bed of lettuce and a hoe, to think

over your life: your actions past, present and future. Nostalgia is joyfully saddening. Love is painfully elating. Neither can you experience at that moment in the field; just you and a bed of lettuce and a hoe.

Flipping through the guest book in the WWOOF quarters of Vallanes organic farm helps to alleviate my feelings of being a prisoner of my own mind, tortured by my incessant inner dialogue. The book, its original hard black shell recovered with a now worn and torn poster depicting fields and forests, reads like a surprisingly personal diary; the traditional upbeat "thanks for a great summer" entries augmented by deeply individual outpourings of personal growth and struggle experienced by countless young visitors during their time in the fields.

One entry from either August 9th or September 8th of 2001 spoke to me. At that time a girl named Elizabeth from Portsmouth, New Hampshire, was feel-

ing my pain. Likely younger than me at the time of writing – as all WWOOFers seem to be, making me feel frighteningly more senior than my twenty-four years – and having sought out a summer of WWOOFing for herself, as opposed to hearing of the practice by chance and thinking it a quirky way to spend a couple of days and potentially interesting fodder for an article, Elizabeth was struggling initially.

"There were times that I thought I might be going insane because I was having so many thoughts," she wrote. I feel you, Elizabeth, whoever you are and wherever you may be. We are kindred spirits, you and I. Of course, Elizabeth learned about herself from the experience, calling her time at Vallanes "absolutely the healthiest summer" and expressing her gratitude to farmer Eyundur Magnússon for the opportunity to explore herself and her thoughts in the fields.

I haven't achieved such a heightened



level of calm, inner peace and self-awareness.

Three hours of hoeing in solitude, something that my fellow WWOOFers dispersed throughout the field seem to have no problem with, inspired me not to explore my deepest inner thoughts, fight my internal demons and come to terms with two-dozen years of sometimes questionable choices. Rather it motivated me to hit the fields equipped with my iPod. The subsequent days have been a hell of a lot easier for it.

It seemed like a good idea at the time WWOOFing? Is that some canine-specific breed of bestiality?

That was my inner dialogue upon a chance encounter in May with Amy Borkwood, a twenty-five year old Torontonian then recently arrived in Iceland specifically to hitchhike its ring road and WWOOF its organic farms. Luckily for her reputation in my mind, Amy had an explanation of WWOOFing at the ready. She's a hippie, not a fetishist. I like to label people.

World Wide Opportunities on Organ-

ic Farms (WWOOF) "links people who want to volunteer on organic farms or smallholdings with people who are looking for volunteer help." Thus, WWOOFing is the actual act of volunteering on an organic farm.

"I first heard about WWOOFing about 6 years ago, when only one person I knew had WWOOFed, in France," Borkwood explains. "Now I know tons of people that have WWOOFed all over the world. It has really gained popularity over the last few years."

Borkwood, who has WWOOFed previously in Portugal, Spain, Italy, Slovenia and Greece, seemingly couldn't say enough about the experience. Through WWOOFing she can travel alone safely, see parts of countries outside the major city centres, stay with farmers and be cared for and fed for free, contribute to the agricultural growth of another country and meet people from all over the world with similar interests to her.

So that's when the thought hit me: Getting out of 101 could be nice for a short period of time. I'm totally going WWOOFing!



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I flew to Egilsstaðir. Less time travelling meant more time WWOOFing and, anticipating a relaxing escape from Reykjavík, I was quite eager to get started. Driving the compact sky-blue rented Toyota down the long gravel driveway and around a bend toward a charming old white house, I let out a faint sigh of relief.

This is just what I need. The Grapevine's graphic-design intern and fellow WWOOF virgin, Hailey, and I parked the car, hopped out and greeted Eymundur, a fit middle-aged man of slight stature, ever the farmer in practical denim and a plaid shirt. "Get back in the car and follow me to the WWOOF hotel," he directed. We obeyed.

Farther down the driveway, through an overgrown undulating field, beside a large white warehouse where Eymundur manufactures Móðir Jörð vegetarian burgers was the WWOOF 'hotel' – a portable shelter elevated on concrete raisers and painted in a hodgepodge of contrasting colours chosen by the WWOOFers themselves. It took only a glance for me to utter what my travel companion and I were both thinking: "what have I gotten us into?"

It was overcast, drizzling slightly, and the surrounding mountains were shrouded in a thick fog. The excitement felt when boarding the Air Iceland flight

in sunny and warm Reykjavík was decidedly diminished. Upon entering the 'hotel' we were greeted by nine WWOOFers, all of whom seemed sceptical about the presence of a journalist and graphic designer.

Fast-forward five hours, after a delicious vegetarian lunch prepared by the housekeeper of the WWOOF 'hotel,' Lilja, and a mind-numbing three hours clothed in neon-orange vinyl overalls, rain boots and an oversized WWOOF-supplied sweater, holding a hoe in my cramping and callusing gloved hands.

"So how was your first day of real work?"

Goddamned WWOOFers!

I ain't gonna work on Eymundur's farm no more

WWOOFing was hard work. Mentally more than physically, though I presume those who seek out summers of the practice, travelling from country to country, farm to farm, are stronger of mind than I am; less in need of constant entertainment, less dependant on outside distractions and shiny trinkets to fiddle with or get lost in.

However, Vallanes, I learned over my four days living there, is not the typical WWOOF farm. The young volunteers were disenchanted with Eymundur's lack of participation and one-on-one time with the WWOOFers. They seek out experiences on organic farms to learn and that was clearly something

that this farmer had little time for between business meetings and marketing his barley, veggie burgers and massage oils. Due to this disconnection between the farmer and his minions the nine WWOOFers living with me in the 'hotel' lamented that I was not experiencing the WWOOFing they so loved.

Speaking with one particular WWOOFer I met on Eymundur's farm really made me crave a WWOOFing do-over. A WWOOF-over?

Leah Mawhinney travelled from her home state of Maine, supported by a grant, to WWOOF. Truly interested in learning about farming practices throughout the world, she WWOOFed other farms in Iceland and was so convincing about how phenomenal an experience WWOOFing typically is that I found myself pricing out tickets to run away with her to the beaches of the Golfo di Taranto.

As a matter of fact, if I had a credit card to pay for it and no responsibilities to tend to in Reykjavík I would be WWOOFing on the coastal kiwi farms of southern Italy at this very moment, confident that my bombardment of thoughts would be more manageable under the Mediterranean sun than they were on Eymundur's farm; just me and a bed of lettuce and a hoe. ♡

✍ CATHARINE FULTON
📷 HAILEY LOMAN

The WWOOFing Bunch

Introducing the farmer and WWOOFers of Vallanes organic farm

EYMUNDUR MAGNÚSSON - 54 - "THE FARMER"



Eymundur didn't grow up on a farm. His grandparents had been farmers but he was born and raised in Reykjavík and experienced farm life during his summers in Egilsstaðir. "I was on my grandmother's farm in the valley not far from here and I just fell in love with the countryside and I decided to be a farmer when I was about six." He actually pursued a life of farming when he was 24 years old, beginning with a traditional dairy farm and making the shift to organic farming ten-years later. At that time he was a pioneer of organic farming in Iceland, often told by other farmers that he was crazy to go organic in conditions that are already difficult to grow in. "I got to know organic farming, I had been growing organically for myself and once you get to know organic it's easy to see that it's the right thing to do. It tastes so much better."

AMY BORKWOOD - 25 - TORONTO - CANADA



Amy lives in Toronto, Canada, where she's beginning a university programme in feminist social work in the fall. She has WWOOFed in Portugal, Spain, Italy, Slovenia and Greece... and Iceland. During her time in Iceland Amy spent time on two farms in the Selfoss-area. "WWOOFing is perfect for me, because I can travel alone and still get into the countryside, meet people, and it's also a really great way to travel for a longer period of time for cheap. I also love being able to do something productive and helpful while I'm travelling in another country."

LEAH MAWHINNEY - 20 - MAINE - USA



Leah was WWOOFing with a grant for people that study psychology... but she doesn't study psychology (she studies food and agriculture) so she's not even sure how she got that money. "I'm here partially because I want to travel and partially for learning about the changes in agriculture over recent years. "The good thing about WWOOFing is that you often work with the farmers and the farmers are often very knowledgeable so you can spend your days doing things that you've never done before – like herding sheep or birthing sheep during the lambing season." After Iceland Leah was jetting off to Bologna, Italy, to spend some weeks on a farm there before travelling south to the Golfo di Taranto to harvest kiwis and olives in 40 C temperatures.

GRACE HAWLEY - 20 - BRISTOL - UK



Grace is an English literature student on a gap year. "I was supposed to be getting a job but because of the economic situation in England it's really hard to find anything. So I was sitting in Bristol spending lots of money on rent and thinking I really want to travel but I don't have much money and thinking 'what the fuck am I going to do for the next six or seven months?' So I went WWOOFing!" Her three week stint at Vallanes farm in Egilsstaðir is her first WWOOFing experience and she has really enjoyed it "Working with the soil is really healing and I'm met some really great people," she says. After a short trip back to Bristol Grace is off to two other WWOOF farms in southern and central Finland.

HANS BURGER - 18 - NETHERLANDS



Hans works at an organic grocery store in a small town in north-west Netherlands. "I want to learn about organic agriculture and I wanted to travel in Iceland so that's what brings me here." Vallanes was his second WWOOF experience – he was in France last summer in a spiritual commune – and his first farm in Iceland. He will be spending a total of one month on the farm in Egilsstaðir. Hans developed a reputation among the WWOOFers as "the kid who eats a lot of garlic" as he was often caught eating raw cloves of garlic sneakily from the fridge. "I like the way it makes me feel; a little bit high. It's also useful when you want to be alone."

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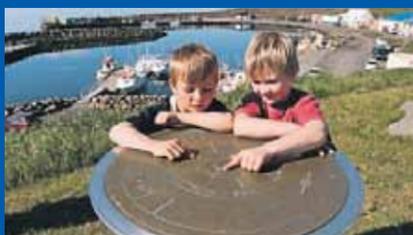
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After being picked up from the Arctic Rafting head quarters, it took little over an hour to get to base camp Drumbó – situated just under 100 km from Reykjavik and a stone's throw away from Geysir. The landscape was green, fresh and calm, a contrast to my raging enthusiasm and hunger for some water stimulation.

» RUBBER AND BLUBBER

The wait was short and sticky; we were soon called into the gear room to be given the all-important debriefing. Our mentor stood above us on a set of stairs; his stance was firm and reassuring as he explained what the deal was with the equipment before wet suits, life jackets, overalls, crash helmets and waterproof shoes were all distributed.

The sight of another man's balls was NOT the most pleasant of ways to enter a changing room during the mad dash of suiting up. These wet suits (still wet) were tough enough to get on let alone with time restrictions and a room full of testicles.

Once we arrived at the riverbank, a safety talk was given whilst the numerous crewmembers pumped up the flimsy grey rafts. These important words were very hard to hear over the water flow and man power. Something about an 'oh shit rope' was mentioned

through the noise. Funnily enough this 'oh shit rope' was nicknamed the 'oh shit rope' mainly because you held on to it when you 'oh shit yourself' – it all made a lot of sense by this point.

» TALLY HO!

With oars in hand, I and ten others approached the first rapid at a mild pace – nervous cries surrounded the raft, mingling with bird song and H2O. Going through the rapids themselves was rather enjoyable, although disappointingly, you could count the number of rapids for the duration of this one and a half hour journey with one hand and a thumb.

Half way down the beautiful stretch of Hvítá, the convoy of battered rafts came to rest at the popular hot spot for cliff jumping. Jumping off a 10-metre cliff into the deep water below was most possibly the highlight of the voyage. When else can one leap into the vast unknown surrounded by flashing lenses and gaping faces in the West of Iceland?

» FUN AND GAMES

Off we went again in our sizable dinghies between the serene canyons of Brúarhlöð. The river was still, the scenery was breathtaking and the company was a level below entertaining. The conversation quickly became dry in the water. Thankfully our guide Siggí was at hand to shake up things a little before we ended up purposely drowning ourselves.

Games including 'circle of trust' and 'tug of war' provided giggles for some and embarrassment for others. Eventually he lost all means of sanity and began to throw us into Hvítá – the water was of a warmish temperature, so it was in good taste.

Back at base camp Drumbó



we were provided with hot soup accompanied by bread and butter – both of which we're gratefully welcomed. The hot tub, lukewarm sauna and refreshments bar were also available if you felt like getting wet (again), warm or even drunk. Now after some downtime from the River and moaning raft mates, I pondered the name of this trip – 'RiverFun' was an apt title. We did spend the last one and a half hours on a river, and yes it was fun. ☺

✉ JONATHAN BAKER ESQ
📧 HAILEY LOMAN



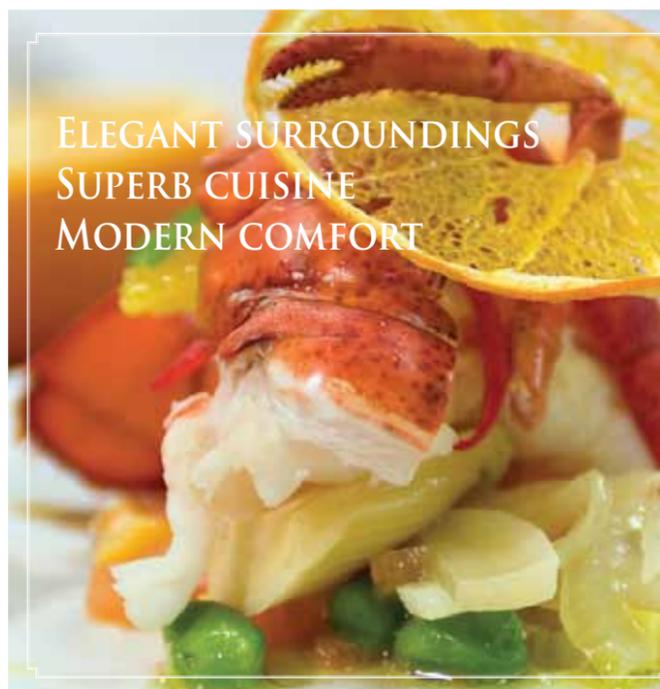
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Travel | Activities

Fun Times in and Around Egilsstaðir

West is best, but East is... pretty great too!

Welcome to Egilsstaðir, the sunny town in the east of Iceland that just happened to be cloudy and rainy when my colleague and I touched down for five fun-filled days of WWOOFing and exploration. Lonely Planet pegs the place as “a grey service town and the main regional transport hub.” Despite the dreary first impression the written description of the town makes to all tour-book totting globetrotters, Egilsstaðir and the surrounding area has some pretty cool things to offer.

THE NIGHTLIFE

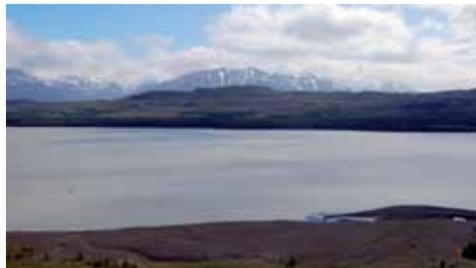


My travel companion and I should have known better than to hit the sole club in town relatively early at night. When we pulled up outside of Valaskjálfi in our rented powder blue Toyota shortly after midnight the scene looked promising enough. Pockets of young

locals were cavorting in the car park and on the front steps of the unassuming beige building, ready to get their drink on. But the place was dead.

We opted for a glass of wine at the Icelandair Hotel Hérað where the hospitable night guard/bartender/waiter, Högni, convinced us to give Valaskjálf another shot after 2:30 AM. We did. It was packed with highly inebriated folks who were seriously enjoying the live tunes courtesy of Disel. If you feel like boozing and cover bands, this is your kind of place.

ROAD TRIPPING



Lagarfljót: Driving along the southeast bank of the river toward Hengifoss is like being transported out of Iceland. There are so many trees! The undulating terrain and winding road skirting the waterside is a gorgeous half-hour drive and the waterfall at the end is

beautiful. Drive back to town on the gravel road on the northwest side of the river for strikingly different scenery and for picturesque stops at a rocky monument to Jóhann Magnús Bjarnason and a house covered in sod.



Seyðisfjörður: Driving across Seyðisfjarðavegur is a treat in itself, offering magnificent sweeping views over Egilsstaðir and the surrounding area and bringing you face to face with some seriously impressive waterfalls – Gljúfurfoss is the most epic, but Gufufoss and

all the other shoestring thin mountainside fossar are stunningly beautiful. So beautiful, in fact, that the thirty-minute drive was stretched out to nearly two-hours on account of all of the photo shoots. In Seyðisfjörður pay a visit to the Skaftfell Gallery and Bistro for some scrumptious pizza (they have other things on the menu, but the pizza was delectable) and some art.



Kárahnjúkar Dam Project: The infamous hydroelectric project is a mere hour from Egilsstaðir so do yourself a favour and check it out. The drive over the highlands, marked every so often with rows of electrical towers that go on for infinity and

disappear at the horizon, is stunning and sad all at once. The dam that we saw, one of three comprising the project, was shocking – lush green valley to one side and depressing grey dirty flooded death to the other.

So yeah, go to the East and have a good time! ☺ - CATHARINE FULTON

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Puffin Express brings you to the forefront of puffin life with their daily rides out to Akurey Island, which is just a short distance from Reykjavík Harbour. The business, which is sixteen years old, employs a fifty-year-old ferry, which is said to be the oldest in the harbour area. The company, a group of people from the same small town in the Westfjords, prides itself in a "quiet, up close, and personal" experience with the puffins, as manager Hjörtur told me.

Puffin may of course be seen in large amounts in practically every store in Reykjavík, their faces adorning t-shirts, coffee mugs, and keychains of all styles and sizes. Their shiny orange beaks extend from their puffed white cheeks, a quality that will garner reactions usually reserved for newborns. "Ooohh" and "awww," in particular.

The puffin, Iceland's most common bird, has that certain draw that makes adults and children alike all gooey and cooey. And what could be better than getting closer to that cute little bird you wish you could hug?

I got to experience the closeness on a beautiful Thursday afternoon as I caught the last Puffin Express ride of the day at 16:30. The ride out to the island was pleasant, as I was almost lulled to sleep by the slight rocking of the boat, the sunshine, and the pristine green-blue waters. Small black dots started to form in the distance, and we came upon the first puffin. The group of twenty or so people flocked to one side of the boat, cameras in position.

The "ooohhs" and "awwws" began. I surrendered, helpless, and cooed over them along with the others. Puffins seemed to innately do that to people (or so I told myself). Suddenly, what started as a lone puffin soon stretched in to thousands as we approached the island.

There they were, bobbing up in down among the waves, flying in great

"I surrendered, helpless, and cooed over them"

groups above the water, and standing, checking out the boat from the rocky terrain of their homeland. The captain, Sævar, turned off the engine of the boat a few times so that the water grew still, and we could float along silently, and get even closer to the puffins. Hjörtur told us the facts along the way, pointing out the holes that act as the puffins' own "little apartment." Those holes have two rooms, you know. Smart puffins.

The delighted reactions to the puffins continued well in to the ride back as most of the passengers looked over their recently snapped photos. I felt satisfied with my up close experience with the puffins, and browsed through my own photos as well. Almost like a doting new mother. ♥

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This Issue's Free Track ALBUM: KIMI ROSTER SUMMER FUN!

The Kimi Summer Fun tour around Iceland was such a blast last year that the good people behind the fierce Akureyri label decided to do it again, with twice the intensity, twice the band and eight times the love. This summer sees the tour circling Iceland in all sorts of confusing ways, offering up some of the country's finest techno/indie/rock/pigfuck/acts in towns they're seldom seen.

To celebrate the tour, the label's decided to give out a free compilation featuring tracks from all the bands performing. Thirteen free tracks, a whole compilation at the click of a mouse! Tracks by Sudden Weather Change, Reykjavík!, Prins Póla, Retro Stefson, Skakkamanage, Miri, Skakkamanage, Swords of Chaos and FM Belfast. And a print-outable cover! This is exciting, right? Well, wait no further, head on to www.grapevine.is and download some love.

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Árbær Museum and The Settlement Exhibition Reykjavik 871±2 are parts of Reykjavik City Museum. Both are open daily in June, July and August from 10am to 17pm. Detailed information at our website at www.reykjavikmuseum.is





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CONTINUED FROM PAGE 6

all screaming physical revolt, then you had Vespertine with its frail undertones of courtship and introspection...

Well, Vespertine was... I made it around the time I bought my first laptop. It was very exciting. Everyone was so depressed, talking about 'THE END OF MUSIC' and 'music is doomed, what with all the downloading' and I was just... 'No, it's not. You just need some imagination.' It was partly inspired by that. There was a collection of instruments on the record that all sound very good when they're downloaded – like the harp, glockenspiel and celesta – and all the voices were whispered instead of sung at full blast.

The soundscape was kind of virtual, more thought than physical. More mental and frozen. I decided: 'OK, this world is not warm summer, it is a frozen winter. It's cold, you turn off your body.' In Vespertine, I made a record that you experience in a frozen state, from the cover artwork to the soundscape and all lyrics being about being in a pupal stage on a winter's night. Hibernating. I was playing with that idea. It's funny to think that in the year 2000, when I was making that record, people were acting very scared about the purported 'end of music'. It's always that same cliché. I liked turning it upside down.

And now of course, almost ten years later, there's a whole lot of music out there being made that's directly influenced by what downloads well. Music being made by people that have been for the last decade listening to mp3 files at their house, and now they're making music out of them. There's no real focus now on listening to Dolby Stereo at your house. The bitrate can be shitty for that matter, there's no right way to listen to music. Anyway, I thought that work with Vespertine was equally exciting and challenging. And then Volta was a very different affair...

Up on the hill with a flag and a horn

So what are you thinking or contemplating right now that might be reflected on Volta's follow-up?

My friend *Gabriela* [Friðriksdóttir, artist] is big on numerology. In the time leading up to Volta, she'd calculated that I was an eight, which means justice. I thought that was funny, especially since my dad is always working in the union movement and my mom has that gene in her... she went on hunger strike for eighteen days to try and stop the Kárahnjúkar dam from happening. So I thought it would be funny and humorous – although maybe no one but me gets the joke – to do a justice album, an EIGHT; up on the hill with a flag and a horn.

For the next record, if I can promise you anything about that, it's that it will not be a justice record. It's fun to run up the hill with a big flag, demanding justice, but it can be a tiring feeling in the long run. Trying to think you can tell others what's right and what they need to do. It was fun for two years but now I am done with that. I liked it, though, the raw energy with the brass girls and the hooliganism. But now I have something different. I will say that I am excited about all the new programs and instruments we've been talking about.

ON THE NÁTTÚRA ORGANISATION...

Perhaps in line with Volta's theme of justice, you have lately been very involved in grassroots organisations, promoting environmentalism and sustainability with the Náttúra group. The song you released in support of the project last fall ('Náttúra') was a big success, too. How is the Náttúra project going?

Yes, well, at the moment we're dedicated to running the website [www.nattura.info] and are in the process of deciding what our next move will be. We were kind of stunted during this spring's election and that whole recession and economic collapse thing, that's no secret, but we are working on a lot of ideas. There are currently many groups in Iceland – not just us, but all sorts of people to the left, right, green and not green – that are interested in creating what can be called a national assembly. We are also really keen on that idea.



They do this in a lot of nations that are going through trouble. We would need a certain proportion of the 300.000 persons that make up Iceland, around 1.500 people, and we would meet with the aim of mapping out what we want Iceland to be in 20 years. We'll get a wide assembly; Jón and Gunna from Bildudalur, folks that wish to harness everything and build dams everywhere, and people that wish to harness nothing. Groups that want Iceland to become the biggest electric car country in the world, and people that want us to hunt more whales. The whole of us, planning out a course. We cannot be everything, and we cannot be nothing – there needs to be some sort of commitment. And as I said, we [the Náttúra group] might very well cooperate with another ten groups in calling together a nationwide meeting. These are some very different groups, many of whom totally disagree with us on most things. But I think that it's the first step to a national assembly, that these groups work together.

Are you aiming to do this in 2009?

Yes, but I don't know if we can do it. It's a dream, participating in that. A dream we foster. This is in any case a good idea, and it came from the people themselves, not from an elite or politicians. People have lost a lot of faith in politicians. But I don't know if I should be talking about this, I'm not at all sure it's going to happen. It would take months to plan and put together.

ON WHAT SHE'S LISTENING TO...

What are your current listening habits, what sort of music are you digging at the moment?

I think it's been an unusually fine year for pop music. The year is only halfway through and already I've found a lot of new releases that I genuinely like and will listen to at home. It's a good year for pop music. Like Antony's new record [Antony and the Johnsons' *The Crying Light*], Animal Collective [Merriweather Post Pavilion], The Dirty Projectors [Bitte Orca]... I'm forgetting something. On the whole, I feel this is a really exciting year for music.

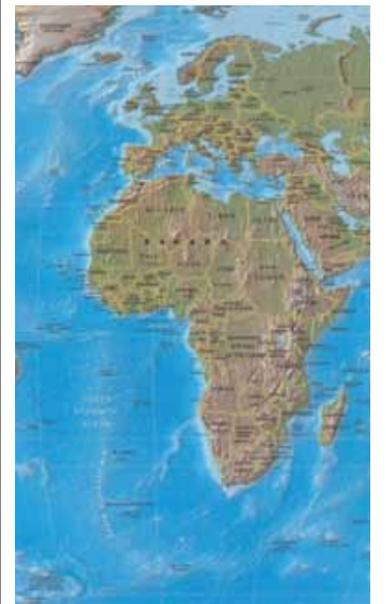
There were a few years in between that I felt nothing exciting was going on. At least not to my tastes. But now, observing the new generation of Americans – the aforementioned, along with people like Joanna Newsom, Americans between 20 and 30 – I feel more excited. I feel I have more in common with that generation of Americans than with a lot of what's been making the rounds these past years.

So I am excited for the next generation. Maybe Bush saved the day by staying in power for eight years, so everyone got fed up with careerism and marketing and making money. It was always said that Europeans make pop music and they just try to make great music, not caring if it makes it to number one or not, but in the US people are always thinking about success. And I feel like that's totally over now. Like Animal Collective and that whole generation, it's like they're on the whole other side of that coin. I've been living in New York and it's been an exciting time, the extreme flipside of materialism. The new generation isn't even thinking of profit, it's like, 'forget it, I won't even go there!' And that's fun to witness. The line now is that people are supposed to be creative and prolific, in line with nature. Making money or possessing money it is no longer the one two three of it all. So I like that, that's my department. ☘

HAUKUR S MAGNÚSSON

Who Was There?

The Volta touring ensemble had a lot of people in it. Babysitters. Chefs. Organisers. Roadies. Engineers. Soundpeople. And musicians, too. The crew that performed at the tour included Mark Bell on computers and keyboards, Damian Taylor on keyboards and programming, Chris Corsano on drums and percussion, Jónas Sen on piano, harpsichord and church's organ and the all female, all Icelandic ten piece brass section Wonderbrass on the horns. And Björk, of course.



Where Did They Go, Now

The Volta tour was the most extensive one Björk has embarked upon in her solo career. The following is a list of the countries the Volta touring outfit visited in 2007 and 2008. It is divided by continent. It has a lot of countries in it.

NORTH AMERICA

- California
- New York
- Illinois
- Colorado
- British Columbia
- Washington
- Ontario
- Michigan
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Poetics anonymous



I became a poet for more or less the same reason everybody else did: I'm lazy and I wanted to sleep late. That was the job description. You get to sleep late, drink late and most people won't ever find out you're stupid because what you do is beyond comprehension anyway – your roots are in some ephemeral world on the other side of everything and poetry is not supposed to be understood anymore than flowers (that's why so many poems are about flowers – flowers rarely return the favour).

I'd read books about poets. They were absent-minded and sentimental – check. They liked drinking and smoking – check. They read a lot of books, but in schools they were flunkies – check. They loved nothing more than lounging about – I remember hearing the Icelandic poet Sjón (I think it was him) say that 90% of a poet's job consisted of sitting at cafés talking about shit. Double-check.

It all seemed so easy. You don't need any formal education and nobody can say (without a doubt) that what you do sucks. It's all a matter of taste, and anyways, most poetry doesn't even get noticed, let alone deemed good or bad. And poems are short. It takes years to write a novel. You can write a 60-page poetry book in a decent afternoon. At some point I, and my friend (and poet) Steinar Bragi, calculated that we could technically write 10,000 poetry books in one year. Most of which would be better than most of what we were reading.

And some years later, if you're lucky, you get a government stipend and get sent to exotic countries to read onstage and lounge about with like-minded (lazy) individuals and being admired by people who wish they were as good at being lazy as you are.

If you're a loser, a drunkard, if you're mean to people – it's all a part of the game. Poets are supposed to be alcoholic, rude and emotional, self-centred (wo)manizers – people love it! It means they are really gifted; they've seen the depths of hell and are reporting back (to offer up one cliché on the matter).

I've been a (serious) poet now, with intermittent jobs, for about a decade. And let me tell you, it's not all it's cracked up to be. I used to be a slacker. (Wo)Man, I was king

of the slackers. I could hardly be bothered to keep up with a conversation, let alone participate in one. But times have changed. I haven't had three consecutive days without working in years. My day starts at eight in the morning and sometimes stretches past midnight. You know that time just before you fall asleep and all the weirdest thoughts in the world seem to crowd your mind? Well, that's the most important time of the day for a poet. One has to keep vigil. Stay concentrated. And woe to him who falls asleep, for he will lose. (What he loses is not certain, but he loses nonetheless). And still you have to get up at eight because there's stuff to be done, deadlines to be met.

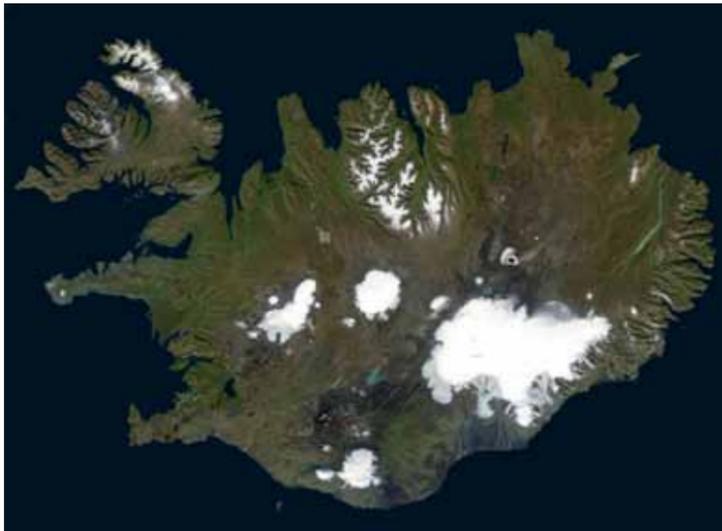
In two and a half months I'm going to start my paternity leave, and I'm scared shitless. In ten years I've managed to go from aspiring sentimental loser to neurotic workaholic. I'm not worried about having nothing to do – babies are work, that much I do know. But I don't know what'll happen if I leave poetry alone for three whole months. Will it wither and die without me? Will I start writing in secret? Locking myself in the bathroom to scribble a hurried poem? Will the authorities find out and punish me (I'm not supposed to be working while receiving government money).

Babies are inspiring. They will not be ignored. They induce sleeplessness, which induces creativity. I'm headed for disaster. In short, I'm not sure if I know anymore what to do with myself if I'm not working.

Besides, whatever happened to becoming a loser? That was a fine and noble plan. Had I been lounging about for the last 10 years, perhaps I'd feel totally rested and relaxed and ready to face the challenge of getting up in the middle of the night to change diapers. Or perhaps I'd be totally out of shape, with cirrhosis of the liver, still mopping floors for a living, whining about never getting anything done.

And despite all the neurotic worrying, I'm as psyched as the next guy about becoming a dad. It'll be peaches and blueberries, all day long until he becomes a teenager (at which point I'm sending him to military school). ☘

A (Slightly Outdated) History of Iceland.



A Brief History of Iceland

Gunnar Karlsson
Mál og Menning, Reykjavík 2000.
English translation by Anna Yates

As the title clearly states, this book is a very brief account of the history of our small nation and country. And the first thing I noticed is that it is in fact very small, making it quite handy for travellers. The second thing I noticed is that the last part of chapter one about the settlement of Iceland seems to be missing. At least from the copy I have. And typically, it just had to be the most interesting part of the story of settlement that continues to be heatedly debated by both genetic specialists and us common folk alike; the issue of whether Iceland was settled by brave, independent-minded people fed up with the oppressive rule of Harald Hairfair or, as some would have it, outlaws and criminals escaping Norwegian justice and grabbing some slaves along the way. So I guess that whether we Icelanders are descended from criminals or bravehearts will just have to remain a mystery, for now.

Despite the aforementioned smallness, the book is packed with facts and information, and somehow still manages to be a surprisingly light read. The chapters are short with informative pictures and the index at the back is also very helpful. There is a map of Iceland and a simple timeline inside the cover that gives a basic overview of the history of the country.

Christianity and the Church get a lot of coverage, understandably, as Christianity played a big part in history and politics of old. But personally I would have liked to have seen the Old Norse religion getting more than just a paragraph. A note on the first Icelanders way of living would also have been interesting, but perhaps that is moving into speculation rather than fact. And Gunnar seems to be a man of facts, which is fitting for a historian. For example, he states clearly that it was indeed

Icelanders who were the first Europeans to discover America, knowledge that has long since been taken as a fact in Iceland but the outside world somehow manages to be doubtful about, despite the overwhelming evidence in our ancient sagas.

The book was published in 2000 and has been re-printed three times, in 2003, 2007 and 2008, but without being updated. Thus, on page 67, Ingibjörg Sólrún is said to be the mayor of Reykjavík though she only remained in office till 2003, and on page 63 the U.S. are said to still have a military base in Keflavík. So, although most facts remain facts, some of the information in the book is outdated and perhaps even more clearly so as the atmosphere in Iceland has drastically changed since the economic meltdown of last October. I particularly liked the part where it says: "History has taught Icelanders that political autonomy means prosperity, while submission means decline." (p. 34)

I think history has changed her mind. At least according to those who claim that submission to the Brits and Dutch in the Icesave debate is the only way out of this mess that we suddenly find ourselves in.

☘ - HILDUR KNÚTSDÓTTIR

A compact overview of the history of Iceland that still manages to be a surprisingly light read.

Speechless By The Mountain

"Gedanken am Rande der Askja"

Páll Skúlason
University of Iceland Press, 2005
English translation available as
"Meditation at the edge of Askja,"
French translation also available

This short philosophical essay evokes the question of the existence of the human being and his relations to the outside world. Standing at the foot of the Askja, in awe of its raw and majestic appearance, Páll Skúlason – Icelandic philosopher and writer – searches for his place in the world as an entity. Wondering what connects things with each other and what actually makes the world a whole, he realises that he doesn't know anything. He feels that he is thrown into the world, without any orientation, not knowing where to go.

Askja for him is the symbol of the world itself; or rather, a symbol of the encounter with the world and what is inherent in it. At the same time it is a natural symbol and re-condition for human existence. Having said that, Páll Skúlason asks his main question: What is reality? And is there a concept or a system behind it? In line with epistemology, he doubts the possibility of conveying one's true and own experience with the world to others, concluding that it is impossible to find an answer anyway. As a metaphysician he asks about the connection between things in order to be able to find a universal explanation for our perception of existence, free of personal experience. He also considers ethical arguments, admitting that conventions and tradition keep us together. But apart from all these questions raised by philosophers in the last centuries and millennia, like Socrates, Heidegger, Descartes and Sartre, Skúlason makes the case that humankind needs the reality as an independent entity of everlasting connections. Consequently, he ponders whether humankind lives in an alliance of trust with the natural whole, which means that true belief is a natural belief, also the Christian belief.

There is reason why Skúlason – out of all the natural wonders in Iceland – chose Askja for his essay. Askja is one of the active volcanoes in Iceland. Its last eruption took place in 1961. Öskjuvatn, the lake belonging to the volcano, is more than 200 meters deep and therefore the deepest lake in Iceland. The photographs generously included in this little booklet give an idea of how vast and majestic Askja and its surrounding looks for all the readers who haven't had the chance to see it. They help one understand why Skúlason was speechless when he went to Askja. Even if the reader might not completely agree with Skúlason's theory, it becomes clear how small and unimportant he must have felt standing at the foot of Askja and how hard he tried to answer the questions about his own place in the world.

☘ - IRINA DOMURATH

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THE FIRST SETTLER OF THE NEW WORLD
JÓNAS KRISTJÁNSSON
A study of the expedition made by Karlsefni to Vinland the Good in circa 1010 AD which planned to settle there, but was forced to leave due to the hostility of the natives after 3 years. Based on a new appraisal of older sources, in particular the Saga of Eirik the Red, - probably most detailed and most trustworthy source concerning the voyages the North-America.

Gaelic Influence in Iceland
GÍSLI SIGURÐSSON
Why were the Icelanders the only Nordic nation in the Middle Ages to produce secular heroic prose narratives in the vernacular? Is it possible that the first Icelanders were under enough cultural influence from the Gaelic world to establish an entirely different tradition of story telling and poetic talent from that of their Scandinavian homelands?

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PAGE 10

On the one hand you have people who are portrayed, Cold War style, as traitors who want to sell Iceland's independence to foreigners. On the other hand, you have people who are portrayed as wanting to sever all connections with the outside world. About the actual pros and cons of joining the EU, we hear very little.

Valur Gunnarsson talks binary thinking and Aristotle

PAGE 19

Some people cannot go home because of what is chasing them. Somebody who is running for his life doesn't have any hope in the future to go back home.

Young Nigerian asylum seeker Ubayo on the plight of refugees.

PAGE 26

It's easy to act and do when you've no time to think things over. It's terrifying to have a bank of three hours, just you and a bed of lettuce and a hoe, to think over your life: your actions past, present and future. Nostalgia is joyfully saddening. Love is painfully elating. Neither can you experience at that moment in the field; just you and a bed of lettuce and a hoe.

WOOOFing is hard work for Catharine Fulton

PAGE 6

I feel I have more in common with that generation of Americans than with a lot of what's been making the rounds these past years. I am excited for the next generation. Maybe Bush saved the day by staying in power for eight years, so everyone got fed up with careerism and marketing and making money.

Björk Guðmundsdóttir says all sorts of interesting things in our 'Conversation With Björk' piece.

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