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You may not like it, but at least it's not sponsored (no articles in the Reykjavík Grapevine are pay-for articles. The opinions expressed are the writers' own, not the advertisers').



On the cover: Valgerður Þóroddsdóttir of the Meðgönguljóð collective  
Photo: Hörður Sveinsson (www.hordursveinsson.com)  
Make up: Flóra Buenano  
Thanks: Thank you, everyone! You are great!

Editorial-in-chief | Haukur S. Magnússon

# We Care A Lot!



Hey, check out the above photo. Who are those people? I'll tell you: I'm in there, along with our designer Hrefna, along with our former interns Parker and Rebecca (currently visiting from abroad to do some writing), along with our current interns Tom and Saskia and Elin and Melissa, along with our listings editor Gabriel, along with our journalist John, along with the ghost of what should've been (always lurking in the background, him). Behind the camera is the lovely photographer Matt Eisman, who set up shop at our office over Airwaves, where he'll be shooting some of our favourite musicians (check out his images and SO MUCH MORE at www.grapevine.is!). Entirely missing is our editor Anna, currently on sabbatical (miss u, Anna!).

The people in the above photo represent but a small part of all the wonderful folks who strive night and day and night (but never mornings, those are for sleeping) to ensure that the magazine you are currently reading can exist; that it looks nice, and that it has images and words and ideas and thoughts about who we are—we as a culture, and we as a people—who we were and what we are becoming; what we're doing, and why we might be doing it.

I'll also tell you this: Although the people whose thoughts and words and images and comix and efforts make up the Grapevine might have some very different motivations for subjecting themselves to hours upon hours of hard, mostly thankless work, they all share a passion for actively contributing to their/our

community. They do this by reporting on it and reflecting upon it, providing us with food for thought and fodder for conversation.

This is great! Active participation! Active conversation! What fun!

I love them all, and I love you, too. Hey, want to join in? Drop us a line!

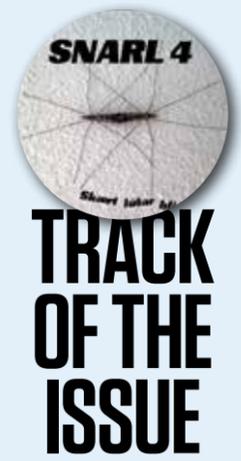
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As I write this, I can hear the band Hellvar blaring through our office window, performing at the official Bæjarins Bestu Pylsur off-venue (yup). It's almost seven PM on Airwaves Thursday, and Reykjavík is brimming with energy, culture and enthusiasm. As soon as we send this off, I plan on heading off to drown myself in all the good vibes, to fully immerse in all the music, good and bad, and perhaps hang out with some of our lovely visitors.

It's easy to lose hope when barraged by the absolutely WTF news that have been coming out of late (you can get informed about a lot of them in this issue—I recommend going straight for page six). At such times, it's important to keep an eye on the good stuff (while remaining vigilant towards all the BS). At their best, festivals like Iceland Airwaves can serve to remind us why living in Reykjavík can be so great.

Keeping that spirit alive should be a priority.

## Comic | Lóa Hjálmtýsdóttir



Kælan Mikla

Ekkert nema ég

SNARL 4

Download the FREE track at [www.grapevine.is](http://www.grapevine.is)

With its loud and gnarly thumping bass, "Ekkert nema ég" starts off filthy great. According to the band, the song's lyrics are all from a long text message drummer Sólveig Matthildur Kristjánsdóttir wrote her friend while drunk. Vocalist Laufey Soffía Þórsdóttir renders the drunk-text beautifully, softly singing: "I will smoke the world / swallow its remains / so there will be nothing left but me," before screaming at the top of her lungs: "I am God!"

Meet **Kælan Mikla**, a trio of avant-garde punks whose lyrics are poems (indeed, you may read about them in our poetry feature), delivered on top of loud, quivering bass lines courtesy of Margrét Rósa Dóru- Harrýsdóttir. They capture Millennials' melancholy, displaced sense of self, and narcissistic worldview down to a tee. They are dirty, they are raw, and most importantly, they are fun! Their debut album hits the streets any day now, but this song comes from a Dr. Gunni curated compilation entitled 'SNARL 4', which is filled with other exuberant bands and is equally worth getting.

Head on over to [www.grapevine.is](http://www.grapevine.is) if you want to download this track and/or read our huge ass interview with Kælan Mikla and/or watch our Post-Set Breakdown video interview with the band. Enjoy!

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# THE TIMELESS WARMTH OF ICELAND



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# SOUR GRAPES & STUFF

## Most Awesome Letter of the Issue!

When I read the Reykjavík Grapevine's article *Closed Doors, Empty Stomach, Desperate Measures* about a Jewish-Iraqi refugee seeking asylum in Iceland after having hard time in Slovakia, a rather ambivalent feeling captured my mind. Well, I am from Slovakia, and at first, I felt a bit pissed off and offended about the way how my country of origin was portrayed. But then I thought it might actually be deserved.

I have a brief experience in working with asylum seekers in Slovakia and... It is not a country where you would like to end up after having run for your life from a place that once had been your home. That's no one's choice, it's just the first country beyond the border. Actually, Adam is a 'lucky' guy. Only about 10 people are given asylum status every year here. The rest is sentenced to a choice of either spending years in refugee residences while there is very little you are allowed/able to do, or returning to their land where persecution and death awaits them. Well, and if you are fortunate enough, you are allowed to stay in this country where bureaus do nothing for your integration and people are even less open to accept you.

Let's face it. I had a chance to spend a year, a beautiful year, in Iceland. And even I, after having returned, realized how much safer I felt on the island. Although

nothing serious ever happened to me, I see those looks and I hear those words on the streets. Being a Jew from Middle East, you certainly encounter a lot of hatred and intolerance. No wonder Adam had to flee again, and he chose well. Unfortunately, I am skeptical when thinking about his experience here as persecution. However severe the situation was, it probably does not meet all the criteria. But I am not an expert, and I wish the authorities decide otherwise and allow Adam to stay.

During my year in Iceland, I met many people from all over the world and very little was known about Slovakia. At most, brief reference to Eurotrip or Hostel is made, but that's it. And that's why I was disappointed when I read those words, when 'we' finally made it to the press. Sure, the article of Benjamin Julian is very tentative and forcibly moving, and portrayal of Slovakia somehow distorted. But there certainly is something true about it. It's true that 'we' should do more for people who come to live here, who ask for help, who need to be protected.

I quite like this country. There are many things that are worth it. But there also are many that are just appalling and shameful. Adam's story represents one of them. I want to apologize for all that negligence and harm, Adam. I just want you to know that there also are good people

here. Some. It's just that those wrong are always much up front.

Filip Simonfy

Dear Filip,

thank you so much for your thoughtful and moving letter.

we understand your grief at how Slovakia is portrayed in the article (potentially confused readers: the article in question may be found online—you should read it. It is also rather moving and thoughtful). I am most certain that the article's author was not looking to disparage Slovakia in his writing - he was merely attempting to relay Mr. Adam's story and experiences as best he could. Every country has its negative aspects that when scrutinized are indeed shameful for its nationals—indeed, Iceland has a less than stellar track record in its treatment of asylum seekers.

Thank you for reading and for your input.

Your Friends At The Grapevine

I loved Jeff Edwards hilarious piece "Accidental Iceland" - do you have an email address for him so I can tell him myself?

Thanks,  
Laurie

Dear Laurie (if that IS your real name),

We can't really do that. What if you're, like, an deranged stalker from his past that's been spending years looking for Jeff Edwards and with the intent of de-

capitating him and FedExing the box to Gwyneth Paltrow?

To ensure Jeff Edwards does not get beheaded, yet gets to enjoy your compliments, we have forwarded your letter his way. Maybe he'll get back to you?

LOL - I really didn't expect you to respond to my request—thanks! I love the Grapevine; so smart, funny, engaging and it has a great energy. Although it's referred to as a "tourist" publication, I imagine your local readership is very high.

I'm traveling to Iceland next week for the first time and [gratefully] have found the tips I need to not come off as an Ugly American in Reykjavik by reading the Grapevine.

Thanks and best,  
Laurie

Dear Laurie,  
Oh, pshaw.

Love,  
Your Friends At The Grapevine



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This Grapevine tee surely is the **SHIZNIT** (whatever that means)! It was designed by our very own art director man, **HÖRÐUR**

**KRISTBJÖRNSSON**, and it's good for posing in front of a mirror, impressing folks with your impeccable taste or picking up men or women of all ages (no minors). **DON'T PANIC** if your letter wasn't picked AWESOME LETTER. You can still get a tee for a low, low price over our website, **WWW.GRAPEVINE.IS**

Now, if you're in the market for free goodies next month, write us some sort of letter. Give us your worst: **LETTERS@GRAPEVINE.IS**

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Iceland | Up in arms

# Who's Afraid Of November 9?

Words by Haukur Már Helgason  
Collage by Hrefna Sigurðardóttir

After DV revealed that the police had just acquired some 150 submachine guns from Norway, Chief Superintendent Jón Bjartmarz—who refused to answer any of the newspaper's questions—explained on RÚV's *Kastljós* that they have possessed machine guns "ever since after the Gúttó-fight."

"The Gúttó-fight" was a violent clash between police and workers, who were protesting announced wage reductions, back in 1932.

The reference is as significant as they get. An Icelandic State Police authority, as opposed to a municipal one, was established in the aftermath of that fight, to ensure that authorities would henceforth have the upper hand against demonstrators. This process was initiated and led by the Independence Party. During the sequence of protests in 2008-2009, it is known that Jón Bjartmarz did press for greater use of force against the public.

The point that Jón wanted to make was that, since the police have been equipped with lethal weapons for such a long time, nothing is really changing. The point that many people heard instead was: these things are intended to keep us down.

## 330 machine guns at the top of the peace index

For years, a debate has surfaced from time to time, about whether or not tasers should be part of Icelandic police's standard equipment. It seemed that several governments in a row sided with those who opposed such weaponry. Meanwhile, someone, somewhere, silently had his or her way with a much more efficient plan. Tasers are, of course, only occasionally lethal. Meanwhile, no one argues with a Heckler & Koch MP5, which can be seen in action in films like *'Zero Dark*

Thirty', wielded by Osama Bin Laden's henchmen, and in *'The Dark Knight Rises'*, employed by Gotham's SWAT teams. In reality, armies use them, as well as special forces. Until recently, you would not have seen such weapons in the hands of regular police officers. Two years ago, however, the Ferguson, Missouri, police department reportedly bought four pieces.

And now they are here. A shipload. The shipment, still locked up in a warehouse, reportedly consists of 250 MP5s, of which 150 are to be disseminated to police departments around Iceland. Iceland's SWAT teams have had access to such weapons before, but these will be distributed to every precinct. Each precinct is free to estimate how many they need, and to decide if they will keep the guns in patrol cars or at the station. Since the news broke out, it has been revealed that the Coast Guard has actually been stockpiling weapons, since at least 2013. They have disclosed nothing of their own volition, but according to their less secretive business partners abroad, they acquired 50 unspecified machine guns from Norway last year, and 30 MG3s from Norway and Denmark. That's 330 machine guns in two years.

Another Independence Party MP noted that, contrary to what the Left thinks, "We don't live in Disneyland."



## "Renewal of equipment, nothing else"

The Prime Minister's assistant, Jóhannes Þór Skúlason, was the first government affiliate to comment on the story when it broke, mocking DV's journalists on Facebook: We didn't buy these guns, he said, Norway gave them to us! As a present. His boss Sigmundur Davíð also quipped on Facebook: "Some people should stop shooting first and asking questions later, especially when it comes to machine guns."

The Interior Minister and Foreign Minister both seem to agree that any public discussion is unnecessary and have remained mostly mute. The Interior Minister remarked, "This is a renewal of equipment, nothing else."

Meanwhile, minor figures have spoken up on behalf of the guns. While the Coast Guard still pretended that the guns were "a gift," former police officer Vilhjálmur Árnason—currently an Independence Party MP—went on the radio to explain why the chief of police had accepted those presents: "Because he has Glock handguns all over the place. And it's harder to take aim, perhaps you are going to a school where there is an attack, and then you want to hit the right man. [...] So it's just, the

police just decided to buy a four-wheel drive instead of a rear-wheel drive." The officer-cum-MP then took to the podium in Alþingi to scold the media for reporting about the guns at all. Literally: "I want to tell some of the media and members of Alþingi that they should be ashamed for their conduct. They talk of things they do not have 100% knowledge about..."

Another Independence Party MP noted that, contrary to what the Left thinks, "We don't live in Disneyland."

When the government and its herd were done deriding journalists for "not having their facts straight," we learned that the facts they reported had, indeed, been straight: The Norwegian army confirmed DV's original report; Iceland had purchased those weapons, for money. Iceland denied, Norway insisted, and so back and forth until Norway provided the invoice as evidence. As if to provide comic relief, Icelandic toll authorities subsequently sealed the warehouse where the guns are kept, until the Coast Guard either pays the applicable import fees, or, alternately, proves that the guns were, in fact, a present.

## The frantic, rioting mob

For what it's worth, Iceland has resided at the very top of the Global Peace Index for seven years in a row. Why would police officers in such a country feel a need to carry weapons worthy of an Iron Man sequel through their daily routine? While authorities remain either mute or nonsensical, their

father figures do not. Last Saturday, an editorial by Davíð Oddsson clarified any possible ambiguity left by Jón Bjartmarz's somewhat ambiguous utterances. In case you're new here, that is Davíð Oddsson the former Independence Party Chair, Mayor, Prime Minister and Central Bank Manager, not to mention psalm poet, and now chief editor of daily newspaper *Morgunblaðið*. Defending the weaponization, he wrote:

"Only six years ago, a rioting mob attacked Iceland's house of parliament and other public buildings... What would those frantic hordes have done if they had reached their goal and broken into Alþingi? Perhaps most would rather not think that through." He concluded the passage with the words, given a whole paragraph for emphasis: "The Nation was then in grave danger."

The will to protest was demonstrated most recently last Monday, when police confirm that 4,500 protesters gathered in front of Alþingi, which, according to unofficial protocol, means that the actual numbers were rather higher.

The only recent incident of protesters taking up arms against authorities was when stones were thrown at officers in riot gear in January of 2009. The police were exhausted and had depleted their pepper spray supplies. Thus left defenceless, they had, de facto, been conquered.

The question that, according to

Continues on P.31





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# So What's This Lack Of Army I Keep Hearing About?

Words by Kári Tulinius @Kattullus  
Illustration by Lóa Hjálmtýsdóttir

Iceland has no army. It does operate a Coast Guard, which does have four ships, three of which are combat-ready vessels. The Coast Guard has a wide variety of guns at its disposal, from cannons to handguns. But it is not really a navy in any kind of traditional sense. The National Police Commissioner also has a Special Unit of 50 police officers, nicknamed “The Viking Squad,” which has several units specialized in various aspects of armed conflict.

**Viking Squad? Should monks in Britain and France start locking their doors at night and pray for safety from the wrath of the Northmen?**

Just about the only thing the Viking Squad has in common with their namesakes, Actual Vikings, is that neither wear helmets with horns. That is about it as far as anything that could be called a militarized force in Iceland. With the best will in the world, it includes about 250 people—that includes those who answer the phones when you call the Coast Guard office. This is not a recent development. Unlike military-free countries such as Costa Rica or Haiti, Iceland never had an army to disband.

**No army? So all these Vikings that settled Iceland gave up their blood-letting ways?**

First of all, the actual Vikings who settled Iceland were only a small proportion of the original settlers. Second, no they certainly did not give up their bloodletting ways. In the first few centuries of its existence, Icelandic government had no executive branch. People had to enforce laws and court judgements on their own, which often meant doing so by force, which could lead to death and disfigurement. And if someone harmed you or your family, you had to retaliate in



turn. It made for an unstable society, which was good material for saga-writing, but bad for getting through life with all your limbs attached.

**I also sometimes do stupid things to get a good story, like when I stuck a baby eel up my nose. Maybe that's not such a good story.**

After Iceland became part of Norway, and then of Denmark when Norway became subject to the Danish king, there was little or no effort made to create an army in Iceland. There was not much gained for the Danish state in having an army in a generally quite peaceful country, especially since transporting the troops to where they would be needed in mainland Europe would take months. This lack of army sometimes caused problems, such as in the sixteenth century, when English and Ger-

man merchants fought for control of harbours in Iceland, with dozens of deaths. And, then, there was a mini-religious war between Catholics and Lutherans.

**You see, the baby eel wriggled about for a while and then fell out. Maybe that's not such a good story.**

With Iceland's lack of army, the occasional pirate ship could have free reign in the country, as could Danish adventurer Jørgen Jørgensen, who took control of Iceland for a couple of months along with a few British merchant buddies of his. However, mostly no one wanted Iceland badly enough to take it away from the Kingdom of Denmark, so an army was not needed. Though there was one instance of Danish authorities raising troops. Andreas August von Kohl, a captain

in the Copenhagen University students' militia, was appointed sheriff in the Vestmannaeyjar archipelago in 1853. Seemingly out of a mixture of boredom and belief in the moral benefits of military training, he founded a battalion in Vestmannaeyjar.

**Boredom is the most dangerous weapon. Genghis Khan got bored one day and decided to invade the shit out of everyone.**

He sure did. Though I think boredom was not the reason. The Vestmannaeyjar battalion got a small grant from the Danish state as well as private funding, and at its height numbered about 100 people. But it did not last long after the death of its founder. Denmark had no interest in maintaining a military in Iceland, and on the rare occasion that it felt the need, it sent a ship over with some soldiers. There was an army of Iceland, it was the Danish military.

**Ah, so a military culture never developed in Iceland?**

Yes. Also, when Iceland declared independence from Denmark in 1944 it was under occupation by the US. The Icelandic army was the US military. After World War II ended, the US army left only to return in 1951 to set up a base, staying until 2006. Meanwhile, Icelandic authorities were happy to not have to spend money on a military, though the right-wing Independence Party long strove to found an official citizens' militia to beat up left-wingers and poor people. Sorry, I mean the militia was supposed to assist the police in sensitive matters.

## NEWS IN BRIEF

BY PAUL FONTAINE



Icelanders have once again grown fed up with their elected representatives, staging a **massive protest demonstration** in front of Alþingi last Monday. Thousands stood at Austurvöllur, Reykjavík's hip spot for protest meetings, to denounce a veritable cornucopia of bad policy decisions (police estimated 4,500 attendees at the protest, while some attendees estimated that they were in fact closer to 7,000). This particular time around, the political party actually leading the country—in this case, the Progressives—have most recently polled at just under 9%. Remember, folks: the last time a ruling coalition stepped down, it was because one party didn't want to give the steering wheel to the other. Just something to bear in mind.



In happier political news, **former Reykjavík mayor Jón Gnarr is considering a presidential run in 2016**. This is a change from the last time he was asked on the matter, when he said he “hadn't ruled it out”, and the time before that, when he said that he would absolutely not run for president. By all accounts Gnarr isn't playing some coy long-game here; it probably genuinely takes a long time to convince some people to run for president, as crazy as that sounds. Watch this space for when he officially throws his hat in the ring.



The saga of **the guns from Norway** just keeps getting weirder, or more hilarious, depending on how you look at it. Despite repeated assurances from the police and the Coast Guard that the guns were a gift and the signing of an invoice was just some Norwegian formality, it seems Norwegians are insisting on getting paid for their machine guns. For now, the machine guns are being held by toll authorities until all this is straightened out. Which

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Law | Order

# Arrest, Injury, Aftermath

How did Chaplas Menke's arrest lead to serious injury? And why?

Words by *Tómas Gabríel Benjamin*

Photos by *Hörður Sveinsson*

Standing by the door of a two-storey building in the Höfði industrial district and not finding a doorbell, I call Chaplas Menke, who says he'll come down to let me in. My interview subject made local headlines this September, after being reportedly brutalised by the police. Since then, the story has gone quiet.

A short while later, he invites me to his abode. He is of average height, dark-skinned, with sunken eyes and a svelte frame. He has a thick accent and speaks hesitatingly, picking his words carefully.

I ask him how he's doing, and he modestly says okay as we make our way up the stairs and to his room. He hobbles slowly along on a crutch through the unlit hall of the eleven-bedroom complex. It's dingy and a full seven kilometres from downtown Reykjavík.

Chaplas's room is an eclectic mess, with a large unmade bed in one corner next to an old faux-leather sofa, and a pile of old TVs. Chaplas says he doesn't have a lot of belongings, and that he lets his friends use the unused space to store their things. He offers me a seat on the sofa. On the table next to us are four different kinds of prescription painkillers, as well as packs of instant ramen. The air is stuffy, and I get the impression he doesn't leave his room often.

The 35-year-old Chaplas is a refugee from Liberia, a country that has for long been plagued by civil war. Unlike so many asylum seekers in Iceland, Chaplas has already been granted refugee status—in Italy. He tells me he originally visited Iceland as a tourist in 2009

to visit friends, and was surprised how well he fit in, as well as how friendly the locals were. "Every time I'm in Iceland, I'm very happy," he says. "There are very few black people in Iceland, so no matter where I go, everyone is friendly."

Unfortunately, his Italian refugee status doesn't afford him the same travelling rights as European citizens, as he's only allowed to stay in Iceland for three months at a time. Without a working permit, Chaplas resorted to collecting cans and bottles downtown. He'd earn 15 ISK per item recycled, making around 5,000 ISK (£25 / 40 USD) on a good night out. It's not much, but he says he got by.

## The letter

On one such venture in early September, he was stopped by two police officers. After asking his name, the pair called headquarters, and then told him they had to deliver him a letter from the Directorate of Immigration. Chaplas says he asked if he could come collect it in the morning, as it was already close to midnight. However, the officers assured him the errand would only take fifteen minutes.

He agreed to go to the station,



where he was given a letter stating that said he had overstayed his visit by several months. Another policeman asked him a few questions, before telling him he was under arrest.

Chaplas insists that the policeman didn't explain to him what crime he was charged with, and that he was then refused his legal right to an attorney. He says he panicked and started resisting as the police attempted to transfer him to another room. The police say he was subsequently restrained with handcuffs and a zip-tie plastic strap around his feet, although Chaplas oddly disputes being restrained in that

manner when we speak, one of several inconsistencies in his story. According to police, once they decided to remove the alleged zip-tie, however, they did so with a knife, in the process accidentally cutting Chaplas's right leg four times. He shows me the scars, and two months after the fact, they still look gruesome.

Chaplas tells me he started bleeding heavily, and was ambulated to the emergency room. He says the doctors gave him thirteen stitches, and told him his calf muscle was torn, which

Continues on P.31

## NEWS IN BRIEF

will hopefully make you feel a little bit better about customs hanging onto your iPhone 6 from abroad for a few days before sending it to your home wrapped in that space-age packing tape.



Speaking of those guns, the **Bishop of Iceland** has had some thoughts to share about a number of topics lately, the machine guns amongst them. First, she managed to actually point the finger at the general public for not showing the police sufficient amounts of trust, because apparently we should totally trust a police force that tried to keep a massive arming-up a secret from us (and have been keeping records of the public's political beliefs, as we're told). Second, she hand-waved away the rapidly growing number of people de-registering from the national church as a by-product of both emigration (contending erroneously that people who move away from Iceland are automatically de-registered) and immigration. Which no doubt made Iceland's immigrants feel really welcome here.

According to a new poll, **most Icelanders do not want gambling to be legalised here.** This might be bad news for Progressive MP Willum Þór Þórsson, who has been the sole champion of getting Iceland its first casino. By his accounts, Iceland is practically crawling with illegal casinos as it is. That there may be underground gambling parlours in Iceland would sure explain the predominance of guys wearing fedoras, carrying Tommy guns, and ending their sentences with "see?" when they shake down owners of speakeasies for protection money.

Once again, the idea of adopting **daylight savings in Iceland** is being floated. Granted, setting the clock back an hour in the winter would indeed make the sun rise earlier later in the year here, which would make getting up to go to work slightly more pleasant than doing so in total darkness four months of the year. On the other hand, having to set the clock back again in the spring is awful. Hopefully, we'll just keep setting the clock back by one hour, every winter, until the sun is rising at three in the morning in December. Sure, it serves no practical purpose, but it would make life a little more interesting, you gotta admit.

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# Being The Other



Words by Paul Fontaine

Photo by GAS

I won't soon forget the day I was finally awarded Icelandic citizenship. Having moved to Iceland eight years previous, I fulfilled all the necessary requirements for a non-Schengen immigrant—I had been living continuously in Iceland for at least the past seven years, I had not even so much as a speeding ticket on my criminal record, and I had received no social assistance in the past three years before applying. However, I soon realized that this was about as far as I was going to go towards integration. Citizenship is the immigration ceiling. You are, in the legal sense anyway, an Icelander like any other. In every other sense, you are still a foreigner. You will always be a foreigner. Even your Iceland-born children are categorized differently.

The most obvious example of this can be seen in our own immigration laws. Here, we see an unapologetic ethnic hierarchy at work in terms of which foreigners will enjoy the most privilege upon arrival in Iceland: the “best” immigrants come from Scandinavia, followed by other Schengen-area immigrants (that is, mostly western Europe), followed by everyone else. At the same time, according to “Viðhorf Íslendinga til innflytjenda á Íslandi” (“Icelanders’ attitudes towards immigrants in Iceland”), a report from 2009 done for Bifröst University, the further away from Iceland an immigrant hails, the more likely Icelanders are to view them in a negative light.

This is not to contend that immigration law necessarily creates this outlook, but it does arguably legitimize heightened suspicion of non-European immigrants in Iceland. So long as the law itself divides immigrants into ethnic categories of being More Like Us and Less Like Us, there can be no hope of undoing that mentality in the general public.

This More Like Us v. Less Like Us hierarchy is unfortunately used quite often by some of this country's louder voices of intolerance. Turn on radio station Útvarp Saga, for example, and you will very often hear this kind of rhetoric: poor little Iceland just cannot defend itself, culturally or linguistically, against a massive influx of non-Scandinavian foreigners. Immigration is new to Iceland, they say, and our very national existence is in danger.

This mentality is insulting to Icelanders. It tells them that they are some kind of time travellers from the Viking Age who have not socially evolved in centuries; that they are a superstitious and fragile island people who just cannot handle new cultures, languages or religions, and rather than upsetting their narrow world view, foreigners must learn to be more like them.

To be sure, Iceland is a special country in many ways. The danger comes from believing this specialness gives us a pass to discriminate. But the key to undoing this lies in taking a more modern, and more accurate, look at what it means to be an Icelander.

In poll after poll over the years, the vast majority of foreigners report experiencing some form of prejudice from Icelanders on a daily or almost daily basis. I can attest that every time Grapevine has reported on this very basic and demonstrable fact, there will always be locals who respond with disbelief. Surely this is a misunderstanding of what “prejudice” means, they argue. Maybe it's a misunderstanding based on language barriers. Maybe they just don't get the “Icelandic way” of being.

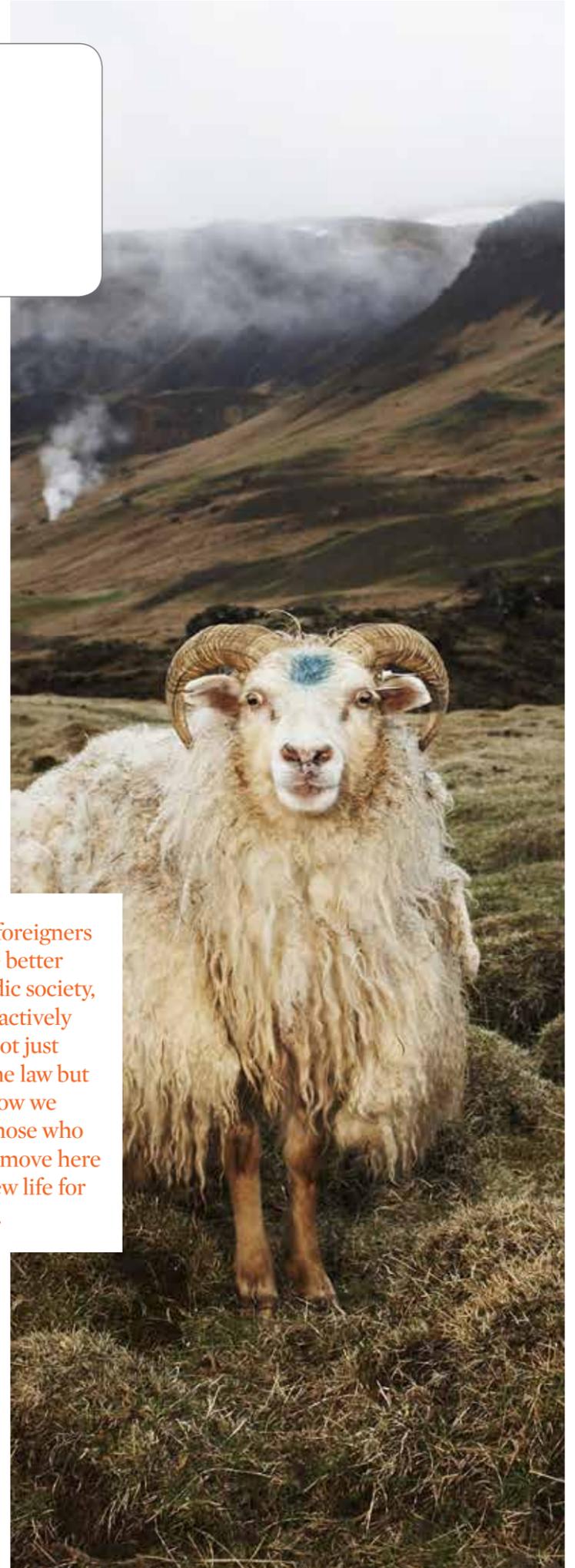
Here I want to point out the concept of “death by a thousand cuts.” Maybe none of these things, by themselves, are necessarily a “big deal.” But imagine you experienced these little things on a more or less daily basis. The accumulative effect wears a person down and grates on the nerves to the point where, each time one of these “little things” happen, the hurt you carry from all the

previous little things hurts just a little bit more.

This is something I would like everyone to have in mind the next time you hear an immigrant say they have been discriminated against, or are hurt by what they see as racism or xenophobia. It is not their job to learn to either accept it or laugh it off; it is our job to listen and change our behaviour. And no Icelander should accept the notion that they belong to a fragile and medieval culture that cannot adapt to change.

If we want foreigners to integrate better into Icelandic society, we need to actively engage in not just changing the law but changing how we approach those who voluntarily move here to start a new life for themselves. We need to accept that we are a part of the rest of the world; not separate from it. If we truly consider the future of this country something of paramount importance, we need to make integration something that we do for immigrants; not something immigrants need to do on their own.

**If we want foreigners to integrate better into Icelandic society, we need to actively engage in not just changing the law but changing how we approach those who voluntarily move here to start a new life for themselves.**



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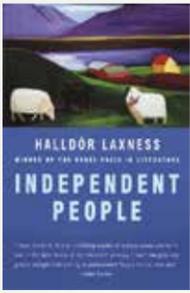


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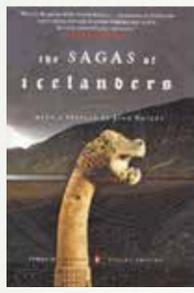


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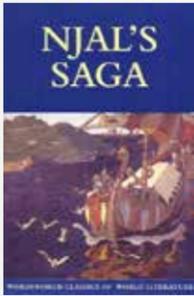
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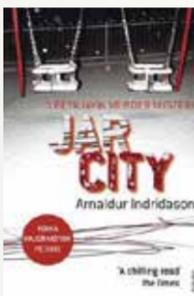
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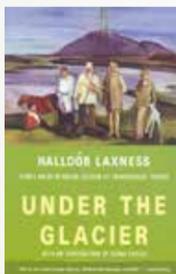
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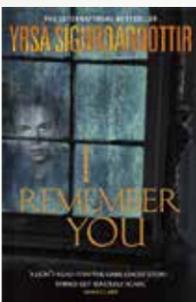
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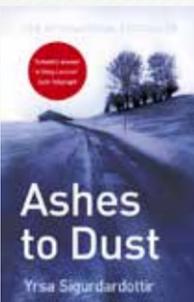
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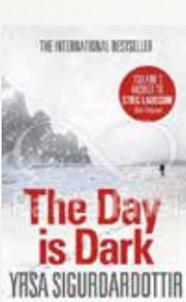
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## News | Politics



# A New Wave Of Protests

Icelanders are once again making their dissent heard, loud and clear

Words by *Tómas Gabriel Benjamin*

Photos by *Spessi*



Protest organizer Svavar Knútur, as it all went down

Tension has been rising in Iceland of late. An estimated 4,500 people attended a general protest against the government on November 4, almost completely filling Austurvöllur by Alþingi. This marks it as one of the biggest demonstrations this year. The event was initially inspired by a Facebook rant from singer-songwriter Svavar Knútur, wherein he bemoaned the current coalition government's favouritism of the rich and powerful.

Instigator Svavar Knútur began the demonstration by addressing the crowd. In his speech—which has been widely shared across social media since the event—he likened the rally to the first of three warnings his father used to give troublemakers at the dinner table before forcing them to leave. He went on to demand that elected officials do their job with integrity, modesty and a modicum of respect for the general public, while condemning their actions of late, which he said included refusing to take any form of criticism seriously—at best responding with condescension—leaking misleading personal information about asylum seekers, and covertly weaponizing their police force.

Svavar added that this protest meeting was but the first of many to come.

### All kinds of people

Judging by the numerous signs and banners present, those present were there for a variety of reasons. Some signs insisted that the government was corrupt and pandered to the wealthy and powerful, while others displayed socialist slogans or urged for new elections.

Teacher Ólöf Húnfjörð Samúelsdóttir, 53, told me she was felt compelled to protest due to on-going strikes in the educational and health sectors. She described the situation as hopeless, and said didn't even know where to begin

listing what the government was doing wrong. Ólöf was joined at the protest by four family members.

In conversation at the protest, Agent Fresco singer Arnór Dan Arnarson was less charitable, noting that there was a great disparity between what the government said and how it acted. "It doesn't make sense to say there's no money to resuscitate our crumbling healthcare system, while at the same time lowering taxes on wealthy fisheries and quota owners." He went on to say that apparent moves to privatization and police militarization were signs of Iceland moving further away from the Nordic welfare state ideal, and closer to the US model. "This government is out of touch with



## Info

The November 4 protests began at 17:00, and had mostly wrapped up two hours later. The protests were peaceful, with no arrests made by the police.

reality—it's demolishing our society's pillars. The only way to stop it is by making some major fucking changes and getting a new government."

Meanwhile, inside Alþingi, Prime Minister Sigmundur Davíð Gunnlaugsson evaded questions from a RÚV reporter who asked why people might be fed up with his government, stating instead that they were upset about a great many things, such as the on-going music teacher's strike, and the fact that their own parties were not in power. This demonstration was simply, in his opinion, a part of Iceland's newly established tradition of protesting. He went on to claim that he agreed with some of the opinions expressed outside, and disagreed with others.

The protest meeting lost steam once the sun set, and by seven o'clock, two hours after it formally began, the protest

"This government is out of touch with reality—it's demolishing our society's pillars. The only way to stop it is by making some major fucking changes and getting a new government."

had dwindled down to a few hundred. Around twenty police officers were present throughout, at no point interfering with the proceedings. One officer remarked that they felt the crowd's anger wasn't directed at them, but at the politicians.

While dismantling the makeshift stage, Svavar Knútur said he was thrilled with the attendance. "I'm not sure when the next protest will happen, we didn't really plan ahead. It won't be tomorrow, but maybe a few days from now."

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Literature | Too much

# OMG! Bookflood Is Coming

‘Tis the season to buy one of 800 new Icelandic books for your friends and family

Words by John Rogers  
Photos by Hörður Sveinsson

Icelandic winter really, really sucks. It’s dark almost all the time, and the streets are icy and beset by freezing winds and snow. The mood of Reykjavík’s denizens noticeably changes at this time of year, with many people suffering sleep disorders or SAD, and generally withdrawing back into domestic life. It’s a time of lining the home nest, cooking hot stews and soups, turning up the heating, perhaps shying away from more social events than usual, and generally strapping in for the long, dark months ahead.

With indoor activities the order of the day, it’s a perfect time to engage with things that have long hovered on the backburner—creative practices and amusements, perhaps, such as painting, writing or knitting—or just curling up with a mug of coffee and a pile of books.

Handy, then, that Iceland is home to a seasonal book bonanza known as the jólabókaflóð, which translates literally as the “Christmas book flood.” Literature becomes a hot topic of conversation leading into Christmas, with people treating the gifts they select as a point of pride. Indeed, the bookstores of Reykjavík see an annual torrent of new titles hitting the shelves almost simultaneously, with shopkeepers bracing themselves for masses of customers aiming to snap up the most talked-about titles.

## Old Icelandic proverb: books make good gifts

Of course, a Christmas book-rush is not unique to Iceland. Books are a classic present, ranking with an HBO box set for a sibling or a bottle of whisky for dad in imagination. The phenomenon of the Christmas book rush is consistent across Europe, with many national newspapers in England and France, for example, publishing an entire section featuring

author top-tens and literary gift ideas. But here in Iceland, the ‘flood has some interesting numbers attached to it, and the feel of a more defined cultural tradition that makes it stand out from what goes on elsewhere.

For a start, there’s the sheer number of new titles that come out. In 2013, over 800 new books hit the shelves during the jólabókaflóð, accounting for a whopping 80% of country’s entire annual literary output. This number places Iceland at the top of a whole bunch of international charts, including the one about new books released per-capita—in fact, it’s more than double that of Iceland’s Nordic neighbours, with around five titles published for every 1000 Icelanders.

Kristján Freyr Halldórsson is the manager of Laugarvegur bookshop Mál og menning. He sits on the “front lines” as the jólabókaflóð approaches each year. “I would say 60-70% of all the books we stock each year come out in the last



quarter,” he says. “It’s getting crazy now. There are so many books coming in—in this store, we got eight titles yesterday alone, some by really big authors, so many releases just blend in with each other—people have to be really clever to rise to the top.”

## Tell me a story

But, first things first—how did all this come about? Well, settle down, children—the theories on jólabókaflóð’s origins are many, and tap into various strands of culture and history that reach back to the country’s very beginnings. As far back as the 12th century, Iceland was already a Nordic literary leader via the sagas—that is, those famous historic epics about revenge, violence, intrigue, improbable adventures and ill-fated affairs, boasting a body count

that makes Vin Diesel look like the Dalai Lama.

This love of tall tales and storytelling was woven further into early Icelandic

culture in the centuries that followed via “kvöldvaka,” a time of the evening when members of the household would gather around the fire to carry out domestic tasks like knitting and sewing, inventing and reciting poems and stories as they worked.

By the 20th century, literature had become a source of national pride, with the country’s overall literacy rating amongst the best in the world. But as well as these cultural precursors of jólabókaflóð, there’s an economic story to be told. Around the time of World War II, most imports to Iceland were heavily taxed—with paper being a rare exception. This convergence of a strong literary culture and financial practicality clicked together neatly into the seasonal tradition we still see today.

## Not waving, but drowning

Back in present, jólabókaflóð isn’t all fireside tales and bedtime stories. This unusual congestion of new books means that, inevitably, some titles are left by the wayside or buried beneath the weight of the competition. But the way that main publishers carry out their marketing is a problem too.

“The worst thing about the jólabókaflóð,” says Kristján, “is that publishers are

really competing with just a couple of major titles, say, the ones in the crime-fiction genre. They get engaged in a kind of hyped-up chart race, and all the press is about just those few books.”

And with popular genres dominating the media coverage, it can be tough for books that lie outside of more commercial concerns to get the attention they deserve. “We have many very promising young authors,” says Kristján, “and I’ve seen their new works drown in the book flood. Great titles come out from some of Iceland’s best up and coming authors, but they just vanish. They’re probably in the back of the warehouse—behind all the shelves of new books, there’s a section they call ‘the black hole,’ with all the forgotten books.”

And once the “new book!” novelty has worn off, there’s currently not much chance for worthy contenders to reach their audience. “The lifetime of each title in the market is definitely getting shorter,” says Kristján. “People often work on books for years, and then the release date comes, but within two months there’s a yellow tag on the cover, and the price is reduced from 6,000 to 2,000 ISK. It’s like a conveyor belt—it happens so fast, and before you know it, you’re falling off the end.”

“Great titles come out from some of Iceland’s best up and coming authors, but they just vanish. They’re probably in the back of the warehouse—behind all the shelves of new books, there’s a section they call ‘the black hole,’ with all the forgotten books.”

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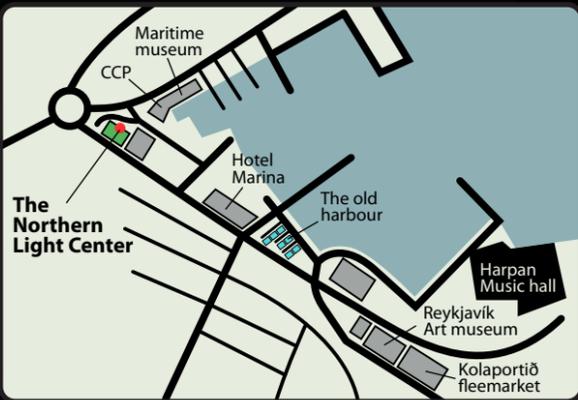
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# Future Perfect

Words by *Rebecca Scott Lord*  
Photos by *Hörður Sveinsson &*  
*provided by Meðgönguljóð.*

On "The Story Island," a fresh young crop of writers is busy carving out a space, making way, creating a culture all of their own, in defiance of what came before. Much like their predecessors, and their predecessors' predecessors.

## I.

shells of buildings  
illuminated ashore  
lay their lustre against the sky

we hold hands  
on the seawall  
marvel the disappearance of a planet

(everyone leaves here in the end)

shadows swallow reflections  
and we can no longer make out  
who is swimming toward us

we are forgotten in waves  
vanish by the seabed

absently we lay  
the foundation of a footprint

*Björk Þorgrímsdóttir*  
(*Meðgönguljóð 2014*)

## Birth

Meðgönguljóð's first book came in the spring of 2012, a collaborative work written by Vala and Kári and published as a subsidiary of the small press Stella, owned by their friend and co-founder Sveinbjörg Bjarnadóttir. In the beginning, Meðgönguljóð published a large number of women

lished this year has balanced out to about an equal number of men and women, reflective of the number of writers really out there. "Our mission early on became to find these voices that weren't getting heard or weren't getting their stuff out elsewhere," Vala says.

## Breathe

Meðgönguljóð started out finding their authors mainly through word of mouth. Kári and Vala would attend readings, and when they witnessed someone they found interesting they tracked him or her down, and offer to work with them. And what Meðgönguljóð provides, its real value, goes far beyond just printing and distribution. They assign an editor to work with each poet, taking between six to nine months to revise and craft the manuscript. In the beginning, the editing was solely in the hands of Vala and Kári, who took turns doing every other manuscript. By now, they've gotten established writers on board as editors, fostering a connection between the younger and older generations of writers.

Vala is gung-ho about the collaborative aspect of the editing process. In working with an editor, she says that every single manuscript is improved in all sorts of ways. "There's some sort of magic in the collaboration," she says. "I think it's invaluable just getting real feedback. The idea isn't to put a leash on the writing. It's about creating a dialogue." She goes on to emphasize that getting out of your own headspace is critical, and that the notion that writers are solitary creatures who produce masterpieces in a vacuum is largely a myth. To her, a sense of community is important, and that's exactly what she and Kári are aiming to do with Meðgönguljóð.

Icelanders' rich literary history is an enduring point of pride for the nation, greatly contributing to the national identity, even providing the basis for their claims to independence in the 19th and 20th centuries. Long before the onslaught of the ongoing nation branding campaigns based on the reputation of revered musicians like Björk and Sigur Rós, Icelanders liked to present themselves as a literary nation—"The Story Island"—on the world stage, frequently boasting of their high literacy rates and fabled storytelling tradition.

Indeed, before Björk, there was Snorri Sturluson. Stretching from the Sagas of the Icelanders written in the 13th and 14th centuries, all the way to the diverse literary scenes of the 20th and 21st centuries, the tradition of the written word is almost forcefully ingrained into Icelandic culture. A widely disseminated myth states that one in ten Icelanders will publish a book in their lifetime, and while that is mostly bullshit, the sparse populace still manages to produce an impressive amount of literature.

So, let's say you decide to devote your life to writing literature in a language of only 330,000 native speakers. How do you get started? How can you make your voice heard? As literary scholar Jón Yngvi Jóhannsson details in a sidebar to this article, a common route for young would-be authors since the advent of modernity has seen them grouping together under a banner, fleshing out and promoting mutual mythologies and shared aesthetics (that are often in opposition to their predecessors') as they claim space for themselves and their contemporaries—usually emphasizing poetry over prose. Eventually, some of those authors will branch out into publishing more popular forms

of fiction, and some of those will eventually become revered literary figures.

It all starts somewhere.

Which leads one to ask: what's brewing in Iceland at the moment? What are our youngest writers up to, and where are they headed?

## Pregnancy

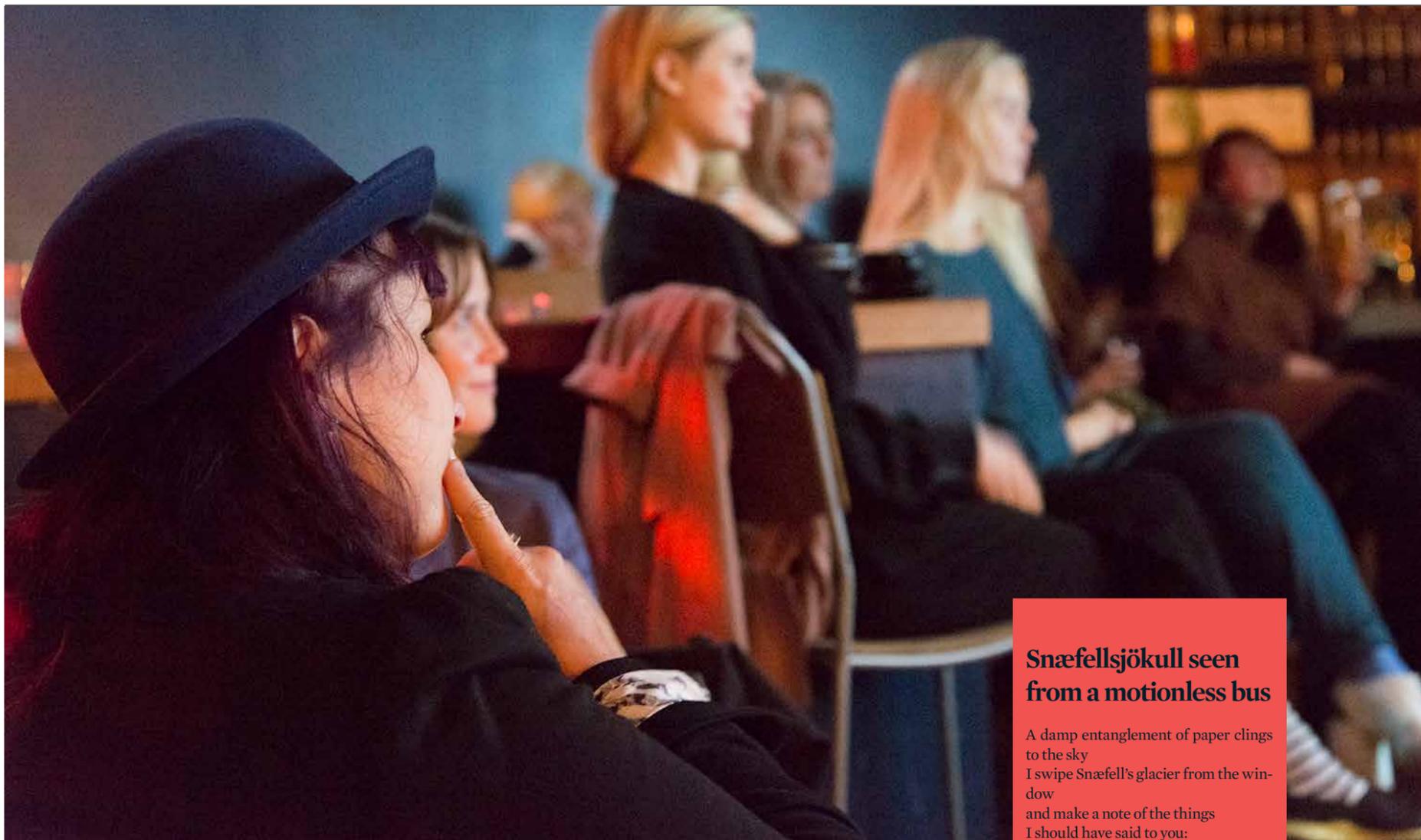
A quick survey of the local lit scene reveals that a group of young poets operating under the name Meðgönguljóð (translated literally as "pregnancy poems") has been the most prominent and active in carving out space for themselves of late, making their presence widely known and slowly infiltrating the discourse. Founded by Valgerður Þoroddsdóttir and Kári Tulinius, Meðgönguljóð was conceived as an independent publisher of poetry that would provide young poets an opportunity to release their work through a professional yet highly DIY process, providing vital support, resources and encouragement.

Vala and Kári conceived the idea and M.O. of Meðgönguljóð after having each just come back to Iceland from stints in the US. Upon returning, both noticed

that Reykjavík was all of a sudden distinctly and lamentably lacking a literary scene. They found that readings and events for writers to come together had become alarmingly rare, while poetry books were prohibitively expensive, the average price hovering at around 5,000 ISK for a hardcover. "That price made it sort of precious somehow," Vala says. "It wasn't a part of the everyday. You weren't picking it up and carrying it around with you and chatting with your friends about it. We basically wanted to make the whole experience more casual, to make it so that you could go to a café and pick up the newest poet."

To begin with, Vala and Kári drew on the low-cost model of zines and independent publishing—which they had grown familiar with in the US—to make a series of chapbooks: small handmade books featuring a selection of works by a particular poet, often their first published work. The two of them casually refer to the first project of Meðgönguljóð as the "coffee series," as the idea became to sell each book for around the price of a cup of coffee, or between 4-500 ISK.

"The idea came in the wintertime of 2010 and 2011," Kári says, "when the recession was still biting very hard and the post-pots and pans revolution excitement was sort of starting to wane."



### Snæfellsjökull seen from a motionless bus

A damp entanglement of paper clings to the sky  
I swipe Snæfell's glacier from the window  
and make a note of the things  
I should have said to you:

1) under a flat, glassy surface  
there are stones which are stones  
2) snow softens;  
I am a mountain that is a mountain

Snæfellsjökull will be tossed in a bin  
will decompose among banana peels,  
paper cups, pop cans, candy wrappers  
refuse which is refuse

poems document landscape;  
feelings rot

Kári Tulinius  
(*Meðgönguljóð 2013*)

### Scream

While *Meðgönguljóð* might be the most prominent group of the moment, it is far from the only game in town, with several other collectives and publishing groups keeping the literary scene alive, each with their mission statements and defining characteristics.

Started in 2013 by Sólveig Matthildur Kristjánsdóttir, Friyrkjan is a punk poetry group of sorts. Sólveig herself is young, 19 years old, and many of the early members were around that age, though now the membership has expanded to those in their mid-to-late twenties. The group hosts monthly readings, currently at Bravó, where Sólveig works as a bartender. The scene at Friyrkjan's readings is Bacchanalian, fueled by beer and a raw edge. And in contrast to *Meðgönguljóð*, the group's poets claim they aren't at all interested in editing and refining their poetry, focusing on just writing it and performing on stage. They published their first compilation of 21 poems in August of 2012, and their second one in December of this year. Meanwhile, Sólveig herself is currently working on a book that *Meðgönguljóð* will publish come next year.

Emil Hjörvar Petersen, another poet published by *Meðgönguljóð*, is a part of a self-publishing venture called Nykur, originally started in 1995 by Andri Snær Magnason as a means to facilitate authors who wished to publish their own works.

Ásta Fanney Sigurðardóttir, a poet who has published with *Meðgönguljóð*, says that groups such as *Meðgönguljóð* are critical to foster a system of encouragement. "I think that poets are really sometimes like lone wolves," Ásta says.

"They're all in their own world, writing and reading their own stuff. I think it's important to come to these meeting points where authors meet authors and poets meet poets. Then you're not alone and you're not just putting your poems in a drawer." She says that there's always something that comes from these gatherings and can be used in her own poetry or just her life.

"There's a nice atmosphere among the young writers, and I do feel they are generally supportive of each other," says Arngunnur Árnadóttir, another *Meðgönguljóð* poet. "The group of people surrounding *Meðgönguljóð* is fantastic and it's been inspiring to get to know them."

When asked if she thinks they've been successful in fostering a community, Vala says she can't really answer that, as she's far too close to the action to have an objective opinion. Kári feels similarly, describing *Meðgönguljóð* as a generation rather than a movement, in the sense that the poets they've published so far were all born in the 80s. He says, "There are certain things in common with aesthetics, but we haven't sat down and worked out a manifesto. And I don't think we would ever do that, for various reasons.

We're not necessarily speaking as some sort of consensus, and in that sense, we're not a movement."

K á r i goes on to say, "I do think that all of the poets that we've published, at least in the shorter works, the little books, are reacting to what happened in Iceland and the chaotic period that's been ongoing since the end of 2008." As life-changing as the financial crisis was, especially for people of his generation, just coming of age, he reiterates that he doesn't have any interest in being a

movement publisher. "Frankly, in some ways it's because movements are internally sort of volatile. We like to keep things as drama free as possible. We're poets, not playwrights."

### What's poetry got to do with it?

Almost all writers affiliated with the Icelandic literary scene, past and present, local and abroad, seem to have started their careers with poetry. As long as there's been a prose tradition in Iceland, there's also been an equally strong current of poetry running alongside. This traditional fare is the stuff of the Sagas, with rigid rules for composition, mandatory end rhymes and a strong emphasis on alliteration. The Atom Poets broke free of this in the post WWII period, forming the first modern poetic movement in Iceland with their free verse, and subsequent movements have continued the theme of breaking from the past, including Nýhil, the most recent movement, whose most active years were between 2004 and 2009.

Haukur Ingvarsson is an author, literary scholar and poet who debuted during Nýhil's heyday. He describes their approach to language as being very different from a lot of what's happening now. He says they were very focused on language and political aspects of it, but at the same time playing a lot with its sound and utilising both high- and lowbrow stylistics.

One of Nýhil's founders, Haukur Már Helgason, posits that while poetry might be a natural driving force behind the urge to write for some, it's not financially viable to dedicate one's writing life to poetry, since Iceland is too small of a country to foster a literary market that could support that. Writers who are primarily novelists but started out as just poets might have been able to continue on with poetry, had they been born in countries with larger language zones and therefore space to support the subculture that is poetry. Nýhil co-founder Eiríkur Örn similarly says, "Iceland is too small to have a substantial subculture—everything has to exist within the mainstream to be able to subsist. Literature is more and more a cultural sidenote and poetry is a cultural side note within literature."

Despite the fact that it's not financially viable, poetry is still actively be-

ing written and pursued. Haukur Már says that the conscious reasons to create poetry "have to do with ideas about poetry being a good criterion for one's capabilities, while also being an important place for practice: to actually focus on your writing, word by word, find your own desires and tendencies in its employment, in the way you bend it or squeeze it or explode it. I think these are not just rationalizations, but quite valid reasons for at least some writers."

There's something about poetry that appeals to an Icelandic sensibility, though it's not necessarily just by virtue of being an Icelander that writers here start with it. Many, if not all writers continue on through their careers thinking of themselves as poets first, and novelists, screenwriters, or whatever else second. Says Kári, "I think it's common all over the world, the idea that poetry is the expression of the soul. I think that idea has very strong currency in Iceland. For instance, though I am primarily in many ways a novelist, I believe in poetry in a way that I don't believe in novels, in a sort of almost religious sense."

It's almost a given that a writer in Iceland is also a poet, no matter what genre or literary scene he or she eventually gravitates towards. Sverrir Norland, author of *Kviðasnillingarnir*, a novel published this past September by Iceland's largest publisher, says he started writing poetry as a child. His first two published works were poetry books, and then he moved on to prose, his current focus. "I'm a poetry guy, even though I don't really write much poetry anymore. But I read it—it's my main source of energy."

Vala asserts that not only is poetry a natural thing for a writer, it's also the bravest kind of writing. "In some ways, it's easier to criticise, easier to mock, because it's disarmingly simple. In that way I think poetry is a bit like being naked. Like making love, or being made love to, it requires a very concentrated surrender. And when it's good, it's terrifyingly honest. There's nothing more danger-

ous than an honest poet—at their best, they can be a culture's most devastating social and political critics."

T h i s critical potential rears its head in a different way for every generation of poets. Who can say exactly what this generation is reacting to and criticising? Opinions vary, and it's

difficult to know because there hasn't yet been an opportunity for hindsight. Haukur Már, who is from the generation above the poets just coming up, notices an almost bitter sense. "If they have anything in common, as far as I see, it would be a sense of disillusion, giving birth to various different responses, from the finest cynicism to calls for arms. It might go somewhat hand in hand with a hopeless political situation, an enduring crisis of identity, of the economy, and of existence."

### How to make a living in three easy steps

If it's not particularly financially viable to make a living off writing, and especially poetry, then how are there so many Icelandic poets and writers alive and well? The majority of writers have two or three other jobs, like Sólveig of Friyrkjan who bartends at Bravó and Húrra, or Ásta Fanney who gets to eat whenever she sells a drawing. But surely this can't be the only way, because romantic as it is to be a starving artist, it's not exactly a sustainable career goal.

Haukur Már states it frankly, "Icelandic writers can make a career of writing because the state funds them. Period. Over 90% of published literature does not sell sufficiently to keep the author alive along with the publisher and the rest of the industry. About half probably manages to cover printing costs by sales only. But the deciding factor is this one fund, founded by the state in 1969, where artists, including writers, can apply for a salary. It is a stipend, but received on a monthly basis, for three, six, nine or

### January 3rd

Mitten-clad hands opened beer bottles with a key and we sipped from them while trampling the snow in dress shoes. We walked single-file through the graveyard, holding on to each other so no one lost their way among the gravestones. Beyond the graveyard followed a sharp, steep hill, which we didn't realize until we had half-rolled, half-ran down it. Still we landed on our feet and stood in the backyard of a house. Made a racket under the bedroom window and smoked a bunch of cigarettes. We sprinted over Tjörnin's sheet of ice, letting ourselves glide across, fell and hurt ourselves more than we expected. Kept going and kept falling. There were stars in the sky but we didn't see them for the street lights. Anyway, we didn't want to see anything in this ice cold gale.

Arngunnur Árnadóttir  
(*Meðgönguljóð 2013*)



twelve months a year, depending on the artist's recognition and the quality of his/her application."

It would be almost impossible for a writer to make a living if they had to rely only on the sales of their books, according to Haukur Ingvarsson. The grant system is necessary for the health of the literary scene, too, he says: "The existence of different kinds of literature is vital for the scene to function." Poetry is what fuels the writers of other genres like fiction, like Sverrir Norland said.

It's a fairly cut and dried process to apply for a stipend: you need to submit a detailed proposal, and sometimes a CV. However, the vast majority of people receiving such grants are over the age of 30, and have already published a book before. So the means to support oneself until those almost essential criteria are reached are slapdash and haphazard: side jobs, a generous family, or student loans.

"And I think, aside from any artistic merit, a collective can be tremendously important in those formative years," says Haukur Már, "at least as a mental and social support system. When your extended family and your acquaintances from school, even close friends, don't understand why you bother—having a group of people who share the manic obsession can be tremendously helpful."

The pattern that's repeated every generation is a fading away of the previous literary scene, the forming of a new community with a new sense of purpose, and then their subsequent fade. That's not to say that the members of each generation just go away when the collective goes.

Certainly members of groups like Nýhil and its predecessors, like surrealist collective Medúsa (more on page 20), are still extremely active, their publications regularly topping critics' lists and even sales charts.

Haukur Ingvarsson thinks this generational cycle will continue. He says that each generation "not only invents itself, but also picks up older authors from previous scenes that were perhaps not paid much attention and it reevaluates their work and literary history." Literature is like Ouroboros, with no discernible beginning or end, at least not within anyone's living memory. Things, authors, stories, forms are constantly recycled and woven into the new narrative.

As to where it's going, Haukur Már can't say. "I wouldn't dare to propose any direction. Anything worth anything will

come as a surprise. One feature, however, that I think may be important, is emancipation from the fetishisation of language. As in: this particular language, Icelandic. The adoration of linguistic texture has at times been somewhat given preference over thought or any other content." He says this focus can make it easy to develop tunnel vision for Iceland and only Iceland, ignoring the existence of the rest of the world and, therefore, the context in which Iceland sits.

Emil is optimistic about the current

variety in the literature he sees coming out of Iceland. "With a new generation, the genres come out of hiding, writers will experiment in other ways, and 'the Icelandic novel' will change." He says he worries about the government's proposed raise in VAT on books, along with its much maligned cuts to arts and culture funding, positing that they have the potential to negatively affect the literary scene. His hope is that the work of small publishers like

Medögönguljóð, who he says has created a new poetry scene in no time, continues because despite the larger publishers putting out great books, "in the long run it's not healthy for literature to have such monotony. The more variety, the better for literature."

Vala herself agrees that the cyclical pattern will continue. She specifically hopes for the poets of Medögönguljóð to flourish and keep at it. She believes the poets in Medögönguljóð have the potential to be the great voices of tomorrow. To Vala, diversity is critical, both with the voices in poetry and literature, and culture and society at large, and her desire is for the powers that be to recognize and appreciate this. The politicians who are in charge of funding arts and culture have a great responsibility to nourish it.

"I cling to the belief that if we keep encouraging a diverse range of voices we're bound to end up with a revolution. James Baldwin once wrote, 'Where the poet can sing, the people can live. When a civilisation treats its poets with the disdain with which we treat ours, it cannot be far from disaster.' I want to give poets the chance to sing. Poets can be great critics. They can spark things. You give them the chance and they will, as Baldwin says, empty oceans with a home-made spoon and tear down mountains with their hands."

## Urban Surf

Nauseous from hunger  
we stretch out in the gutter  
and touch  
like teenagers

a bird in the eaves above  
blushes  
melts  
and sinks to the ground

deep down (inside me)  
are streets  
delineated in water  
a shimmering wet

there I stow the salt  
and the zippers

Valgerður Þóroddsdóttir  
(Medögönguljóð 2013)

# Youth Groups In Icelandic Literature, A Brief History Of

From Fjölnir to Medúsa to Nýhil to Medögönguljóð...

Words by Jón Yngvi Jóhannsson

Some accounts claim that modern Icelandic literature began in 1835, when four young students started their own literary journal in Copenhagen. Their influences and impulses came from Europe; an amalgam of reigning Enlightenment ideals of progress and a desire to disseminate bright new ideas and romantic aesthetics that they had picked up in their exile. The name of their journal, Fjölnir, came from the writings of the medieval historian Snorri Sturluson. Fjölnir was a mythical king of the Swedes, who sadly drowned in a large vessel of mead, which he fell into while dead drunk.

From then on, we can tell the same story over and over again: young and aspiring poets form a group, and publish journals or even books on their own until they are gradually accepted into the mainstream—that is, if they avoid falling into large vessels of mead or other beverages.

Fifty years later, four Icelandic students again form a literary journal, this time aiming to import naturalism and new political trends from Denmark. Again, the name was borrowed from Snorri. This time, it was Verðandi, one of three witches that spin the threads of destiny in Old Norse-Icelandic mythology.

Another fifty years later, The Association of Revolutionary Writers appeared on the scene; abandoning the custom of choosing medieval names for their journal, they named it, rather appropriately, The Red Pens. Modernism and the post-war avant-garde also had their journal, the influential Birtingur ('Candide') published in the 1950s and 60s.

## Get vile!

Many, if not most of the literary groups which have been formed since the first edition of Fjölnir rolled off the printing press in Copenhagen have, in one way or another, identified with the founding fathers, the Fjölnismenn ("The Men of Fjölnir"). This was also the case in 1976 when Listaskáldin vondu ("The vile poets") appeared on the scene. The name is a parody of a nickname given to most revered of the Fjölnismen, Jónas Hallgrímsson, "Listaskáldið góða" ("The fine poet"). The scene they first appeared on, very literally, was at the University Cinema, where 1,300 paying guests were crammed in, some of them sitting in folded chairs or in the aisles. Never before, or since, have so

many people attended a poetry reading in Iceland. The reading was the culmination of the group's success, but they went on to host other readings around the country. The group and other writers around it has been dubbed "the funny generation," as their writing showed a humour and irony that was sometimes absent from both contemporary modernists and more overtly political writers.

Members of "the funny generation" are still active in Icelandic literature, and since the late '70s, grassroots groups have regularly emerged on the scene: young poets, novelists and artists that have later found their way into mainstream Icelandic literature and beyond. The fairly recent suburb of Breiðholt, Icelanders' first attempt at creating a concrete jungle, gave birth to the most influential of these: the surrealist group Medúsa, founded by six adolescents in 1979. In the following years, the group studied and practiced surrealism in various forms inspired by its ideological founders, and in close cooperation with similar groups that were still active in other parts of Europe. Medúsa organised happenings, held poetry readings at punk rock concerts, published volumes of poetry, and in the true spirit of the avant-garde, wrote manifestos describing the group and its goals. According to the group, itself, Medúsa was made from "7 kilos flour, 23 grams surrealism, 13 grams dada, a teaspoon of punk, a kilometre of Yasmin tea and 666 litres magic."

The most prominent figure of Medúsa was Sjón, who published his first volume of poetry at the age of 16 and has since become an internationally acclaimed novelist. He received the Nordic Council Literary Prize in 2005, and has already been translated into 25 languages.

Members of Medúsa later joined other groups combining literature, visual arts and music, most notably Smekkleysa ("Bad Taste Ltd."), founded in 1986 by the members of Medúsa and their friends, many of whom went on to found The Sugarcubes. Among them were writers like Friðrik Erlingsson and Bragi Ólafsson (the Sugarcubes' bass player), who, like so many Icelandic authors, started out as a poet but has since become one of Icelandic literature's finest and most unconventional novelists.

## The spectre of Nýhil

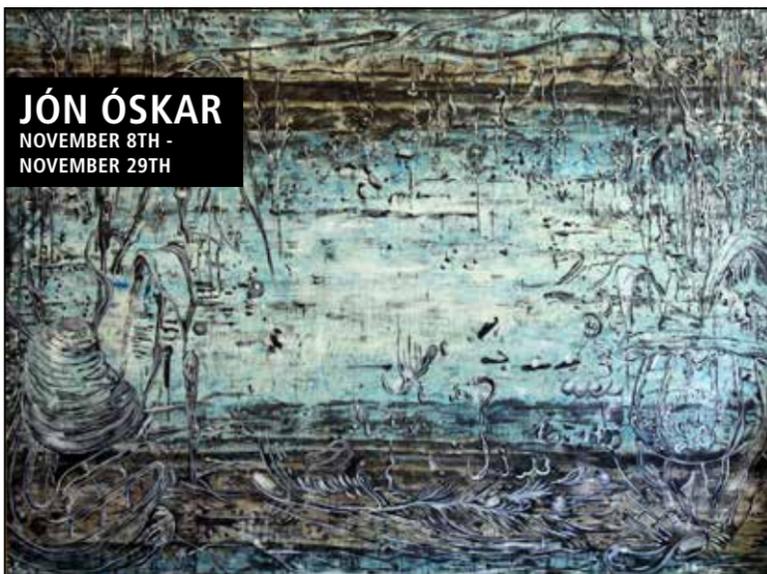
The 1980s and 90s saw other groups of poets and artists; some were short-lived and loosely affiliated, others have had a lasting impact. Besti vinur ljóðsins ("The poem's best friend") hosted a series of poetry readings from 1986-91, bringing together poets and writers from Medúsa, Listaskáldin vondu and various younger poets.

The most influential group of young poets and intellectuals in recent years has been Nýhil, founded in 2004. The name of the group is a pun on nihil(ism), "ný" meaning new in Icelandic. The wordplay, the mixture of Icelandic and foreign languages and the connotations of the neologism capture Nýhil's spirit. The group was very active until 2010, publishing poetry and nonfiction, hosting international poetry festivals and readings. Nýhil's aesthetics were avant-garde and experimental, its politics left wing and radical. The group's international character and individual members' networking with foreign artists are among its strongest characteristics.

And once again, literary history repeats itself: from the grassroots and experimental environment of Nýhil writers have slowly but surely emerged into the mainstream, broadening it at the same time. Eiríkur Örn Norðdahl, Steinar Bragi and Kristín Eiríksdóttir now form the vanguard of Icelandic literature, even making noise abroad.

Nýhil was boisterous and loud. In comparison, the latest groups of poets to emerge may seem rather tame. The lo-fi output of Medögönguljóð ("Partus Poetry") is a recent example, as are the more elaborate books of Tunglþækur ("Moonbooks") a small publishing house operated by artists and writers which only publishes books on a full moon. But, if things may seem peaceful at the moment we can find hope and comfort in the words of Sjón: "There is this tendency in European art that once things seem to have reached some sort of an equilibrium, some bullies come along and hurl themselves on the sea-saw; sending the old into the air from where it may never return."

Jón Yngvi Jóhannsson is an adjunct lecturer at the University of Iceland where he teaches modern Icelandic literature, Scandinavian literature and literary theory. He has written on Icelandic literary history and Danish-Icelandic literary history. His latest book is a biography on Gunnar Gunnarsson, a major Danish-Icelandic author.



JÓN ÓSKAR  
NOVEMBER 8TH -  
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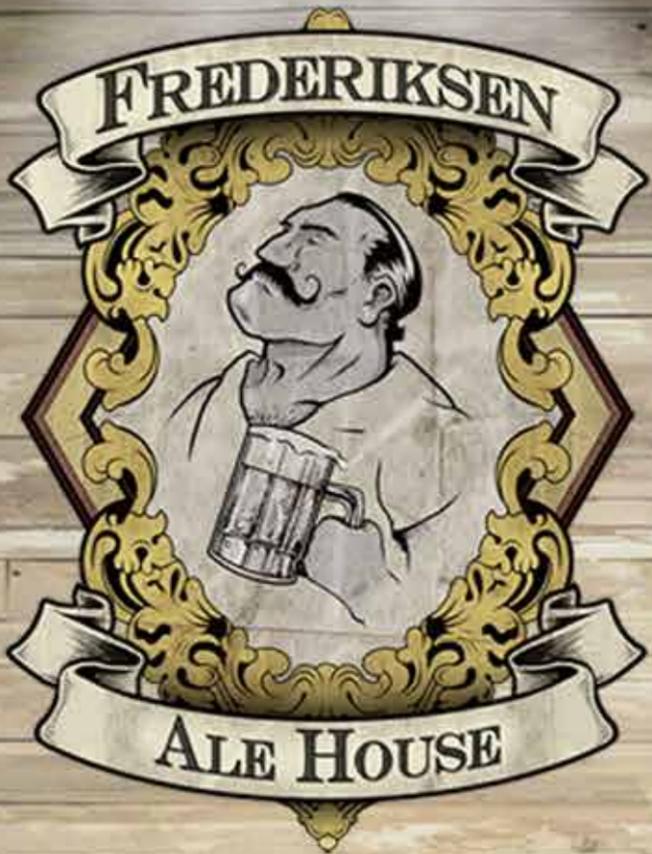
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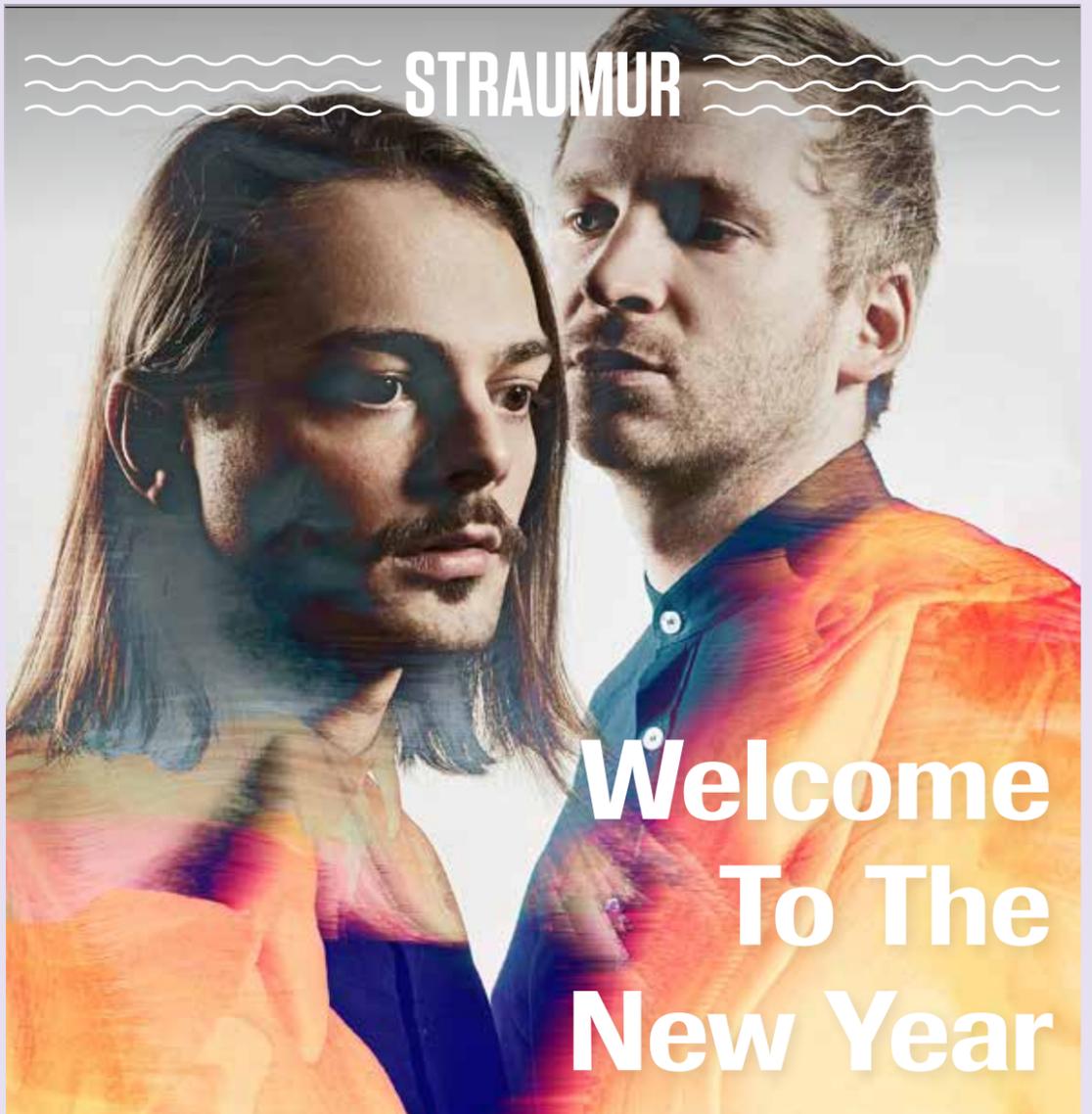
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**Words**

Óli Dóri & Davíð Roach

By the time this issue hits the streets, we will be halfway through the fourteenth edition of the Iceland Airwaves festival. At the day of publication, Friday November 7, Straumur will be hosting an off-venue show at the independent cinema Bíó Paradís, where Vorhees, Sin Fang and Unknown Mortal Orchestra will perform (in that order!) from 16:15-19:00. Later that same day, we will also be hosting an official Airwaves show at Gaukurinn (starting at 20:00) where, among others, Oyama, Strigaskór Nr. 42, Black Bananas and Fufanu will grace the stage. The off-venue in Bíó Paradís continues throughout the weekend during the daytime, so be sure to drop by.

Iceland Airwaves always sort of feels like it marks the beginning of a new year on the musical calendar, with many musicians timing their releases around the festival. For your benefit, we've sifted through a lot of quality music in the past month, checking out all that new stuff. Here are some of the highlights!

Kiasmos—'Kiasmos'



The debut LP from the duo of Ólafur Arnalds and Bloodgroup's Janus is full of beautifully rendered tracks that draw from techno, ambient and neo-classical. Merging the organic, analogue and digital, the album deftly navigates extended grooves and subtle melodic swifts with great assurance. The best songs remind us quite a bit of Jon Hopkins's excellent 'Immunity'—not a small compliment.

Sykur—'Strange Loop'



The latest single from Reykjavík technopopsters Sykur is a bouncy upbeat electro romp that slows down the tempo midway in the chorus, which strangely makes it all the more infectious.

Singapore Sling—  
'The Tower Of Fornicity'



Singapore Sling is the leatherclad, shades-wearing dark horse of the Reykjavík rock scene, starting with apathy into the ether to the soundtrack of their blaring feedback-laden drones. This album is one of their most lo-fi yet, and mixes surging guitars with swaggering rockabilly and a cool so effortless and full of hateful contempt that it permeates every inch of the album.

Oyama—'Coolboy'



Oyama just released their debut long player last week, it's called 'Coolboy' and it's a masterpiece of dreamy pop, pedal laden rock freakouts and impeccable songcraft.

Muted—'Special Place' EP



The left field-leaning producer Muted is releasing the excellent EP 'Special

Place', whose title song features Jófríður Ákadóttir (Samaris, Pascal Pinon) on vocals, sounding like the faded whisperings of a young Björk. The EP sports two excellent remixes from Ruxpin and M-Band, and a couple more instrumental songs in the vein of the experimental electronica from the Brainfeeder label.

Grísalappalísa—'Strax í dag'



Postpunk pranksters Grísalappalísa just released a cover of "Strax í dag," by one of Iceland's most beloved pop groups: Stuðmenn. Their treatment is true to the spirit of the original, although a lot rougher around the edges.



Straumur has been active since the summer of 2012, with writers Óli Dóri and Davíð Roach documenting the local music scene and helping people discover new music at [straum.is](http://straum.is). It is associated with the radio show Straumur on X977, which Óli Dóri hosts every Monday evening at 23:00.

## Album Reviews



### Sóley - 'Krómantik'

Morr Music (2014)

[www.facebook.com/soleysoleysoley](http://www.facebook.com/soleysoleysoley)

Sóley blows the dust off some haunting piano pieces



**+** Sóley's latest outing, 'Krómantik', surprises. The EP departs from her usual pop-pinged songwriting, instead delivering a very short collection of ghostly piano music written for several art projects. It is in essence a multi-soundtrack album, and its title is an appropriate portmanteau that sandwiches together "chromatic" and "romantic."

All of the tracks on this sixteen-minute EP revolve around an old piano, seemingly left to go out of tune and gather dust. Each piece channels composers known for their piano music, especially the late Romanticists of the 19th century, like Rachmaninoff, Shostakovich, and Prokofiev. "Stiklur" is winding and chromatic; "Kaósmúsik" and "Efterteiti" are macabre dances, not out of place in a Tim Burton film. The titular song "Krómantik" is a bit more familiar to contemporary ears, and it builds wordless vocals in layers. For those who read music, the sheet music images that appear in the liner notes will be a bonus, giving you a

sense of Sóley's working process.

While the distant, sometimes out-of-tune piano is evocative, it loses its mysterious charm rather quickly without additional visuals to accompany. These curious and clever piano miniatures are done a disservice when masked by reverb; "Stofuvals" is one of the least shadowy works, and one can notice the interesting harmonies and winding lines. It would be interesting to hear the pieces alternatively recorded on a clear, crisp piano, which would bring out Sóley's unique compositional voice while still referencing their 19th century classical role models.

'Krómantik' is a good collection piece for those who may know of Sóley's music, and evokes images of music halls past. But for those looking for a more substantial work, we await the next LP. For Sóley, whose previous works lay in a colorful area between genres, these tracks feel ghostly and pale.

✂ - NATHAN HALL

### Worm Is Green - 'To Them We Are Only Shadows'

ATA:DIGITAL (2014)

[www.wormisgreen.com](http://www.wormisgreen.com)

Electronic music's solid foundation



**+** 'To Them We Are Only Shadows' is the latest album from veteran Icelandic musicians Worm Is Green, a band celebrating its fourteenth year of operation. The group uses electronics and samples along with vocals, drum pads, and bass to create a blend of austere textures, often with trip-hop influences. On 'Shadows', we hear a wide range of shifting moods, sometimes even abruptly within individual tracks. Nearly unaccompanied vocals might pause for a moment before choruses of synths enter; some glitchy beats might follow, only to conclude with a bass line and backup harmonies.

'...Shadows' also offers a surprising dryness; there are no lengthy echoes or delays to the synths or vocals. Singer Guðríður Ringsteð provides the vocals on the album, sometimes in unison with a male voice and other times breaking away into harmony. Along with the dryness comes darkness, both in brooding instrumentation and through lyrics. One gets the feeling that Worm Is Green seek to highlight humanity's uncanny abil-

ity to conform to a gloomy status quo, as shown in declarative text like, "move along/form a single line/your soul is mine" and "stand your ground/don't let them change you."

If the variety of sprightly produced electronic music and slower tempos is refreshing, it does come with a price, as some sections lack momentum. Many songs are quite sing-able but can also seem a bit heavy on trip-hop nostalgia. Overall, the album presents itself like a live performance, and one wonders if Worm Is Green might give audiences denser textures or more dramatic tempos when performed on stage. "It is time/it is now or never/we need nothing short of forever", as they sing "for the last show on Earth." We'll keep you posted if Bárðarbunga, Ebola, ISIS, etc. might make that final show a reality.

✂ - NATHAN HALL

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# Two Days Of Criminal Activity

Iceland Noir: it's happening again!



**Iceland Noir**

 The Nordic House

 November 21-22

 [icelandnoir.com](http://icelandnoir.com)

## Words

Quentin Bates

## Photos

Markús Már Efraím

People thought we were nuts at the time, when in reality we were suffering from good old Icelandic gung-ho enthusiasm. This year, we ought to know better. Three of us—Yrsa Sigurðardóttir, Ragnar Jónasson and I—got together last year to organise a small crime fiction festival in Reykjavík. After all, how hard could it be? We had all been to a few of these, and it didn't look like it could be all that much of a headache.

It had seemed odd to us that Iceland didn't have its own crime fiction festival. After all, there are plenty of them elsewhere. Denmark has a big one, as does Norway. There are a couple held every year in Britain, several in Germany and there are a great many in France, as well as no shortage of them in the States. But not Iceland. Like Sweden, Iceland has plenty of literary stuff going on, but not crime fiction. We felt it was time to put Reykjavík on the crime map, in a fictional sense, of course.

### Iceland-style

In fact, we organised last year's one-day Iceland Noir in record time, a matter of months, and it worked out pretty well. It didn't do any harm that we had some great names who agreed to take part; Ann Cleeves can take the credit for getting us off the ground, as without her instant and unequivocal "yes" when we enquired whether she'd go to Iceland in the middle of winter for a new crime festival, we might not have been so quick off the mark.

Then there was Arnaldur Indriðason, the king of Icelandic crime fiction. The lineup was already looking good with the crime writers we had press-ganged into making the trip to Iceland, but there was a sudden flurry of additional interest when we were able to announce that he'd be taking part last year.

Now, the second Iceland Noir is about to take place at Reykjavík's Nordic House, on the 21st and 22nd of November. At the moment there are a few seats left. Being able to use Nordic House has made it all possible, but it is limited in size. As we aren't bust the max capacity, and as we need to cover the cost of the coffee and the programme, this year we've also had to charge a festival fee. Tickets are available at the Reykjavík City Library—if you'd like

one, email the trusty Úlfhildur (ulfhildur.dagsdottir@reykjavik.is) for details.

### Intense criminal activity

There are a few more changes this year. To begin with, we invited Lilja Sigurðardóttir to join our informal board of organisers and her input has been a huge help. Iceland Noir is also two days this year instead of just one, as we figured that with so many people coming from abroad, we needed to offer them more than just one day of intense criminal activity. We had been concerned that we might not be able to fill up a two-day schedule; it turns out we could probably have filled three.

We have a fine lineup of local and visiting crime writers, from the big names of Peter James, David Hewson, Vidar Sundstøl and Johan Theorin to first-time authors with some interesting and challenging new ideas, ranging from those writing traditional whodunits, to some of the hardest-boiled crime writers about, to those with a supernatural tone to their work. Crime fiction is a remarkably broad church, with plenty to choose from.

As well as the Icelandic crime writers taking part in two days of panels and discussion, there's a very varied crowd visiting for Iceland Noir, mainly from Britain, but also from Norway, Sweden and Finland, one from Greenland, one from Romania, a few from the US, and a writing partnership from South Africa. They all bring their own unique take on things, and a perspective on their home countries, or those countries they write about—the two aren't always the same.

Úlfhildur Dagsdóttir and the Reykjavík City Library are taking part with a crime walk through the city streets. Last year was the Erlendur crime walk, starting at

the Hverfisgata police station and finishing up by the library, but this year a whole new programme for the crime walk has assembled, starting at the Nordic House and taking in locations that feature in crime novels by a bunch of Icelandic and visiting authors—with some of the writers on hand to read excerpts from their work at those very locations.

### Hot laptops!

Although we've made Iceland Noir bigger and, we hope, even better this year, it hasn't strayed from the original brief, which was to have a good time with a bunch of like-minded people. It has to be said that those people who sit in a dark room dreaming up intrigue and foul murder over a hot laptop tend to be a bundle of fun when they're released into the daylight. Crime writers like to have a good time and things are never dull when they congregate. They buzz with curiosity, imagination and bonhomie, and appear to have an innate sense of direction for the nearest convivial bar.

Reykjavík is fortunate to have a very diverse crowd of visitors who will be here for a few days in November, starting with the Icelandic Crime Syndicate's annual reading night at Sól on the 20th (doors open at 8pm), with a scattering of visiting writers among the Syndicate's members.

My personal list of what to look forward to? Norwegian writer Hans Olav Lahlum, Guinness world record holder for the longest interview (30 hours, one minute and 44 seconds) is on two panels. Louise Millar, Craig Robertson and James Oswald are coming from Scotland, each with their own outlook on crime fiction, and Craig's latest book is set in the Faroe Islands—probably the first time an outsider has set a crime story there. Then there's the new blood, a panel of debut authors, each of them with an exciting new story to tell. We'll undoubtedly be hearing more from AK Benedict, David Swating, Sverrir Berg and Sarah Ward in the future, but you saw them first at Iceland Noir.

## INFO

Iceland Noir, November 21-22 at the Nordic House, Reykjavík.

Details at [www.icelandnoir.com](http://www.icelandnoir.com), or you can find them on Facebook. For further info, contact [icelandnoir@gmail.com](mailto:icelandnoir@gmail.com). Tickets are available from Úlfhildur (ulfhildur.dagsdottir@reykjavik.is) at the Reykjavík City Library.

INTERVIEW

## The Attack Of Comic Realism

And the counter-attack of ignorant authorities

Hafsteinn Gunnarsson, director of *Paris Norðursins*, interviewed

### Words

Haukur Már Helgason

### Photos

Hörður Sveinsson

Hafsteinn Gunnar Sigurðsson's second feature film, '*Paris Norðursins*', or '*Paris of the North*', revolves around a 37-year-old man, disoriented, as it seems, after a breakup, and his relations to various people, not least of all his chaos-factory of a father. While the son fled his hardships into a small town on the countryside, the father seems to have fled all over the place—last stop: Thailand.

The father comes for a visit just at the start of the son's summer vacation, boozes, and flirts with a woman the son had intermittently been involved with.

### The male animal

The film touches on various themes. It is a comedy of sorts, but a quiet, subtle one. I asked the director about its relations to earlier Icelandic comedies, many of which have focused on disoriented male figures. Hafsteinn replied:

"You mention Þór and Danni from the 'Lif'-series. That's not out of the blue in relation to 'Either Way' [his first feature, 2011]. That one happens in the 80s, of course, and is in many ways an ode to that period's filmmaking, the films I grew up with. '*Paris of the North*' continues examining manhood and relations between men, but in a different and perhaps a bit more dramatic mode than 'Either Way'. '*Paris of the North*' focuses on the relation between father and son and various sides of fatherhood. Certainly these characters are confused and flawed, which may be archetypal for how unsettled the male animal seems to be after the changes gender roles have undergone in previous decades. Hopefully my films are a bit more realist than some of the comedies you mentioned."

**The film is to some extent a coming-of-age story. It also seems to have symbolic side to it, such as the near-literal castration of the father. Do you think of it as a parable?**

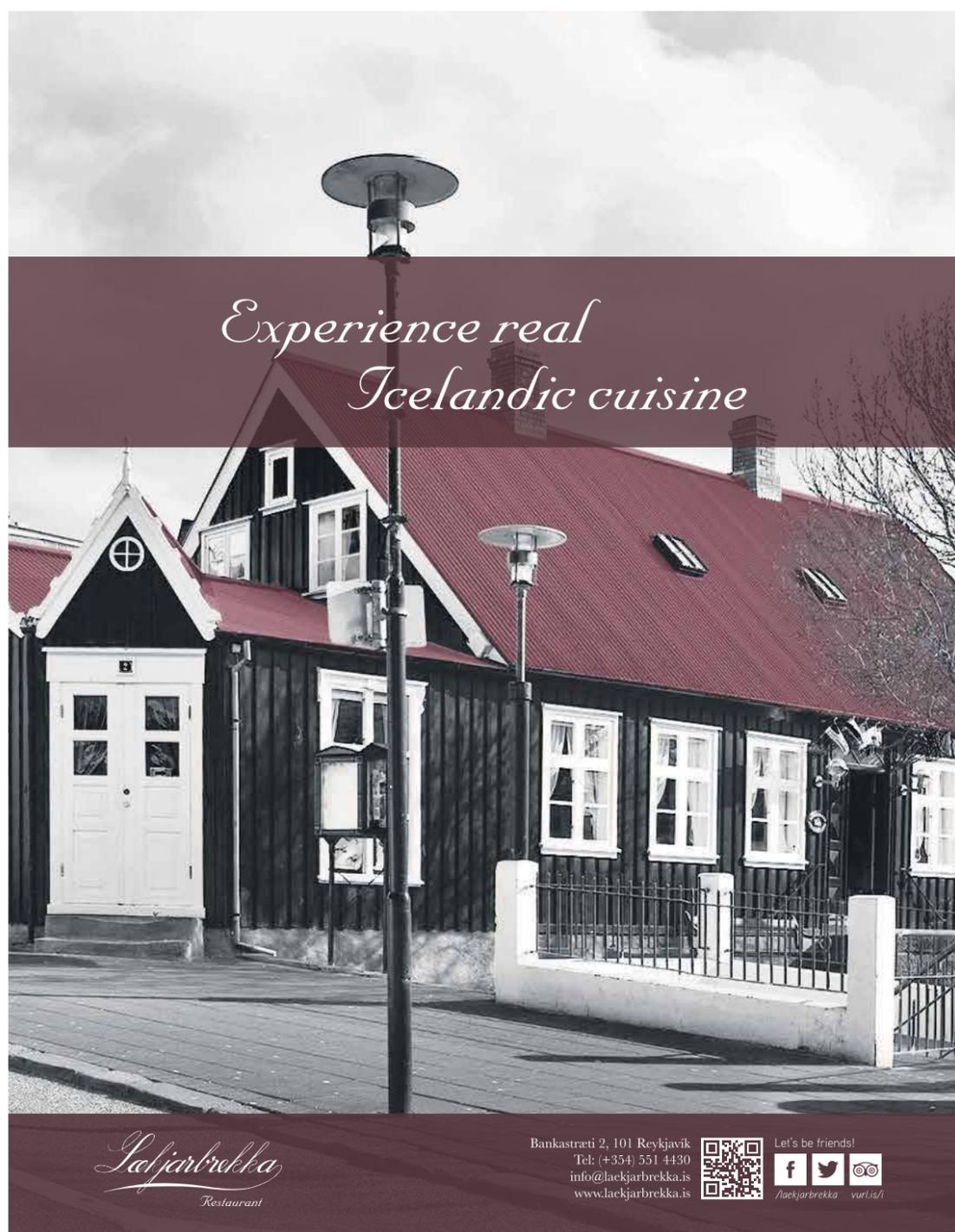
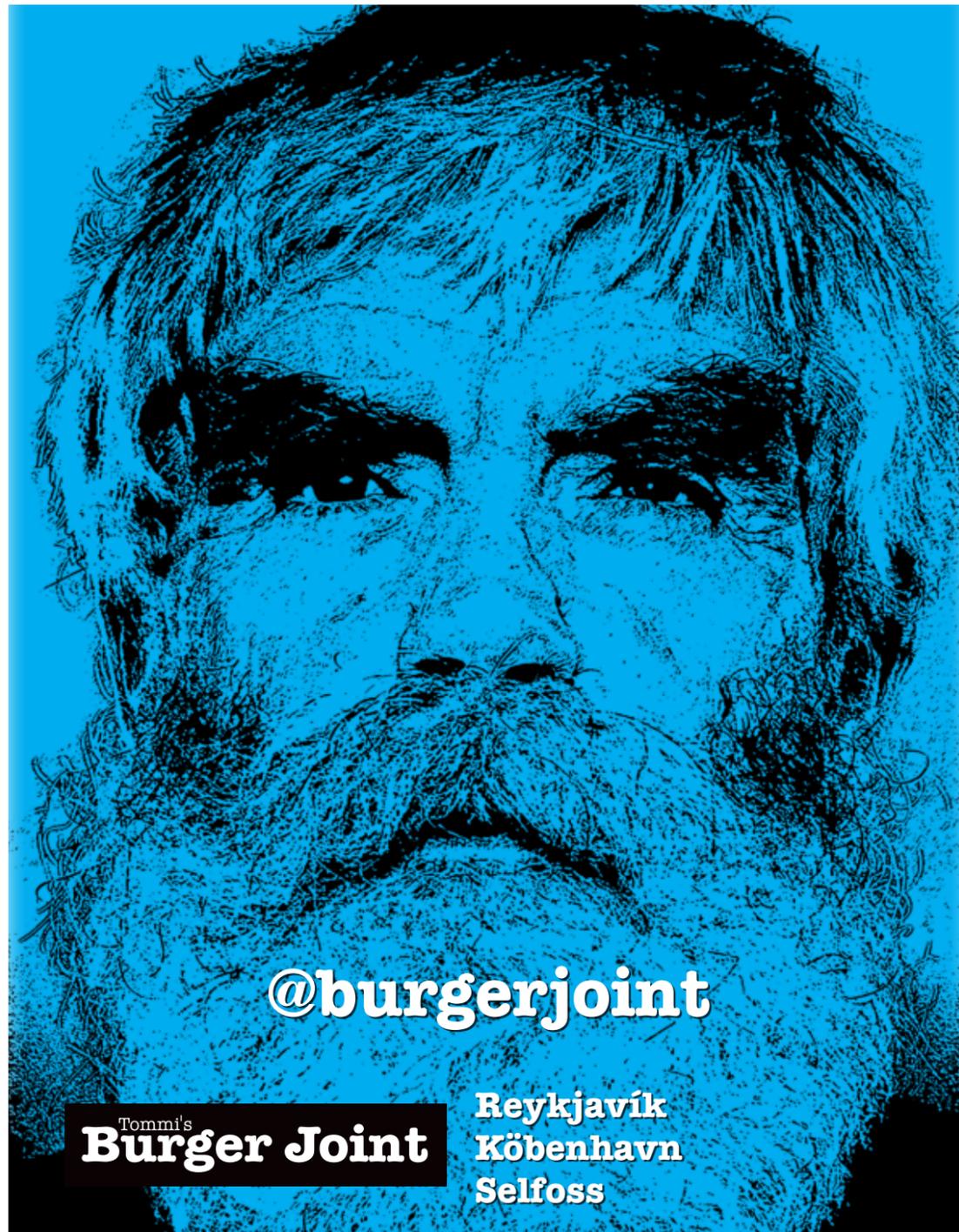
"No, I don't. It certainly is a story of growth of both father and son, who to some extent reject maturity. But towards the end you can glimpse some hope that they might advance a bit."

### Untold stories

**Your films seem to belong among a few other recent works, in advancing a new realism. Baldvin Z, even Benedikt Erlingsson, come to mind, although the subtle sense of humor you share with Benedikt makes it tempting to speak of realist comedies rather than realism pure and simple. Do you see yourself as member of a generation of filmmakers meeting new challenges? Or is your journey purely one man's affair?**

"I absolutely sense a new generation of filmmakers, male and female, entering the scene. Perhaps the works of these people strike a more realist note than what came before. It will be exciting to observe what happens in Icelandic filmmaking in the years ahead. So many stories remain untold, so many formal experiments are yet to be made. A certain wave has started. Currently, local cinemas are screening seven Icelandic films, which is a record. This can be related to the last government's decision to support the creative field and boost the Icelandic Film Fund. The current government has cancelled those investment plans and cut the Film Fund's budget severely. The effects are already felt. To advance further still, Icelandic cinema needs investment. In that sense my generation is, sadly, fighting similar challenges as earlier ones: ignorant authorities."

Hafsteinn mentions that the first all-Icelandic feature film was made in 1977 and the Film Fund was only established the following year. "It's so young. And perhaps only now, this field is finding out what it is and where it wants to go. Now, a lot of knowledge and skill has been amassed, both technical and in terms of ideas, and the field is realizing its potential. It would be disastrous if the only thing lacking turns out to be the political decision to seriously invest in the field."



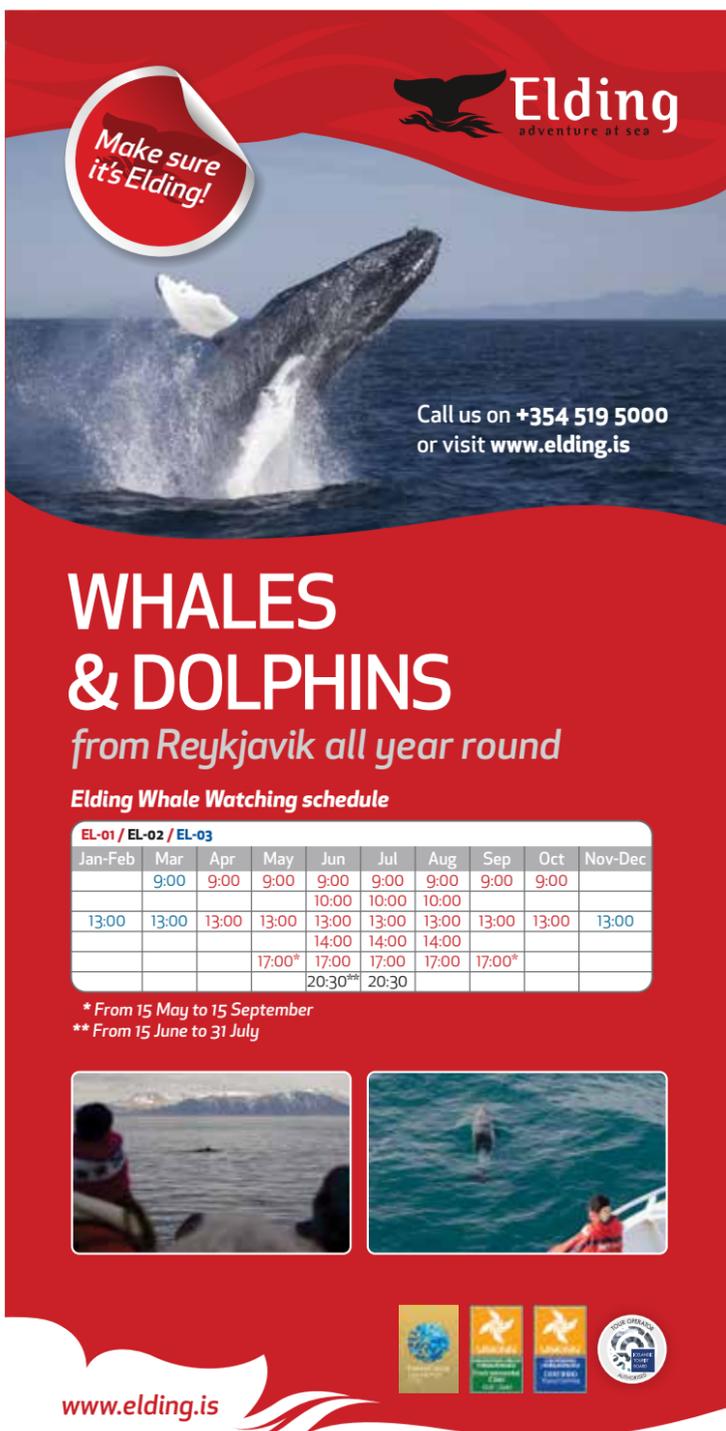
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			17:00*	14:00	14:00	14:00			
				17:00	17:00	17:00	17:00*		
				20:30**	20:30				

\* From 15 May to 15 September  
\*\* From 15 June to 31 July



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INTERVIEW

# The Legs Show

Dancer and choreographer  
Brian Gerke on Emotional

DANCE  
PREVIEW

**Words**  
Grayson Del Faro

**Photo**  
GOLLI

Brian Gerke joined the Iceland Dance Company in 2012, having been teaching at Listdansskóli Íslands since 2007. Just two years later, his first solo piece of choreography has premiered as one half of a show called 'Emotional'. It is a double-feature show comprised of Brian's performance, 'Meadow', accompanied by 'EMO1994', a piece by Norwegian choreographer Ole Martin Meland. Sitting in the small cafeteria behind the scenes at Borgarleikhúsið, Brian walked me along the long road he took in choreographing 'Meadow' and dancing in 'EMO1994'.

### Dancers: assemble!

"Generally, I just love dance," he begins. "I mean dancey dance, like kicking, turning, spinning, physical, sweaty, virtuosic dance. So I wanted to make a piece that I would want to be in and that showed what these dancers could do."

But it wasn't easy at first. "When I joined the company, I had an identity crisis because everyone else was so talented and original—I saw everything they could do that I couldn't," he says. "It took a full year of me breaking down and trying to quit before I realized: I too am unique. I shouldn't try to be them, I should let them be them and let me be me."

"Which is where I came up with this: we're like X-Men," he exclaims. Here, we both lean in excitedly, Americans geeking out a little about comics. "We have Storm and Wolverine and Nightcrawler and Shadowcat and all of that. But no one has all the powers. Each is different. So I thought it's so strange to practice ballet every day, trying to be the same, when really, the majestic part of ourselves is our uniqueness."

This was the birth of the piece's working title: 'Imperfect Instrument'. "None of us are perfect and we are instruments when we're tools for choreography," he explains, adding that he doesn't believe in perfection to have a negative connotation. "It just means 'unique.'"

### Finding the meadow

So he started small. "I wanted to make an abstract dance for these amazing performers. If it was all about the movement, I didn't want to do tricks or rely on coolness. I wanted to do something simple, maybe a bit naïve."

He was visiting his hometown of Missoula, Montana when the work really became 'Meadow'. "Walking through a super dense forest, you can turn and suddenly come upon a lake or a meadow. I know it's such a hippie-dippy word, but that sensation is just 'magical,' like a freaking Disney film. Like Alice in Wonderland and all the weird animals that live there."

So he had stumbled into a setting, but who he found there was still a mystery. "I was working with 'Imperfect Instrument' and 'Meadow'," he says. "I wasn't sure yet if they were X-Men, or mythological creatures that don't exist, or what. But I had the inspiration for the movement: the creature, the animal, the superhero. From there, it started to roll."

### Something "queer"

That explains the intended subject, but he discovered another along the way. Both dances challenge, as he says, "one topic of heteronormative dance." That is, gender. "And in the most obvious ways," he explains. "The men are wearing makeup

and I've asked them to shave—I was going for androgynous."

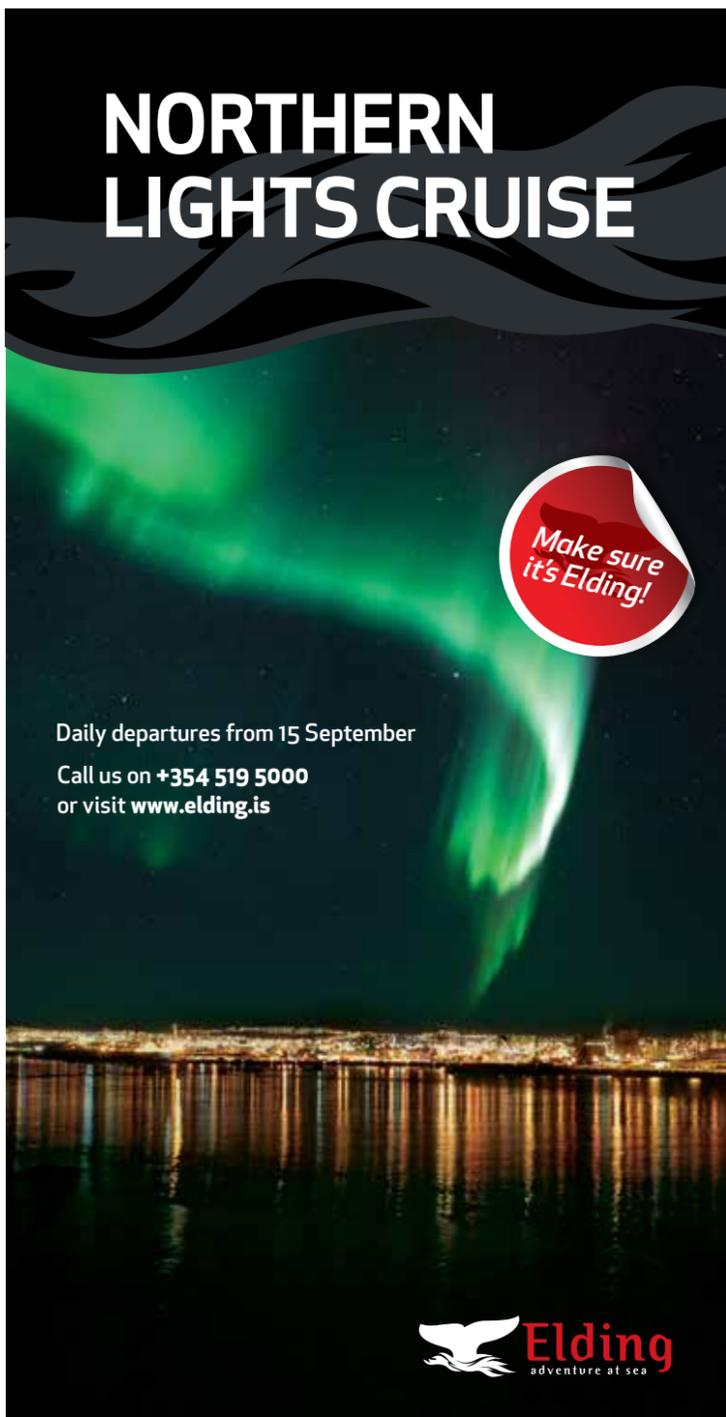
So was Ole. Brian describes his dance solo in 'EMO1994': "To use Ole's word, there's something 'queer' about my solo at the end. I'm hooded in this puffy thing that deforms my body but so are the girls. I'm wearing red lipstick and my midriff is bare, but the movement isn't feminine." He pauses here, adding, "At least it doesn't read that way because it's also quite violent."

### The legs show

It's not just the costumes that work with androgyny, but the choreography as well. He feels that traditional gender roles, "even in contemporary narrative dance, are a waste of talent." Female dancers have too much skill to be treated only like small, delicate beings to be flung about, while male dancers simply "lift and gesture, lift and gesture. We were not doing that. The only lifts in the entire show are a woman lifting a woman," he points out.

"We often joked that this was 'The Legs Show' because both pieces have lots of legs," he admits with a laugh. "Even the concept of legs, like 'gams,' is feminized. But there is power in them also, with women, and the men move just as subtly. Not all things are just one thing, or even two things." This concept runs palpably through the entirety of 'Emotional'.

"I would love to continue working in that way," he says, concluding, "I think it's just much more interesting to see that."



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# Dancing To The Heartbeat

Hlynur Páll Pálsson discusses the Reykjavík Dance Festival

DANCE  
PREVIEW



INTERVIEW

Words  
Grayson Del Faro

Photo  
GOLLI

The Reykjavík Dance Festival has changed nearly as much as the art of dance itself in its twelve years of existence. But a change of directors and board members this spring has brought on much more drastic changes to its scope and concept for coming years. In conversation with the Grapevine, managing director Hlynur Páll Pálsson explained how.

## Creating a pulse

When the concept began, there was not a dance program at Iceland Academy of Arts, or many independent dance companies. Hlynur says that RDF's beginnings were "basically a grassroots thing: people making a festival for themselves to show their works in Iceland." It took off from there. "It's been growing in the past twelve years, almost exponentially. Both in audience number and in the amount of works shown."

Hlynur is no stranger to performance. Working for years as a stage and production manager at Borgarleikhúsið, he stepped into his directorship at RDF in April, alongside new creative directors Alexander Roberts and Ásgerður G. Gunnarsdóttir. "We felt the August festival had become as big as it could get," he said, "we wanted to expand into four festivals instead."

Rather than one ten-day festival in August, they planned two larger festivals in May and August, with shorter festivals in November and February to keep dance in the city's consciousness more regularly. "Before, everyone came together only once a year," he explains. "We wanted to create a pulse, like a heartbeat of the dance scene."

**"That's what art is: challenging normality. We're fans of taking normal things and twisting them around to get people to rethink them and reshape themselves."**

## Queering the popular

Each incarnation has a different concept. August's focused entirely on works by Icelanders. "Queering the popular" is the concept November's performances will tackle.

"Pop culture is continually citing itself, creating itself, and redesigning its identity," Hlynur says. "That's what art is: challenging normality. We're fans of taking normal things and twisting them around to get people to rethink them and reshape themselves." Using the Icelandic word "snertiflötur," or "touch point," he explains that each piece either explicitly or subtly touches on the nebulous topic of pop culture.

In addition to challenging concepts of pop culture in the upcoming festival, RDF has always been pushing the limits of the art form of dance. The new schedule reflects this. There's "danceoke," where music videos with iconic dances are played and people attempt to dance along. There's a "heated debate" where both dancers and audiences are invited to swim together and discuss dance in the hot tubs at Sundhöll Reykjavíkur. There are also events that bring dance to radio and film.

One event features particularly unique performances by the lead singers of three iconic Icelandic bands: Unnsteinn of Retro Stefson, Kata of Mammút, and Gunnar of

Grísalappalísa. Choreographers Alexander Roberts and Ásrún Magnúsdóttir have studied the musicians' live performances and choreographed dances for them to perform based on their own stage presences. Hlynur elaborates: "What they do onstage with the bands is a dance. But now it's being focused into a solo with no band—just them, moving."

## You don't have to be drunk to dance

"Where does dance end and the other arts begin?" he asks me. "We're continually trying to figure out what this thing that we enjoy watching and doing really is. Because RDF is not only about watching dance, it's also about getting people to dance." In August, one event took place in the homes of dancer Ásrún and her neighbours. In the middle of the day, each played their favourite music and opened their doors to strangers to come and dance with them.

"People are realizing that you don't have to be drunk to dance," Hlynur says. Because Reykjavík Dance Festival is not necessarily about the brain. Alongside the "heartbeat" of four festivals per year, this is why the brochures for their August festival centred on the design of a human heart. "You're not trying to understand stuff," he says. "You're just taking it in, the emotions or the beauty or the ugliness or whatever you see."

"Of course it can get you thinking," he adds, "but to us, it's also about the heart."

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## Westfjords

**How to get there:** If you're driving, take road 1 North, turn onto road 60, and then again onto road 61 until you get to Ísafjörður (use a map, follow directions, watch out for weather conditions). You can also fly directly from Reykjavík via Air Iceland: book your tickets online at [www.flugfelag.is](http://www.flugfelag.is).

**Words** Melissa Coci

**Photos** Anna Domnick

When I set off on a Westfjords adventure in early November, I never expected it to be such an educational experience. But, it was. What I learned was the utter futility of trying to defy the elements, how one must sometimes just surrender to the environment. City slickers heading to the Westfjords in wintertime, heed this warning: you are not in control. The forces of nature are. And that's fine.

# Winter Westfjords And The Art Of Zen

Learning to lose control on the outskirts of Iceland...



When it comes to tourism, November is definitely the off-season for the northern Westfjords, just a few skips from Greenland. Some might say this is for good reason. Up there, the weather gods rule. And boy do they love winter. Luckily, the idea of not having to worry about crowds or being cajoled into some kind of adventure hike by a well-meaning friend appeals to me greatly. It was with this attitude that I eagerly made a list of "must-dos" in the region and packed my warmest of jackets for a relaxed, fun-filled three-day trip, free from touristic

trappings.

After showing my planned itinerary to a friend who grew up in Ísafjörður, the region's capital, he filled me in on what would become the theme of the trip: in the Westfjords, you have to be flexible, you have to go with the flow. Without much warning, the weather can ground flights, close roads, cut off electricity and render any plan or schedule useless. And there is simply no point in getting worked up over this. You need to take it as it comes, and try to enjoy the ride.

**Condoms, guitar amps, ice cream**

The nature of the beast became apparent before Grapevine photographer Anna and I even made it up there. A scheduled Friday morning flight to Ísafjörður was cancelled due to snowfall and wild winds. There would be no flights that day. By Saturday morning, we'd grudgingly accepted that the trip wasn't going to happen, resigning ourselves to yet another day of coffee and pools in Reykjavík. At midday, however, the airline announced that our flight would depart in an hour. The un-

predictability of the area had already hit me—and I was hooked.

The first view of the fjords as our plane made its descent had me quite literally gasping. As the clouds parted, we were greeted with pristine waters, black sands, snowy mountains, and even a rainbow. The kindness of every local we encountered once in town would prove just as shockingly pleasant. The stage was set as soon as we landed, when an airport employee moonlighting as a car rental agent (in true Icelandic fashion) offered to drive to his house to lend me his phone char-

ger. This sort of behaviour would repeat itself throughout the weekend, the locals constantly going out of their way to be as helpful as possible.

As we approached the town of Ísafjörður proper, we were struck by the natural beauty in which it sits—inlets, mountains and an almost ominous number of ravens. After an extended period of time just standing around and gawking at Mother Nature's majesty, hunger eventually got us moving, so we headed to Hamraborg, widely regarded as "Iceland's best kiosk."

AIR ICELAND  
FLUGFÉLAG ÍSLANDS



EXPLORING ICELAND,  
THE FAROE ISLANDS OR GREENLAND  
IT'S EASY WITH AIR ICELAND



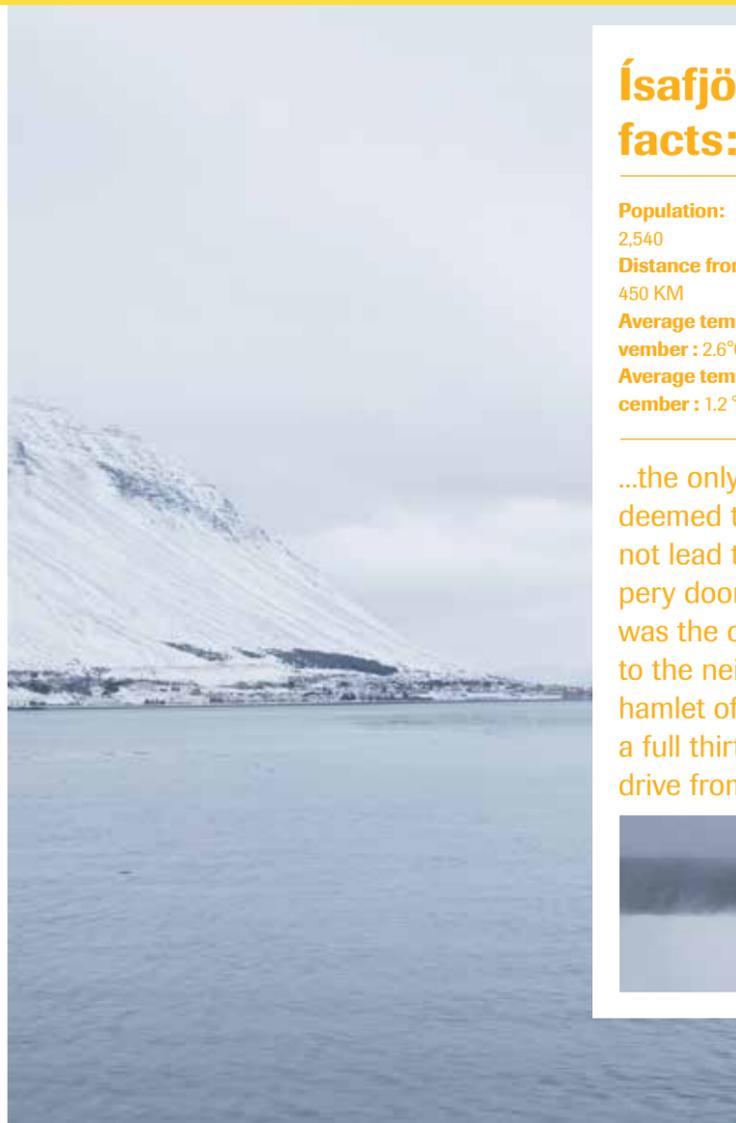
Distance from Reykjavík  
Around 450 km



## Ísafjörður facts:

**Population:**  
2,540  
**Distance from Reykjavík:**  
450 KM  
**Average temperature in November:** 2.6°C to -1.3°C  
**Average temperature in December:** 1.2°C to -3.1°C

...the only road deemed to be in “will not lead to your slippery doom” conditions was the one that lead to the neighbouring hamlet of Bolungarvík, a full thirteen-minute drive from Ísafjörður.



Entering the shop-cum-restaurant was an assault on the senses. On that rainy Saturday afternoon, it felt like half the town had gathered in there under the watchful yet friendly gaze of proprietor Úlfur Þór Úlfarsson. Hamraborg is truly stuffed with stuff, offering most everything one could ever want or need in a town like Ísafjörður: from Fender guitar amps and flavoured condoms, to milk, beer and various electronics. While the fast food we enjoyed there was firmly up to the greasy standards of its category, the ice cream was truly next level. You should try some,

if you ever have the chance.

### Feasting on face

Hyped up on sugar, we were determined to explore the town and its surroundings. Of course, the weather had the final say. A quick visit to the Icelandic Road and Coastal Administration’s absolutely crucial website, [www.vegagerdin.is](http://www.vegagerdin.is), revealed that the only road deemed to be in “will not lead to your slippery doom” conditions was the one that lead to the neighbouring hamlet of Bolungarvík, a full thirteen-minute drive

from Ísafjörður. Opting to explore more Ísafjörður instead of risking a drive, we wandered through town as the sun went down.

Perhaps we took that whole going-with-the-flow idea too far that night when we accepted an invitation from Ísafjörður Mayor Gísli Halldór Halldórsson to attend the local Kiwanis charter’s annual “svið feast” (“svið” are seared sheep heads). The event was a quintessential example of Icelandic hospitality. The hosts, particularly club president Gunnlaugur Gunnlaugsson, went out of their way to make us feel welcome. I was gifted an expensive bottle of red wine, simply for being a visiting “British journalist” (close enough). Even the puffin hunter guy we

sat next to seemed kind enough, despite constantly boasting of how many puffins he’d killed throughout his career.

Goaded on by our hosts’ warmth and jovial nature, we had no choice but to partake in the heaping platters of seared sheep heads on offer, getting a first taste of this local delicacy. The verdict: quite good, if you can look past the fact that you’re basically eating a face.

### Winter wonderland

The next day, I woke up to find Ísafjörður had turned into a twinkling winter wonderland. Instead of getting worked up over the fact that our plan to explore the furthest ranges of the region (via our trusty rental car) was doomed, we serenely ac-

cepted our fate, opting to go along with whatever the day might bring.

In the end, our trusty pals at [www.vegagerdin.is](http://www.vegagerdin.is) made our decision easy. The only roads safe to drive (particularly for outsiders who are not at all used to local conditions) were the ones to the neighbouring towns of Flateyri and Súðavík. While this wiped out half of our planned itinerary, having but a few simple destination options to choose from was kind of nice for a change.

The drive to Súðavík, while a little slippery, was absolutely stunning. This is no hyperbole: the fjords came off as majestic beings transported from Antarctica, leaving us in awe of the power of nature. While Súðavík’s main attraction, the Arctic Fox Centre, was closed (surprise, surprise), we got our fix of the local fauna from the delightful sheep we encountered while there. They serenely dug through the snow to eat the grass below, unfazed by the frigid conditions and the crashing waves of the ocean beside them. It served to underline nature’s way of adapting to challenges, rather than fighting them, which is something many humans might take to heart. Bearing that in mind, I managed to not throw a tantrum when we learned that the road to Flateyri had become too treacherous to travel just as we were making our way there.

### On the road

On our third and last day, the blankets of snow had melted away. The universe had rewarded our patience with a pink sunrise (Thanks Holuhraun!) over beautiful mountains, with a smattering of clouds rendering the fjord’s inlet a deep blue. The roads finally clear and safe, we immediately drove off.

As we made our way through the fjords that make up the Ísafjarðardjúp fjord—Álftafjörður, Seyðisfjörður, Skötufjörður, Hestfjörður and Mjóifjörður—we became increasingly exhilarated by the surroundings we traversed, mouths often agape for minutes at a time. Further adding to our sense of wonder was how quickly the weather and road conditions had turned around, the stark contrast highlighting the adaptability of the region (and the adapt-

ability it demands of its denizens).

### I’ll be back

The highlights of our Westfjords trip occurred right at the end of it. After passing a small pod of wild seals en route, we arrived at Heydalur valley, nestled in the fjord of Mjóifjörður. The valley is home to an adorable, family-run guesthouse and restaurant that both come highly recommended by those in the know. Resisting the urge to book a night at the guesthouse and explore the area properly (our flight to Reykjavík was regrettably only a couple of hours away), we opted for lunch at the restaurant. And what a delight that was! After slurping down some hearty (and affordable!) soup made by the friendly Stella, I was sorely tempted to order one of everything on the menu. And vegetarians rejoice, one of Heydalur’s employees, Elíse, is a vegetarian, ensuring plenty of veg-friendly menu options. She is also happy to answer any questions you may have about the resident cockatoo, dog and rehabilitated arctic foxes they regularly host at Heydalur. Leaving the resort behind to catch our flight proved incredibly difficult—with two pools, friendly pets and a plethora of wintertime activities to get up to, Heydalur is clearly a great stop-over in the Westfjords.

Even though it nearly gave my time-conscious friend a heart attack, I couldn’t resist a quick dip at Hörgshlíðarlaug, one of the many natural pools the Westfjords has to offer. While enjoying a soothing bathe, and gazing out at the snow flecked mountains and calm fjord, I firmly decided that I would be back. Sooner than later.

Considering it was the region’s off-season, there was still so much to see, even if most of it was covered in snow. Unlike most of Iceland, the winter season here has yet to be invaded by hordes of tourists, and it likely never will be. But for the adventurous, for those willing to be flexible and give up the human folly of needing to feel in control at all times, the Westfjords in winter is an excellent getaway.



Check it out!

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**The Adrenaline Park**

**How to get there:** Adrenalíngarðurinn is 40 km out of Reykjavík, and is open all year round. You can book tickets at [www.adrelin.is](http://www.adrelin.is), or by calling (+354) 414-2910.

**Distance from Reykjavík**  
Around 40 km



# Wrestling With Your Own Fear



At the Adrenaline Park, we overcome

**Words** Tómas Gabríel Benjamín

**Photos** Matthew Eisman

I can feel the sun shining gently on my skin, hear a stream of warm water flowing from the nearby Nesjavallavirkjun geothermal power station, and see the big and majestic lake Þingvallavatn spread before me. I think to myself: “I would really appreciate this scenery, were I not elevated ten metres from the ground.”

Adrenalíngarðurinn (“The Adrenaline Park”) is an amusement park for adults: an obstacle course that offers 45 obstacles on three levels for those willing to step outside of their comfort zone. I chose to go straight up to the top floor, because I wanted the “authentic experience.” Of course, I was kicking myself over my decision as I hesitantly began crossing the first obstacle, a rope bridge with two out of every three steps missing.

I told myself I was waiting for our photographer, Matt, to get into a good position for a shot. In reality, I was mostly just second-guessing whether I had clipped in my safety line properly.

When Matt finally makes it up, I curse under my breath and think that the park’s name is a misnomer, as the only thing I’m feeling is an overwhelming sense of dread. What if I fall and my harness works, but I end up snapping my neck? What if?

### Paralysis of analysis

Our instructor, Sölvi Þór Jónasson, had carefully led us through all the park’s safety precautions and shown us how to clip our harnesses correctly, so that if we were to fall, we wouldn’t plummet to our death.

Testing the system a half metre from the ground, it all seemed easy and safe, even though I’d heard of people in the past getting injured. I came mentally prepared to leap, run and climb through the course, but standing on the platform I found the real obstacle was my own fear.

Having run out of excuses, I take the first step and feel the whole bridge move terrifyingly from side to side as I put my weight on it. I clutch onto the railing, and experience something akin to vertigo as I look down below.

And then, when I leave the safety of the platform and take the second step, the fear recedes. I feel the bridge sway, but it’s not as distressing. With each step the fear lessens, and when I reach the next platform, I feel an endorphin rush. I had conquered the first trial, and perhaps more importantly, a part of myself that I hadn’t known existed.

And then I see the next obstacles, a series of small wooden blocks suspended through the middle. How can they support my weight? Are my legs long enough to reach from one pad to the next? What if I fall? What if this line isn’t strong enough and I plummet to my death? What if...

### Clip in and keep moving

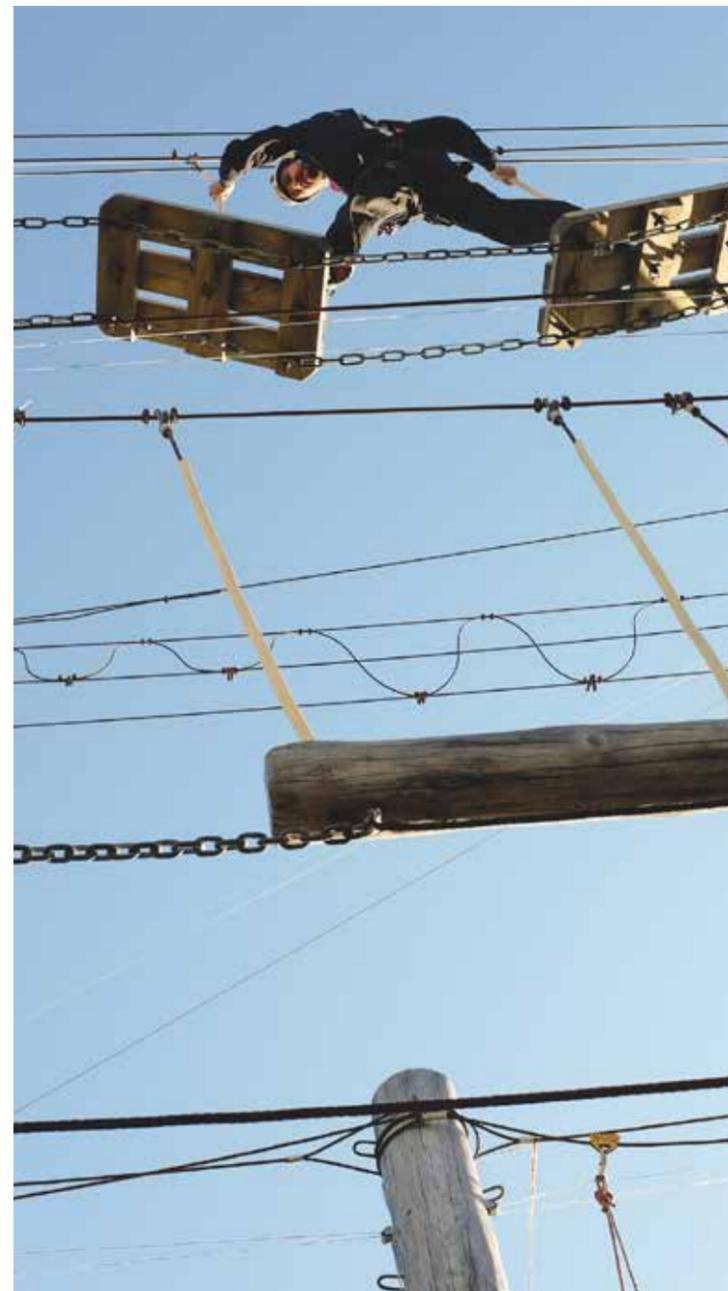
Each obstacle invites the same thought process: fear as I overanalyse the problem, then relief when I just get on with it. I venture through a bridge made out of rope hoops and suspended wooden beams, cross a tightrope with steady rings every few steps, and traverse over a slippery-looking wooden log, facing each challenge with more confidence, until they just become playful tests of agility.

For the most part, Sölvi sits back on the ground level, sipping his hot chocolate, watching our group calmly, as a parent would its children at the playground. At the end of it, he tells us they get a lot of company outings, school trips, and stag and hen dos, but that he’s only ever had to climb up and save one person that got stuck. “It’s not any more complicated than moving forward and pulling yourself up when you fall,” he says.

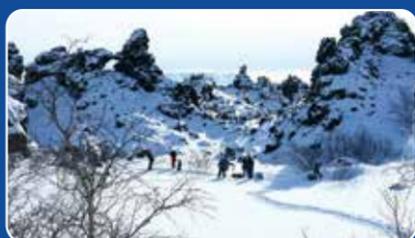
My fearful past-self wished he had told us that before we started.

## INFO

Adrenalíngarðurinn features a variety of obstacles, including numerous kinds of rope bridges of varying difficulties, a swing that starts twelve metres from the ground, a climbing wall, a zip line, and a slackline. The course takes an estimated three hours to complete. Tickets go for 6,900 ISK.



# LAKE MÝVATN WINTER TOUR



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Continues from P.06

the psalm poet, “most would rather not think through” was then in fact answered in action: When police officers found themselves in this frightening position, protesters themselves formed a human shield around them, to protect them from any rocks that might be thrown. That frantic mob.

That is not to say that, back in 2009, no one meant to frighten authorities. The clear intention of the whole movement was to demonstrate that the people would not tolerate a government accepting no responsibility for lies, corruption, failed plans, a failed ideology, and predictably dire consequences. We are all still living out the consequences of the economic crash. We will for a while.

That winter, however, for weeks upon weeks, every single can of skyr and raw egg hurled at the house of Alþingi was a logical demonstration of the peaceful means employed to demand change: I am not a stone, every commodity shouted as it flew. I could be a stone, I am angry enough to be a stone, and I am right enough to be a stone, and still I am not. This has been called a revolution. It was not, but it was an effective uprising. The skyr really scared them.

There is, however, more than one side to fear. Our current dilemma mirrors the third stage in the familiar sequence of responses to fear: First authorities froze, then they fled. Now they want to fight.

November 9

A conservative’s mojo lies in easily equalling their own preservation with the preservation of civilization as such: the preservation of actual and innocent people leading their honest, peaceful and prosperous lives, against a nameless, unholy and frantic mob, ready to harm those creatures of delight at any opportunity. The Left. Morgunblaðið provides this worldview. In spades. It is too coherent and too self-assured to ignore. The editor speaks on behalf of those in power, only a little more freely than they do, now that he doesn’t share their responsibilities.

If Iceland had not already accepted a chronic state of cognitive dissonance as its predicament, Davíð Oddsson and his opinions would have no currency today. When the country’s wealthiest woman bought Morgunblaðið at a post-crash discount from a nationalized—that is, publicly owned—bank, and handed the reigns to Davíð, not every reader cancelled their subscription. Hardcore Independence Party members remain. Morgunblaðið is their mouthpiece.

Obviously, Morgunblaðið’s editorial is factually wrong. It is also politically wrong, and not in the traditional sense.

Davíð Oddsson used to consider himself liberal. He now expresses a desire for the state to be invincible. Only failed states harbour such desires. Such states have come and gone.

There was one in Germany a while back. It had more in common with Iceland than data collection and police surveillance of people’s political views. This coming Sunday, the West will celebrate November 9 as the 25th anniversary of a rebellion against the authority of concrete slabs known as the Berlin Wall. That wall was supposed to defend the State’s integrity and good intentions against dissidents.

Incidentally, November 9 is also the day of the above-mentioned Gúttólfur. This coming Sunday marks its 82nd anniversary. That day, the workers won. Then, they went home. No one was killed. Subsequently, the workers’ demands were met. Wages were not reduced, as had been proposed. That was good. As Jón Baldvinsson, socialist and member of Alþingi in 1932, noted after the fight, there is nothing wrong about the police being defeated every now and then.

It happened again January 21, 2009. That was not merely good, it was necessary. A state by the people and for the people cannot be armed to the teeth against the people. A state that aims at invincibility against its own population, and will tolerate protests only as long as they are sure not to achieve anything, is not, fundamentally, a democratic state, but a fascist one.

Return the guns.

Continues from P.10

could take up to twelve months to heal. After being treated for his immediate wounds, Chaplas says he was made to wait in a holding cell until morning, before being released without charge.

Getting a helping hand

His long-term friend, Lillý Mikaela Hreinsdóttir Miðfjörð, came over to pick him up and describes over the phone how she had never seen Chaplas in such a broken-down state. “He was just sitting there, wearing nothing but his boxers and a t-shirt, covered in his own blood,” she says.

Lillý says she noted a radical change in Chaplas’s behaviour over the following weeks—an easy-going person by nature, he was noticeably afraid of being around strangers according to her. Indeed, he initially refused to meet me for the interview without having Lillý present.

The physical injuries have made it difficult for Chaplas to go anywhere by himself. “I drive him to the doctors, his lawyer, and anywhere else he has to go,” she says. “He’s now completely dependent on the goodwill of others.”

Rendered unable to earn a living through collecting recyclables, Chaplas now gets his food from the Fjölskylduhjálpi (“Family Aid”) food bank. Lillý says she tries to help him with other financial needs, but admits that as a mother of four, there’s not much she can do.

Admitting fault

Two weeks after my meeting with Chaplas, Hörður Jóhannesson from the office of the National Commissioner of the Icelandic Police agrees to answer my questions over email. He says that an internal investigation determined that Chaplas’s injuries were the result of a communication failure; that the police assume full responsibility for Chaplas’s injuries and are currently working on an out-of-court settlement with his lawyer.

Hörður says that the accidental stabbing was a result of two officers

not conveying their intentions clearly enough, as one went to fetch prongs to cut the plastic straps, while another proceeded to use a knife, to the aforementioned effect. Following this, an internal memo has been passed to every officer, asserting that correct protocol for removing plastic straps bars the use of a knife.

Hörður tells me that the investigation revealed that Chaplas had indeed asked to speak with a lawyer when he was detained. The officers’ failure to abide his wishes was the result of misunderstanding or mistake, says Hörður, further hypothesising that after the injury occurred, normal procedure went out the window.

Hörður asserts that Chaplas was informed that he was being arrested for staying illegally in the country, and that police had been searching for him since July. Chaplas’s heated reactions then set in motion the chain of events that followed.

However, the officers involved have not been punished for the incident. “We’ve gone over the matter with the staff in question,” he says, “and as far as I know they won’t face any further consequences.” He added that the police will answer for what happened, but not through the media, as the case is still on-going.

Over email, lawyer Þórsteinn Gunnarsson, a division manager at the Icelandic Directorate of Immigration, said he couldn’t comment on individual cases, but noted that the directorate only asked police to deliver a notice to individuals that have overstayed their stay, not to arrest them. Those notified generally have 5-30 days to leave the country before being deported, although extenuating circumstances may warrant an extension.

Currently, Chaplas and his lawyer, Hreiðar Eiríksson, are in the process of negotiating with the police. “If a settlement can’t be reached, we’ll have to take the matter to the courts,” Hreiðar tells me over the phone.

Hreiðar adds that the police has yet to provide him with a reason for Chaplas’s arrest, and brings into question whether restraining him was necessary to hand him a simple letter. He was unwilling to comment on whether he

thinks Chaplas may have been treated differently because of his skin colour and nationality. However, his friend Lillý was not so modest, claiming that many foreigners are systematically discriminated against in Iceland.

“Chaplas has been met with a lot of hostility, and I know of many other cases where the police have arrested black people without any justification,” she says. “Even though many people would like to believe otherwise, we live in an incredibly racist society.”

An uncertain conclusion

Almost three weeks after initially meeting Chaplas, I visit him again with our photographer. He’s starting to be able to walk short distances without a crutch, and looks healthier, but conveys to me that many still don’t believe what happened to him. “People say that they can’t believe the police would cut and hurt me,” he confides, “but I want everyone to understand what is going on.”

While he waits to see if he’ll get his day in court, the facts of the matter—“the known knowns,” to quote Rumsfeld—tell a pretty compelling story: a man is arrested, protocol is breached, his human rights are not respected, and in addition to his reputation being tarnished, he suffers physically and emotionally at the hands of the police.

If we take the fiasco at face value, as a series of unintentional accidents, it goes to show that there are not enough checks in place to protect citizens’ rights, which is troubling news if the police are indeed getting unprecedented access to firepower in the near future (see more on that on page six).

This foul-up confirms that police mistakes can have dire results, as is apparent from Chaplas’s limp. Hopefully some good can come from this unfortunate series of events, if the police indeed use the opportunity to revise their procedures and learn from their mistakes.



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# Gothic Wolffish Cheeks in JaJaJaland

Emiliana Torrini and Chef Antto Melasniemi (formerly of HIM) made us dinner

**Words**

Ragnar Egilsson

**Photos**

Axel Sigurðarson

A relentlessly cheerful Icelandic pop musician and a brooding Finnish wunderkind of the Nordic food scene (and former keyboardist for goth rock band HIM) traverse Iceland to source ingredients for an intimate banquet in a nondescript apartment to promote a music festival in London.



The festival is called JaJaJa, a pan-Nordic music festival featuring the best and the brightest of the Nordic music scene, held November 13-15 in London's Mile End. The festival will culminate in a Nordic food feast sprung from the loins of chef Antto Melasniemi and singer Emiliana Torrini, a feast conceived on an Icelandic road trip and given a trial run in an apartment in Grandi. For that trial run, we were there.

**Dish 1: Fried Wolffish Cheeks**

A Reykjavík photographer had graciously leased his Grandi digs for this odd event: a tastefully gothic apartment with an unbelievable view, looking a little like the showroom of an upscale Scandi furniture store. Antiques and curios lined blackened walls and Norwegian kelp laced over the dinner table like bubble wrap. Outside, the grill was flaring up menacingly, trying to look tough in the face of the gale ripping through the balcony from the North Atlantic.

Emiliana Torrini greeted us with a crowberry, lemon and prosecco apéritif from her arsenal of 64° Reykjavík Distillery liqueurs. She is the daughter of an Italian restaurateur operating out of Iceland and is, herself, an enthusiastic epicure. As well, she's an engaging storyteller and impossibly warm, whether it's on the topic of restaurant farting or tour bus mania. Oh yes, and she's also a critically and commercially successful songwriter who co-wrote a Kylie Minogue hit and sang the main theme for 'Lord of the Rings: The Two Towers'.

Behind the counter, Chef Antto is fry-

ing up cod cheeks with chive hollandaise. Antto is a large man, and he would have to be, since he seems to be filled with every Finnish stereotype I could think of. Stern of face, sparing of words, hung of overs, choleric of melans, and brandishing a sharp knife (the archetypical Finn is essentially an Icelander with a knife).

**Dish 2: Lambface and pickled red cabbage in flapjacks**

As Antto's hangover receded, from behind the tummia pilviä emerged a wry charm and playful intellect. Unsurprisingly, as Antto has masterminded some truly bizarre dining projects. Such as the Solar Kitchen project, a pop-up restaurant travelling from green fields to car parks while relying entirely on solar energy, and "The Trojan Bar," a wooden box which folds out into a fully equipped, transportable bar.

"With Solar Kitchen," Antto tells me, "the idea was to build a restaurant completely controlled by nature. Usually it's chefs trying to control all the elements and playing God.

I liked the risk of not knowing if I would be able to serve hot food. I am a bit chaotic by

nature. I like to leave it up to nature. Maybe also because I'm a bit lazy. It's freeing, you just go with the flow. It's almost like a religion."

**Dish 3: Langoustine with fennel and sautéed rye bread**

On the topic of his "Hel Yes" pop up restaurant events, held in a church in Stockholm, Antto says: "It was very performative, it was an experimental social gathering more than a restaurant. I know it sounds a bit iffy, but it was good. No mercy of just observing."

"I liked the risk of not knowing if I would be able to serve hot food. I am a bit chaotic by nature. I like to leave it up to nature. Maybe also because I'm a bit lazy. It's freeing, you just go with the flow."



I found I'm actually quite interested in all this stuff."

"I went to work in Paris, London, Amsterdam. In London I worked at a place which was a hellhole. A huge place, with mice and cockroaches running around and if you left your knife to go to the toilet someone would steal it. Very old, very cruel atmosphere. It was like a haunted pirate ship."

Emiliana chimes in, "I can't stand kitchens like that. I was in a really fancy hotel in Wales, really pregnant, and all I could hear was the chef going all: 'You fucking what?! This is my name on the door!' I was worried he would die of a heart attack. And all the posh people were trying to quietly ignore it but because I was so pregnant I let out a massive fart in the middle of the room. And then I launched into a crazy laughing fit."

**Dish 4: Grilled lamb hearts with a potato-and-sardines gratin**

It's understandable, being a chef is no easy job, all fourteen-hour shifts in windowless rooms. A bit like being a musician, I suggest to Emiliana. "Yes, but we get breaks in between. However, when you tour for a long time you create your own laws, your own world. You are like a country onto yourself. And everyone goes mad at some point. You end up completely dysfunctional and disconnected, even if you are wearing a smile on your face."

Antto feels similarly disconnected with the new Nordic movement in most ways. Antto seems to aim for something less pretentious and decidedly less transformative of ingredients.

Emiliana seems to share this approach. "There's so much demand on people now. They want you be making food made from comet dust, or Kate Moss sweat ice cream." Antto: "I would actually love to do a dish from Kate Moss's sweat."

**Dish 5: A liquorice crème brûlée**

Antto is not obsessed with sourcing the rarest of rare ingredients or using his skills to make them unrecognisable, but he is certainly inventive and enamoured with the marriage of food and design.

I suggest to Antto there is an element of synesthesia in his approach. "For me, it's very natural to think of taste as music. I often think of sharp flavours as high notes and middle notes as sweet. You can compose it like that in your mind."

"In my case, I always blend images with sound. When I'm recording I have to record until it conforms to the image that I've built in my mind, the music has to layer over the image like a film," Emiliana adds.

And with that we get to the final course. One of the more pleasantly strange things I've tried this year. It is a taste-bud bewildering dulce cream pudding, not overly sweet or flavourful, just this lingering, savoury, oceanic, ashy dulce flavour in the creamy depths.

With a few deft touches, Antto and Emiliana have put a clever twist on all the regional mainstays they had gathered—and you too can be a part of that if you join the JaJaJa festivities in London.

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**SECONDI**

*Linguini and langoustine in chili and garlic*

**DOLCI**

*Tiramisu*

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# November at Húrra



- 10. Monday night jazz 20:00 free entry
- 11. Arnljótur & Fu Kaisha 20:00 1.000 ISK DJ Ravenator
- 12. VAR 20:00 1.000 ISK DJ Einar Sonic
- 13. Oyama album release show 21:00 DJ Sunna Ben
- 14. Pétur Ben & Snorri Helgason 22:00 1.500 ISK DJ KGB
- 15. DJ Óli Dóri
- 16. Lowercase Night 21:00 free entry



- 17. Monday night jazz 20:00 free entry
- 18. Dance-ioki 20:00 free entry DJ Styrmir Dansson
- 19. Kippi Kaninus 20:00 1.000 ISK DJ Station Helgi
- 20. Trevor Gordon Hall og Tyler Ludwick 20:00 1.000 ISK DJ Ernir
- 21. Mammút 22:00 1.500 ISK DJ Simon FKNHNDISM
- 22. Hí á Húrra: Stand-up comedy night 21:00 1.500 ISK  
DJ B-Ruff og Logi Pedro
- 23. Doomriders & Kontinuum 21:00 2.500 ISK



- 24. Monday night jazz 20:00 free entry
- 25. Nýdönsk 21:00 DJ Ísar Logi
- 26. Mr. Silla & Cryptochrome 21:00 1.500 ISK DJ Robot Disco
- 27. DJ Ívar Pétur
- 28. Pink Street Boys 22:00 DJ Styrmir Dansson
- 29. Jónas Sig & Ritvélar Framtíðarinnar  
DJ Gullfoss og Geysir
- 30. Lowercase Night 21:00 free entry



L E M Ú R I N N

# A Spaceship In Iceland!

## Words

Lemúrinn

## Photos

US National Archives and Records Administration

A specially prepared Boeing 747 NASA aircraft landed at Keflavík Airport in May of 1983. This would probably not have made any headlines, had the plane not been carrying the NASA space shuttle 'Enterprise' on its back.

This strange flying object passed over Reykjavík before landing at Keflavík, which at the time was, of course, still the US Navy base NASKEF. The aircraft and its cargo were in Iceland for a fuel stop on their way to Paris, to attend an air show. The 'Enterprise' was the first ever space shuttle and was used for test flights in the atmosphere, aided by this modified 747 jet.

**The following is from an article published in the newspaper DV at the time.**

*Tens of thousands of people watched the American Space Shuttle 'Enterprise' on top of a Boeing 747 jet as it flew only 50 metres over Reykjavík airport around 20:30 last night. The peculiar conjoint pair, this gigantic colossus, was the biggest flying object most people had ever seen."*

**The Icelandic astronomy blog Stjörnufræðivefurinn offers these musings about the event:**

*Just imagine seeing 'Enterprise' in the Reykjavík sky! At the time, the Icelandic public had hardly ever seen a computer and every household used a rotary phone. The white space shuttle must have looked like something from the Star Wars Trilogy (the third one, 'Return of the Jedi', was released in theaters around this time). Back then people knew how to dream and had every reason for having those dreams. In 1983 people thought that Mars would be visited by humans after one or two decades.*

The Intrepid Sea, Air & Space Museum in New York City now showcases this first ever space shuttle.

**Enjoy the photos of this spectacular event, which were all found at NARA (US National Archives and Records Administration), [www.nara.gov](http://www.nara.gov).**

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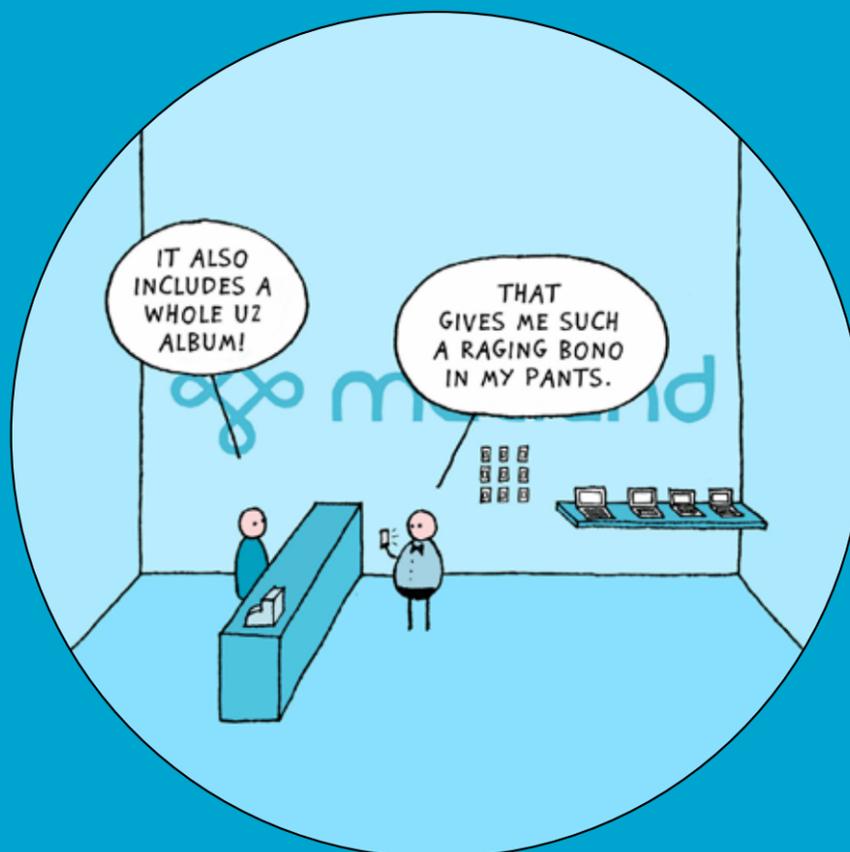
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**STUFFED WITH STUFF**

Issue 17

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P.12



*A state by the people and for the people cannot be armed to the teeth against the people. A state that aims at invincibility against its own population, and will tolerate protests only as long as they are sure not to achieve anything, is not, fundamentally, a democratic state, but a fascist one.*

**We are worried about the submachine guns, and what they might mean.**

P.16



*"The worst thing about the jólabókaflóð is that publishers are really competing with just a couple of major titles, say, the ones in the crime-fiction genre. They get engaged in a kind of hyped-up chart race, and all the press is about just those few books."*

**Bookseller Kristján Freyr, on the annual Xmas publishing frenzy!**

P.24



*It has to be said that those people who sit in a dark room dreaming up intrigue and foul murder over a hot laptop tend to be a bundle of fun when they're released into the daylight.*

**The second annual Reykjavík Noir Festival will take place November 21-22. We dug up some clues about what to expect this year.**

P.32



*"And all the posh people were trying to quietly ignore it but because I was so pregnant I let out a massive fart in the middle of the room. And then I launched into a crazy laughing fit".*

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# *The* REYKJAVÍK GRAPEVINE

# iNFO

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

Issue 17 - 2014

[www.grapevine.is](http://www.grapevine.is)

Your essential guide to life, travel and entertainment in Iceland

**4-25**  
November

## Look At The Light

A photo exhibition in KEX Hostel celebrates past Airwaves festivals.

[see inside for details](#)

Photo by Matthew Eisman



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# MUSIC

## CONCERTS & NIGHTLIFE

Nov 7 - Dec 4

How to use the listings: Venues are listed alphabetically by day. Events listed are all live performances, with troubadours and DJs specifically highlighted. For complete listings and detailed information on venues visit [listings.grapevine.is](http://listings.grapevine.is). Send us your listings to: [listings@grapevine.is](mailto:listings@grapevine.is).

### Friday November 7

- Café Haiti**  
21:30 Autonomous the trio
- Café Rosenberg**  
21:00 Marel Blues
- English Pub**  
21:00 Troubadours Andri / Hjálmar & Dagur
- Langholtskirkja**  
20:00 Fóstbræður Men's Choir: To The Light And Life
- Lebowski Bar**  
22:00 DJ Rúnar
- Paloma**  
22:00 DJ Kári
- Prikið**  
22:00 DJ Gervisykur / DELUXE
- Stúdentakjallarinn**  
21:00 Strangely and Shay

### Saturday November 8

- Café Rosenberg**  
21:00 KK & Maggi
- Frederiksen Ale House**  
15:00 DJ FreddiFriski
- Lebowski Bar**  
22:00 DJ Smutty Smiff
- Harpa**  
20:00 The Icelandic Opera: 'Don Carlo' by Giuseppe Verdi
- Háskólabíó**  
22:00 Nirvana Tribute
- Prikið**  
21:00 Sopfors / Chryptochrome / Mælginn MC / Kocoon

### Sunday November 9

- Austurbæjarbíó**  
20:00 Kópavogur Women's Choir: The Love and Life Concert
- English Pub**  
21:00 Troubadour Danni
- Hannesarholt**  
16:00 French Saxophone Performers Guido Bäumer & Aladár Rác
- Langholtskirkja**  
20:00 Fóstbræður Men's Choir: To The Light And Life
- 22:00 Fóstbræður Men's Choir: To The Light And Life
- Lebowski Bar**  
22:00 DJ Halli Einars
- Salurinn**  
16:00 BassBar

### Monday November 10

- Café Rosenberg**  
21:00 Sunna Björk Album Release Concert
- English Pub**  
21:00 Troubadour Ingi Valur
- Frederiksen Ale House**  
21:00 DJ Milla
- Húrra**  
20:00 Monday Night Jazz
- KEX Hostel**  
20:00 No Lights No Lycra
- Lebowski Bar**  
22:00 DJ Anna Brá



**28**  
November

### Strings And Voices Ylja Album Release Concert

#### Harpa

Austurbakka 2 (C4) | 🕒 20:30 | from 2,900 ISK

Ylja are an alternative acoustic folk group fronted by honey-voiced duet Gígja Skjaldardóttir and Bjartey Sveinsdóttir. Formed in 2008, the band has expanded to a quintet, adding electronic guitarist Örn Eldjárn, bass player Ingibjörg Elsa Turchi and percussionist Maggi Magg to the mix. Since then they have gone on to perform at four consecutive Airwaves festivals, the annual Bræðslan festival in Borgarfjörður Eystri, and at numerous other places. They combine vocal harmonies with soft acoustic riffs to create a soothing ambient sound, equally at home playing tenderly on your living room stereo, and on stage. **TD**



**21**  
November

### Mercurial Metallic Moshers Sinmara Album Release / Misþyrming / Naðra

#### Gaukurinn

Tryggvagata 22 (C3) | 🕒 22:00 | 1,500 ISK

Hotly tipped local black metal band Sinmara are releasing their latest effort 'Aphotic Womb', and want you to join them in celebrating. Sinmara have been a fixture on the scene for a good few years now and are well known for their hefty live performances. They contrast chaotic aggression with haunting melodies and dramatic build-ups to make a sepulchral growling sound. They are joined by two other aptly named black metal bands, Naðra ("Serpent") and Misþyrming ("Abuse"). **TD**  
 Photo by Rakel Erna Skarphéðinsdóttir

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# MUSIC

## CONCERTS & NIGHTLIFE

### Tuesday November 11

**Café Rosenberg**  
21:00 Borgfjörð  
**English Pub**  
21:00 Troubadour Tryggvi  
**Húrra**  
20:00 Arnljótur / Fu Kaisha / DJ Ravenator  
**KEX Hostel**  
20:30 KEX Jazz  
**Lebowski Bar**  
22:00 DJ Halli Einarss

### Wednesday November 12

**Dolly**  
21:00 DJ Gabriel / DJ AJ  
**English Pub**  
21:00 Troubadour Raggi  
**Frederiksen Ale House**  
21:00 Fnykur Funk Band  
**Harpa**  
21:00 Múlinn Jazzclub: Andrés Þór Quartet  
**Húrra**  
20:00 VAR / DJ Einar Sonic  
**Lebowski Bar**  
22:00 DJ Rúnar  
**Mengi**  
21:00 Eskmo  
**Prikið**  
22:00 DJ Steindór Grétar  
**Salurinn**  
12:15 Lunch Time Concert: The Years In Paris

### Thursday November 13

**Café Rosenberg**  
21:00 Eva The Band  
**Dillon**  
21:00 Sun Kil Moon  
**Dolly**  
21:00 Mike Hunt / Shakespeare Sister Theme  
**English Pub**  
21:00 Troubadours Hjálmar & Dagur  
**Frederiksen Ale House**  
21:00 DJ Sim Simma  
**Gaukurinn**  
21:00 Toneron  
**Grafarvogskirkja**  
20:00 Fjörgyn's Grand Concert  
**Hannesarholt**  
20:00 Jazz Improv: Kristjana Stefánsdóttir and Kjartan Valdemarsson  
**Hressó**  
21:00 DJ Cyprie  
**Húrra**  
21:00 Oyama Album Release Show / Nolo / DJ Sunna Ben  
**Kaffibarrin**  
22:00 DJ Símon fknhdms  
**Lebowski Bar**  
22:30 DJ Smutty Smiff  
**Paloma**  
20:00 These Fists  
**Prikið**  
22:00 DJ Styrmir Dansson

### Friday November 14

**Austurbæjarbíó**  
20:00 The Magic of Tom Jones with Matthías Matthíasson, Friðrik Ómar and Jógvan Hansen  
**Café Rosenberg**  
21:00 Kristjana Arngríms & Egill Ólafs  
**Dolly**  
21:00 DJ Orang Volante / Gunni Ewok  
**Dillon**  
21:00 Church House Creepers / Klikk  
**English Pub**  
21:00 Troubadours Ingi Valur & Tryggvi / Biggi  
**Hressó**  
21:00 Band 7-9-13  
**Húrra**  
22:00 Pétur Ben / Snorri Helgason / DJ KGB  
**Kaffibarrin**  
22:00 DJ Alfons X  
**Lebowski Bar**  
22:00 DJ Anna Brá  
**Paloma**  
20:00 DJs Dauði / Ravenator  
**Prikið**  
22:00 DJ Moonshine  
**Stúdentakjallarinn**  
21:00 Karaoke Night

### Saturday November 15

**Austurbæjarbíó**  
20:00 The Magic of Tom Jones with Matthías Matthíasson, Friðrik Ómar & Jógvan Hansen  
**Dillon**  
21:00 Captain Syrup  
**Dolly**  
21:00 DJ Kocoon & Benni B-Ruff  
**Frederiksen Ale House**  
21:00 DJ HanSolo  
**Gaukurinn**  
21:00 Whitesnake Tribute Band



21  
November

### Mammoth Miasma Mammút

#### Húrra

Tryggvagata 22 (D3) | 🕒 17:30 | 1,500 ISK

Mammút are an Icelandic art-rock band that have been making waves at home and abroad since like forever now. Having earned eight nominations in the 2014 Icelandic Music Awards, winning the coveted "Best Song" and "Best Album" accolades, the band have gone from strength to strength. Even if you don't understand Icelandic, you can easily surmise from their stage presence that they craft catchy and distorted lullabies with a subtly darker element running through their music. Expect to leave the show touched. **TD**

Photo by Hvalreki



13  
November

### Stars In Our Eyes Oyama Album Release Concert / Nolo

#### Húrra

Tryggvagata 22 (D3) | 🕒 22:00 | 2,000 ISK

Oyama are releasing their much-anticipated debut album 'Coolboy' like right about now! The five-piece band came together in 2012 and have made a big impression on the scene here in Reykjavík with their shoegazy noise rock furnished with lulling lyrics and dreamy shimmering guitar riffs. The evening is in equal parts the closing of one chapter in Oyama's career, and the beginning of another. DJ Sunna Ben then keeps the party going until the wee early hours. Fun times! **TD**

Photo by Sigga Ella

**Hressó**  
21:00 Band Hægðir and Lægðir  
**Húrra**  
23:00 DJ Óli Dóri  
**Kaffibarrin**  
22:00 DJ Margeir  
**Lebowski Bar**  
22:00 DJ De La Rósa  
**Mengi**  
21:00 Ingi Garðar  
**Paloma**  
23:45 RVK Soundsystem's Reggae Night  
**Prikið**  
22:00 Emmsjé Gauti

### Sunday November 16

**English Pub**  
21:00 Troubadour Danni  
**Frederiksen Ale House**  
21:00 DJ Holm  
**Harpa**  
16:00 Children's Opera: The Magic Flute  
**Hressó**  
21:00 Jazz Jam Session  
**Húrra**  
21:00 Lowercase Night  
**Kaffibarrin**  
22:00 DJ Kristinn Pálsson  
**Lebowski Bar**  
22:00 DJ Halli Einarss

### Monday November 17

**Café Rosenberg**  
21:00 Felix Bergsson & Hlynur Ben  
**Harpa**  
21:00 Bombay Bicycle Club  
**Húrra**  
20:00 Monday Night Jazz

**KEX Hostel**  
20:00 No Lights No Lycra  
**Lebowski Bar**  
22:00 DJ Anna Brá

### Tuesday November 18

**Café Rosenberg**  
21:00 Músakk  
**English Pub**  
21:00 Troubadour Ingi Valur  
**Frederiksen Ale House**  
21:00 DJ Yoda  
**Harpa**  
21:00 Múlinn-Jazzclub: Duo & Trio  
**Húrra**  
20:00 Dance-ioki / DJ Styrmir Dansson  
**KEX Hostel**  
20:30 KEX Jazz  
**Lebowski Bar**  
22:00 DJ Raggi

### Wednesday November 19

**English Pub**  
21:00 Troubadour Arnar  
**Frederiksen Ale House**  
21:00 Fnykur Funk Band  
**Húrra**  
20:00 Kippi Kaninus / DJ Station Helgi  
**Lebowski Bar**  
22:00 DJ Jesús  
**Prikið**  
22:00 DJ Karí

### Thursday November 20

**Café Rosenberg**  
21:00 Trevor Gordon Hall  
**Dillon**  
21:00 Fundraising gig with the Pink Street Boys

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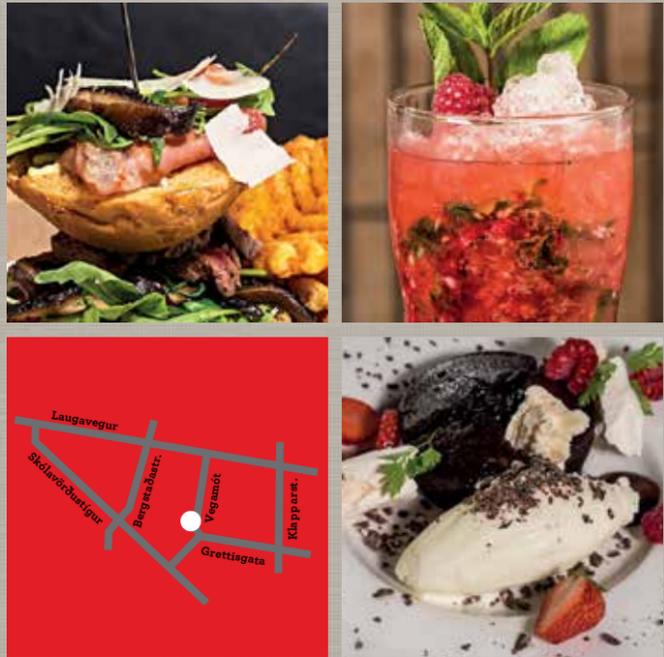
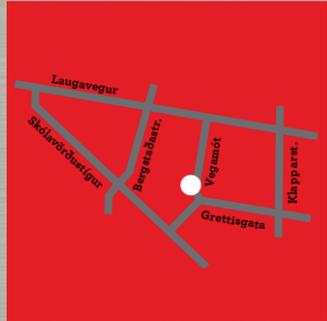
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# MUSIC

## CONCERTS & NIGHTLIFE

**Dolly**  
21:00 DJ JónBjörn / Housekell

**English Pub**  
21:00 Troubadours Alexander & Guðmann

**Frederiksen Ale House**  
21:00 DJ Milla

**Gaukurinn**  
21:00 Electric Elephant / Lucy in Blue

**Hressó**  
21:00 Band Triple Trouble

**Húrra**  
21:00 Trevor Gordon Hall & Tyler Ludwig / DJ Ernir

**Lebowski Bar**  
22:30 DJ De La Rósa

**Mengi**  
21:00 Berglind María

**Paloma**  
20:00 DJ Einar Sonic

**Prikið**  
22:00 DJ GLM

### Friday November 21

**Bar 11**  
22:00 Saktmóðigur / Pungsig

**Café Rosenberg**  
21:00 Svavar Knútur

**Dolly**  
21:00 DJ Steindor Jónsson / Solaris SunGlaze

**English Pub**  
21:00 Troubadours Steini & Eiki / Ellert

**Frederiksen Ale House**  
21:00 DJ Sim Simma

**Gaukurinn**  
21:00 Sinmara Album Release Concert / Misþyrming / Naðra

**Hressó**  
21:00 Band Mr. Mookie

**Húrra**  
22:00 Mammút / DJ Simon FKNHNSM

**Kaffibarrin**  
22:00 DJ Dillalude/Intro Beats

**Lebowski Bar**  
22:00 DJ Raggi

**Mengi**  
21:00 Ólafur Björn Ólafsson

**Prikið**  
22:00 DJ Sunna Ben / Logi Pedro Pílatus

### Saturday November 22

**Café Rosenberg**  
21:00 VOR

**Dolly**  
21:00 DJ Borg vs Hausar

**English Pub**  
21:00 Troubadours Ellert / Magnús & Ívar

**Frederiksen Ale House**  
21:00 DJ Sim Simma

**Frikirkjan**  
17:00 Arne Hjorth, Helge Nysted & Gunnarsson

**Gaukurinn**  
21:00 Skurk

**Húrra**  
23:00 DJ Benni B-Ruff / Logi Pedro Pílatus

**Lebowski Bar**  
22:00 DJ Anna Brá

**Mengi**  
21:00 Chris Sea

**Paloma**  
20:00 DJ Addi Exos / Natalie & Oculus / API PABBI

**Prikið**  
22:00 DJ Kocoon

**Tjarnarbió**  
20:00 Sigga Eyrún Album Release Party

### Sunday November 23

**English Pub**  
21:00 Troubadour Danni

**Frederiksen Ale House**  
21:00 DJ Holm

**Harpa**  
19:30 The Chamber Music Society #3: Mozart & Bartók

**Hressó**  
21:00 Jazz Jam Session

**Húrra**  
21:00 Doomriders / Kontinuum

**Lebowski Bar**  
22:00 DJ Halli Einarss

### Monday November 24

**Café Rosenberg**  
21:00 Bjargræðiskvartettinn

**English Pub**  
21:00 Troubadour Ingi Valur

**Frederiksen Ale House**  
21:00 DJ Yoda

**Húrra**  
20:00 Monday Night Jazz

**KEX Hostel**  
20:00 No Lights No Lycra

**Lebowski Bar**  
22:00 DJ Anna Brá

**28 November**



**Holy Shit It's Sun Kil Moon In Fríkirkjan!**  
Sun Kil Moon

### Fríkirkjan

Laufásvegur 13 (F3) | 🕒 20:30 | 5,900 ISK

For some strange reason, veteran musician Mark Kozelek seems to be making greater waves at this point in time than ever before. And that's kind of weird, not because his latest output under the Sun Kil Moon banner hasn't been consistently wonderful (it has—check out the latest 'Benji' for instance), but because everything he's done basically since the early '90s, starting with the entire Red House Painters oeuvre, has been consistently great. Seriously. Every-fucking-thing. The man is a legend, goddamn. So, why is he getting all this attention now? Is it accumulated? Probably. Does it have something to do with his internet-fuelled trolling of late? Perhaps. It doesn't really matter. What matters is that folks are getting to hear some goddamn Mark Kozelek. That's what fucking matters. Go fucking see him at Fríkirkjan already. It's Mark fucking Kozelek.

**HSM**



**Check Out The Moves**  
Reykjavík Dance Festival

### Bió Paradís (E5), Mengi (F5), Tjarnarbió (E3)

Nov 26 - 29 | 2,000 ISK

For those who were upset at missing the epic dance moves of the Reykjavík Dance Festival in August, have no worry, the RDF is back for its fourth quarterly performance! That's four days of talented dancers and their spiced-up dance moves appearing all over Reykjavík. Expect to be impressed, fascinated, and inspired, as RDF offers guests to come together and speculate the fine details of the choreography, to "listen, watch and engage; do, make, say and think; care, feel, love and share." So head on down and be blown away. **SV**

### Tuesday November 25

**Austurbæjarbió**  
20:00 Ástusjóður's charity concert: Árstiðir / Byzantine Silhouette / Megas & Magga Stína / Ragga Gröndal / Svavar Knútur

**Café Rosenberg**  
21:00 Kanban

**English Pub**  
21:00 Troubadour Tryggvi

**Frederiksen Ale House**  
21:00 DJ Hólm

**Húrra**  
21:00 Nýdönsk / DJ Ísar Logi

**KEX Hostel**  
20:30 KEX Jazz

**Lebowski Bar**  
22:00 DJ Halli Einarss

### Wednesday November 26

**Frederiksen Ale House**  
21:00 Fnykur Funk Band

**Húrra**  
21:00 Mr. Silla / Cryptochrome / DJ Robot Disco

**Kaffibarrin**  
22:00 DJ Kári

**Lebowski Bar**  
22:30 DJ Jesús

**Prikið**  
22:00 DJ Gunni Ewok

### Thursday November 27

**Café Rosenberg**  
21:00 Rósa Guðrún & friends

**Dillon**  
23:00 Ultra Orthodox

**English Pub**  
21:00 Troubadours Hjálmar & Dagur

**Frederiksen Ale House**  
21:00 Throwback Thursday: DJ Disaster

**Gaukurinn**  
21:00 Grit Teeth

**Harpa**  
19:30 Iceland Symphony Orchestra: Concerto and Symphony

19:30 Bryndís Halla Gylfadóttir: Concerto For Cello And A Symphony

21:00 Múlinn Jazzclub: Krafra Quartet

**Hressó**  
21:00 Band Kongó

**Húrra**  
21:00 DJ Ívar Pétur

# MUSIC

## CONCERTS & NIGHTLIFE

**Kaffibarrin**  
22:00 DJ Logi Pedró Pílatus  
**Lebowski Bar**  
22:30 DJ Raggi  
**Paloma**  
20:00 DJ Creature Of The Night  
**Prikió**  
22:00 DJ KGB

### Friday November 28

**Café Rosenberg**  
21:00 Maríus Sverrisson  
**Dolly**  
21:00 DJ PabbaHelgi / Gísli Galdur / Benni B-Ruff  
**English Pub**  
21:00 Troubadours Roland / Alexander & Guðmann  
**Frederiksen Ale House**  
21:00 DJ Yolo  
**Frikirkjan**  
20:30 Sun Kil Moon  
**Harpa**  
20:30 Ylja Album Release Concert  
**Húrra**  
20:00 Pink Street Boys / Kælan Mikla / DJ Styrmir Dansson  
**Lebowski Bar**  
22:00 DJ Anna Brá & Ragg Backtoback / De La Rósa  
**Prikió**  
22:00 DJ Orang Volante / Pedro Pílatus

### Saturday November 29

**Dolly**  
21:00 DJ IntroBeats  
**English Pub**  
21:00 Troubadours Magnús & Ívar / Alexander & Guðmann  
**Frederiksen Ale House**  
21:00 DJ OK  
**Hressó**  
21:00 Band Geimflaugin  
**Húrra**  
20:00 Jónas Sig & Ritvélar Framtíðarinnar / DJ Gullfoss og Geysir  
**Kaffibarrin**  
22:00 DJ Kohip (NO) / Terrordisco  
**Lebowski Bar**  
22:00 DJ Jésus  
**Paloma**  
20:00 DJ Ómar Borg & Housekell / Einar Sonic  
**Prikió**  
22:00 DJ Jay-O

### Sunday November 30

**English Pub**  
21:00 Troubadour Danni  
**Frederiksen Ale House**  
21:00 DJ Holm  
**Hressó**  
21:00 Jazz Jam Session  
**Húrra**  
21:00 Lowercase Night  
**Lebowski Bar**  
22:00 DJ Halli Einarss

### Monday December 1

**English Pub**  
21:00 Troubadour Tryggvi  
**Frederiksen Ale House**  
21:00 DJ FreddiFriski  
**Harpa**  
20:00 Christmas Prelude with Svanur Brass Band

### Tuesday December 2

**English Pub**  
21:00 Troubadour Ingi Valur  
**Frederiksen Ale House**  
21:00 DJ OK  
**Frikirkjan**  
20:00 Woodwind Quintet

### Wednesday December 3

**Frederiksen Ale House**  
21:00 Fnykur Funk Band  
**Harpa**  
21:00 Múlinn-Jazzclub: Tómas R & voices  
**Prikió**  
22:00 Gísli Galdur Birthday Bash

### Thursday December 4

**English Pub**  
21:00 Troubadours Alexander & Guðmann  
**Frederiksen Ale House**  
21:00 DJ Holby  
**Harpa**  
19:30 Iceland Symphony Orchestra: Advent Concert  
**Kaffibarrin**  
22:00 Gísli Galdur  
**Mengi**  
21:00 Hacker Farm / FALK Label Night  
**Prikió**  
22:00 DJ Agzilla



**Do The Bat Dance!**  
No Lights No Lycra

### KEX Hostel

Skúlagata 28 (E7) | Every Monday 🕒 20:00 | 500 ISK

The No Lights No Lycra dance event is on (almost) every Monday at KEX Hostel, where participants can literally dance like no one is watching. If you haven't heard of the concept, it involves everyone dancing in a pitch-black room to some groovy tunes, completely sober. The event originated in Melbourne, Australia and has gained popularity worldwide. KEX Hostel started the first ever NLNL in Iceland in October, and it proved to be such a hit that it has now become a weekly fixture at the hostel. NLNL is a great place for cutting loose, and meeting people when their inhibitions have been lowered by the power of DANCE. **TD & MC**



**Bombay Cocktail**  
Bombay Bicycle Club

### Harpa

Austurbakki 2 (C4) | Nov 17 | 🕒 20:00 | 8,990 ISK

English indie rocksters Bombay Bicycle Club are not to be missed. Touring the world with their mercury award-nominated album 'So Long See You Tomorrow', they're in Reykjavik for one night and one night only. The new sounds of the album are influenced by lead singer Jack Steadman's recent travels to the Netherlands, Turkey, and India. Fancy that, Netherlands-influenced music! **TD**

## THE NATIONAL MUSEUM OF ICELAND

Along with the permanent exhibition that features Iceland's history from settlement to present day the museum offers a variety of exhibitions during the year, e.g. on Icelandic silver and photography.



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13. 9. 2014 – 11. 1. 2015

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Reykjavik  
City Museum



# ART OPENINGS AND ONGOING



**Old School baby!**  
Iceland Film Photographer Association Exhibition

**Icelandic Printmakers Association**

Tryggvagata 17 (D3) | Nov 15 - 29 | ☺ 14 - 18 | Free!

Do you remember the days you would check the count on your film roll to see how many more photographs you could take? Do you remember shaking a polaroid and waiting for the picture to finally appear? The world may have turned digital, but there are still a few analogue fans out there. A group of such people just formed the Iceland Film Photographer Association, and they are launching an exhibition featuring a vast variety of analogue photography techniques, such as polaroid, pinhole, tintype, gum bichromate, and paper negatives. It's like a trip down memory lane, all to show that film is not dead (yet). **SV**

Photo by Kristina Petrošiuť

## Nov 7 - Dec 4

How to use the listings: Venues are listed alphabetically by day. For complete listings and detailed information on venues visit [listings.grapevine.is](http://listings.grapevine.is). Send us your listings to: [listings@grapevine.is](mailto:listings@grapevine.is)

## Opening

**Arion Bank Headquarters**  
**'Speglað landslag' by Hrafnkell Sigurðsson**

In this exhibition (which translates as "Flipped Landscape"), Hrafnkell Sigurðsson examines the relationship between man and nature, showing man-made structures that resemble nature, and natural phenomena that look humane.

**Opens November 8**  
**Runs until February 20**

**ASÍ Art Gallery**  
**'REGLUVERK' by Hugsteypan**

Hugsteypan is a collaboration between Ingunn Fjóra Ingþórsdóttir and Þórdís Jóhannesdóttir. For the past five years Ingunn and Þórdís have been working on their collaborative projects in tandem with their own individual art projects. This show exhibits the results from their inquiry into the rules and repetitions in art.

**Opens November 8**  
**Runs until November 30**

**Better Weather Window Gallery**

The second site specific mixed media installation will launch at this relatively new exhibition window space on Laugavegur by Freyja Eilíf Logadóttir.

**Opens December 1**  
**Runs until December 29**

**Gallery Bakarí**  
**'Lumine Maris Ubique' by Alexander Zaklynsky**

Alexander Zaklynsky exhibits new works on paper, bronze, aluminium and wood. The works developed for this exhibition are loosely inspired by Deiter Roth,

Alexander's experience of moving back to Iceland, as well as the experiences accumulated through art residencies in Spain, Italy, Ukraine, Germany, Holland and Poland.

**Opens November 21**  
**Runs until December 5**

**Gallery Fold**

Abba's (Aðalbjörg Þórardóttir) is known for her oil paintings, of which she exhibits four.

**Starts November 11**  
**Runs until November 30**

**Háskólabíó**  
**German Film Festival**

To mark the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Fall of the Berlin Wall, the German Embassy Reykjavík in collaboration with the Goethe-Institut is presenting the "Múrmyndir - Murals- Mauerbilder" film days. The programme aims to shed light onto the many facets of the divided history on both sides of the wall as well as the reunification of 1989.

**Opens November 7**  
**Runs until November 9**

**Hverfisgallerí**

Hrafnhildur Arnardóttir aka Shoplifter is an Icelandic artist living in New York. Shoplifter makes sculptures, drawings and installations with various materials and found objects. Her works take on themes relating to vanity, self-image, fashion, beauty and popular myths, and often tackle notions that border on obsession or fetishism.

**Opens November 29**  
**Runs until January 31**

**Icelandic Printmakers Association**  
**Iceland Film Photographer Association Exhibition**

The newly formed Iceland Film Photographer Association (Félag Filmuljósmýndara á Íslandi) will hold its first members' exhibition. The show will feature works in a variety of analogue photography techniques, such as polaroid, pinhole, tintype, gum bichromate and paper negatives, as well as more conventional darkroom

prints and inkjet prints from scanned film negatives.

**Opens November 15**  
**Runs until November 29**

**is**

The two person show features works by Icelandic painter Eggert Pétursson and German photographer Friederike Von Rauch. Their works share certain similarities such as the reduction in material content, stillness and concentration.

**Opens December 4**  
**Runs until January 31**

**Kópavogur Art Museum**  
**Gerðarsafn**  
**'Impressions' by Hólmfríður Árnadóttir**

Hólmfríður has a series of textile and paper works from early parts of her career on exhibition.

**Opens November 15**  
**Runs until January 4 2015**

**'Óp/Óp' by Jón B. K. Ransu**

Jón B. K. Ransu has an exhibit with numerous artwork on display.

**Opens November 15**  
**Runs until January 4 2015**

**Kunstschlager**

**Phenomenal**

A collection of performances and projects will take place around the city for three weeks. The works are different in size and medium.

**Opens November 8**  
**Runs until November 29**

**The National Gallery**

**New Works by Jón Óskar**

Jón Óskar is one of Iceland's well known artists with numerous exhibitions in museums and galleries around the world and in Iceland. In his photographs, drawings, and prints, he explores the conflict between the surface of the picture plane and the subjects he portrays, whether they are portraits, historical themes, or personal references.

**Opens November 7**  
**Runs until February 8**

**The Reykjavík City Library**

**The Plant In The Hallway - Comics Exhibition**

Sisters Elísabet Rún and Elín Edda will open a comics exhibition. On display will be their first graphic novel, 'The Plant in the Hallway.' They have been working on the graphic novel for two years, and its story is about the protagonist's life changes when she puts a plant in her hallway.

**Opens November 7**  
**Runs until February 22**

**Spark Design Space**

**Salon**

Every year the Spark Design Space installs a collection of projects they have exhibited in the past.

**Opens November 12**  
**Runs until January 5 2015**

**Tveir Hrafnar Art Gallery**

Jón Óskar stands out in the Icelandic art scene for his paintings of conflict and even violence—not in representation, but rather in their process of creation.

**Opens November 8**  
**Runs until November 29**

## Ongoing

**Árbær Open Air Museum**

A guided tour in English through this open air museum, which consists of twenty buildings happens daily at 13:00. Admission 1,100 ISK.

**On permanent view**

**Anarkía**

**Eye For An Eye**

Kristinn Már Pálmason and Bjarni Sigurbjörnsson's exhibition consists of new paintings made with acrylic paint, pens and airbrush on paper and canvas. Bjarni and Kristinn Már have had numerous solo exhibitions and participated in group exhibitions, in Iceland and abroad.

**Runs until November 22**

**ART 67**

**'Hver Með Sínu Nefi' by ART11**

The ART11 collective has a mixed medium exhibit on show throughout the month.

**Runs until November 30**

**Artótek**

**Figures and Forms**

The artists are two ceramic artists: Auður Inga and Hafðís Brands. They both studied fine art in the Glasgow School of Art. Hafðís specialises in ceramic sculptures while Auður Inga paint along with the ceramic.

**Opens November 6**  
**Runs until December 7**

**Deli Menu**  
*all weekdays from 11-17*



**TACO TUESDAYS**  
*every Tuesday evening from 19-22*

**BRUNCH**  
*ALL WEEKENDS FROM 11-16*

**SOURDOUGH PIZZA**  
*WEDNESDAY & THURSDAY EVENING FROM 19-22*



**ITALIAN MENU**  
*Friday & Saturday evening from 19-22*

**Italian HAPPY HOUR**  
*every evening from 17-19*

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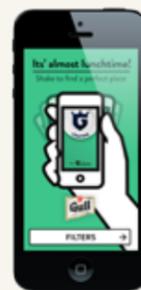
The REYKJAVÍK GRAPEVINE

# IN YOUR POCKET

## CRAVING

Download the FREE Grapevine Craving APP!

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WHAT'S INSIDE

Reykjavík Map | Happy Hour Guide | Places We Like | Best Of Reykjavík | Practical Info

Reykjavík

November 7 - December 4

Keep it in your pocket

## FOUR WEEKS

The Grapevine picks the events, places and what to experience in the next four weeks

21-23 Nov

Art  
**Get Some Nuts!**



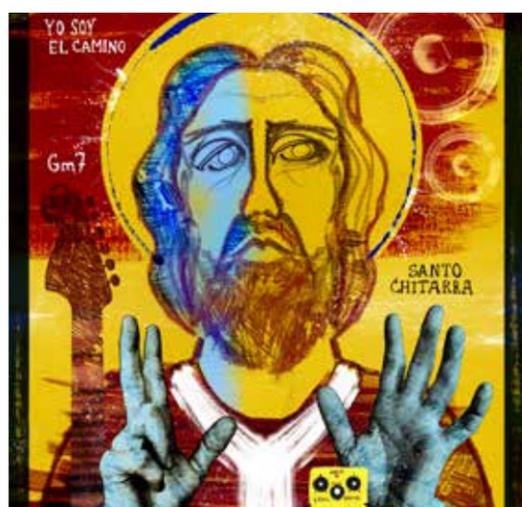
### The Nutcracker

Harpa | Austurbakki 2, (C4) | from 5,990 ISK

One of the world's most famous ballets, 'The Nutcracker', is presented in all its glory with the original score of Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky. The Christmas fairy tale is of course a family-friendly show, and is being produced in collaboration with the Iceland Symphony Orchestra and St. Petersburg Festival Ballet. So sit back and enjoy the show of the little girl who gets a nutcracker for Christmas and falls into a dream world unlike any other. **TD**

22-9 Sept Dec

Art  
**The Divine Comedy**



### 'DEUS' by Þórdís Claessen

Cocoo's Nest (B2) | 11-19 | Free!

Did you ever wonder whether a fusion of rock and religion was possible without creating something as degenerate as Creed or P.O.D.? Well, we're here to tell you it is! Visual artist Þórdís Claessen's newest painting exhibit is an ode to music, in which rock is literally taken to the divine level. The paintings resemble icons and holy imagery, but the religious aspect has been replaced by instruments, pedals and other musical paraphernalia, for maximum rock 'n' rollitude. **SV**

7-9 November

Art  
**Teutonic Tapes**



### German Film Festival (Háskolabíó)

Vesturbær | 18:00 - 22:30 | Admission: Varies

To mark the 25th anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall, the German Embassy in Reykjavík in collaboration with the Goethe-Institute will be presenting the "Múrmyndir- Murals- Mauerbilder" three day film festival. The programme aims to enlighten people on the differences and challenges faced by the communities living in the two halves of the country that was divided for so long. A variety of films will be screened. **TD**



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www.theviking.is



November 15

### HE LOVES THESE HOES BUT IS A FEMINIST

The rapping wunderkind **Emmsjé Gauti** is back on the block in the hip hop den known as **Prikið**. The young rapper has taken the scene by storm, using YouTube to connect to an online audience, bringing Icelandic hip hop into the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Expect **Emmsjé Gauti** to bring slick rhymes, with perhaps a feminist undertone.

November 28

**ROCK AND PUNK ALL NIGHT LONG** Oh lord, our Track of Issue stars, the punk-poets of **Kælan mikla** who just released an EP, LP and cassette in short succession, are teaming up with the garage rock band **Pink Street Boys** who released the critically acclaimed 'Trash From The Boys' a few months back. If you haven't seen these bands play before, they offer two sides of the same coin of brilliance—you can expect them to tear **Húrra's** roof down, or at the very least break a few glasses.

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# MAP

## Places We Like

### Eating

#### 1 Tapas Barinn

Vesturgata 3b

For those with a bit of time on their hands, the evening is well spent at Tapas Barinn, where you can indulge yourself feasting on course after delicious course of miniature dishes served in true Spanish style. There is also a lounge for those who want to hang out and sip a fine glass of red.

#### 2 Höfnin

Geirsgata 7c

Spoiler alert: Seafood comes from the sea. So if you want your seafood fresh, it's to the sea you've got to go. With prime real estate carved out right next to the Reykjavík marina, Höfnin ("The Harbour") has a leg up in this game. Enjoy the wide selection of expertly cooked shellfish as well as cod, salmon and other dishes. Landlubbers will also find four-legged fare to suit their tastes.

#### 3 Sjávargrillið

Skólavörðustígur 14

If you're looking for traditional Icelandic food done right, Sjávargrillið is definitely a place to go. Gústav Gunnlaugsson, Icelandic Chef of the year 2010, is the head chef at this establishment and he does not mess around. Whether you're a curious tourist or a native Icelander, you won't be disappointed by any of the Icelandic dishes on this menu.

#### 4 Icelandic Fish & Chips

Tryggvagata 11

Not your average fish'n'chips joint, this healthy restaurant uses only organic vegetables and quality fish products to serve their fancy take on a fast-food classic. The spiced 'Skyronnaise' sauce is a special treat, and their clean, casual location by the harbour is full of charm.

#### 5 Snaps

Óðinstorg, Þórgata 1

This recent addition to Reykjavík dining has quickly become a popular spot for folks with a fine palate and a modest budget, offering a small menu of courses made from local produce with a carefully selected wine list. It's also a cool hangout for artists and musicians. Make sure to get there early - they take reservations until 18:30 but after that it's a free-for-all!

### Drinking

#### 6 Húrra

Tryggvagata 22

The walls may be dark and adorned with gloomy paintings, and the lighting minimal, but when the bands step onto the stage the place really comes into its own. Armed with a great sound system, the place delivers a great experience for music fans throughout Reykjavík. Oh, and they serve Einstök Pale Ale and White Ale in beer mugs!

#### Useful Numbers

Emergency number: **112**

Medical help: **1770**

Dental emergency: **575 0505**

Information: **118**

Taxi: Hreyfill-Bæjarleiðir: **588 5522**

BSR: **561 0000**

#### Tax-Free Refund

**Iceland Refund**, Aðalstræti 2, tel: 564 6400

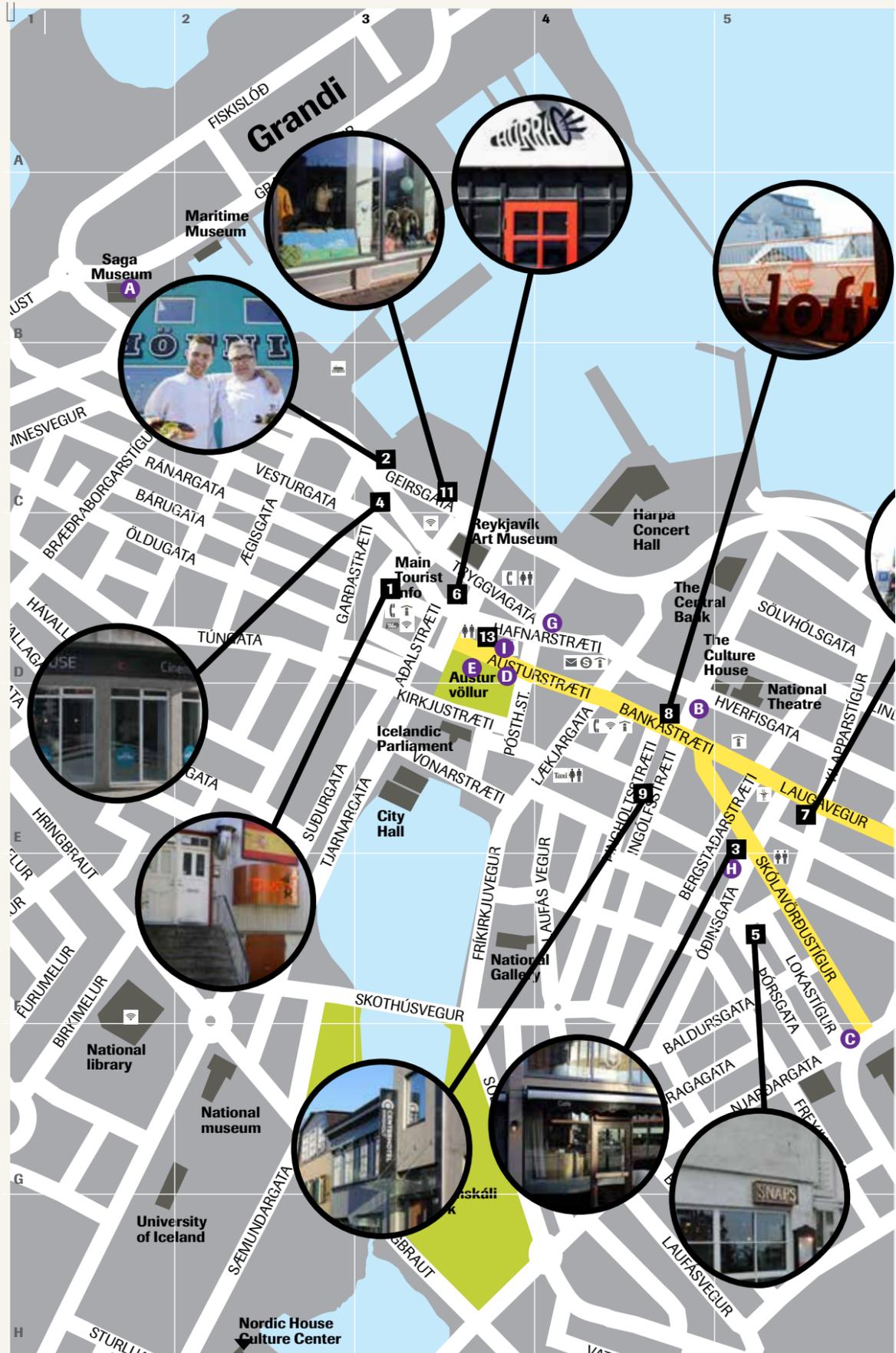
#### Tourist Information

**Arctic Adventures**, Laugavegur 11,

tel: 562 7000

**City Centre**, Aðalstræti 2, tel: 590 1550

**Iceland Excursions - Grayline Iceland**, Hafnarstræti 20, tel: 540 1313



#### 7 Kaldi Bar

Laugavegur 20b

A small, stylish drinking hole popular with the after-work business crowd, this is a great place to feel a little classier and drink with dignity. The beer selection is top-notch, and the handcrafted interior tips the scales of upscale rustic charm. You can be certain that conversation will rule, not loud music.

#### 8 Loft Hostel

Bankastræti 7

With a brilliant location right in the centre of the action, the views from the upstairs bar and rooftop patio at the Loft Hostel can't be more entertaining. In addition to clean, comfortable rooms for all types of travellers, this new hostel is quickly becoming a hotspot for live music and comfortable accommodation alike.

#### 9 Pingholt Bar

Center Hotel, Pingholtstræti 5

Located in Center Hotel Pingholt, this bar is tucked away just outside of the mayhem that is Laugavegur on a weekend night. For a quieter evening, check out their daily happy hour between 17-19, lounge in their chic and modern environment with one of the many beers and cocktails on offer.

**The Icelandic Travel Market**, Bankastræti 2, tel: 522 4979

**Trip**, Laugavegur 54, tel: 433 8747

#### Pharmacies

**Lyf og heilsa**, Egilsgata 3, tel: 563 1020

**Lyfja**, Laugavegur 16, tel: 552 4045 and Lág-  
múla 5, tel: 533 2300

#### Coach Terminal

**BSÍ**, Vatnsmýrarvegur 10,

tel: 562 1011, www.bsi.is

#### Domestic Airlines

**Air Iceland**, Reykjavíkflugvöllur,  
tel: 570 3030, www.flugfelag.is

**Eagle Air**, Hótel Loftleiðir, tel: 562 4200

#### Public Transport

The only public transport available in Reykjavík is the bus. Most buses run every 20-30 minutes (the wait may be longer on weekends) and the price per fare is 350 ISK for adults and children. Multiple day passes are available for purchase at select locations. Complete route map available at: www.bus.is. Tel: 540 2700. Buses run from 07:00-24:00 on weekdays and 10:00-24:00 on weekends. Main terminals are: Hlemmur and Lækjartorg.

#### Opening Hours

**Bars and clubs:** According to regulations, bars can stay open until 01:00 on weekdays and 04:30 on weekends.

**Shops:** Mon-Fri 10:00-18:00, Sat 10:00-16:00, Sun closed. The shopping centres Kringlan and Smáralind as well as most supermarkets and tourist shops have longer opening hours.

**Swimming pools:** Weekdays 06:30-22:00 and weekends 09:00-17:00, although each pool varies plus or minus a few hours.

**Banks** in the centre are open Mon-Fri 09:00-16:00.

#### Post Offices

Post offices are located around the city. The downtown post office is at Pósthússtræti 3-5, open Mon-Fri 09:00-18:00. Stamps are also sold at bookstores, gas stations, tourist shops and some grocery stores.

All the games and all the action!  
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THE ENGLISH PUB  
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D

## New In Town



### 13 Brooklyn Bar

Austurstræti 3

Walking in to Brooklyn Bar, you are immediately struck with the nightclub cum pizza oven décor—it's warm and cozy, has loud hip hop playing downstairs even in the early parts of the evening. The upstairs is a great venue for carousing with the lads or lasses, with its gigantic projector screen displaying the latest match. The grub is stalwart and hearty, but the real gen of the place is its lavatories: they are stylish, spacious and ergonomically sound.

Cleanliness is next to godliness  
—John Wesley 1778



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## Venue Finder Music & Entertainment

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <b>Austur</b><br>Austurstræti 7   <b>C3</b>                | <b>Gaukurinn</b><br>Tryggvagata 22   <b>D3</b>        |
| <b>B5</b><br>Bankastræti 5   <b>D4</b>                     | <b>Hressó</b><br>Austurstræti 20   <b>D3</b>          |
| <b>Bar 11</b><br>Hverfisgötu 18   <b>E5</b>                | <b>Húrra</b><br>Tryggvagata 22   <b>C3</b>            |
| <b>Bíó Paradís</b><br>Hverfisgata 54   <b>E5</b>           | <b>Kaffibarinn</b><br>Bergstaðastræti 1   <b>E4</b>   |
| <b>Bjarni Fel</b><br>Austurstræti 20   <b>E4</b>           | <b>Kaldi Bar / Café</b><br>Laugavegur 20b   <b>E5</b> |
| <b>Boston</b><br>Laugavegur 28b   <b>E5</b>                | <b>Kigali</b><br>Ingólfsstræti 8   <b>E4</b>          |
| <b>Brikk</b><br>Hafnarstræti 18   <b>C4</b>                | <b>Kofinn</b><br>Laugavegur 2   <b>E5</b>             |
| <b>Bunk</b><br>Laugavegur 28   <b>E5</b>                   | <b>Lavabarin</b><br>Lækjargata 6   <b>E4</b>          |
| <b>Café Rósenberg</b><br>Klapparstígur 25   <b>E5</b>      | <b>Loft Hostel</b><br>Bankastræti 7   <b>E4</b>       |
| <b>Cocoo's Nest</b><br>Grandagarður 23   <b>B2</b>         | <b>Paloma</b><br>Naustin 1-3   <b>D3</b>              |
| <b>Den Danske Kro</b><br>Ingólfsstræti 3   <b>E4</b>       | <b>Prikið</b><br>Bankastræti 12   <b>E4</b>           |
| <b>Dillon</b><br>Laugavegur 30   <b>E5</b>                 | <b>Reykjavík Roasters</b><br>Kárástígur 1   <b>F5</b> |
| <b>Dolly</b><br>Hafnarstræti 4   <b>D3</b>                 | <b>Stofan Café</b><br>Vesturgata 3   <b>D3</b>        |
| <b>Dubliner</b><br>Hafnarstræti 1-3   <b>D3</b>            | <b>Thorvaldsen</b><br>Austurstræti 8   <b>D3</b>      |
| <b>English Pub</b><br>Austurstræti 12   <b>D3</b>          | <b>Ölsmiðjan</b><br>Lækjargata 10   <b>E4</b>         |
| <b>Frederiksen Ale House</b><br>Hafnarstræti 5   <b>D3</b> | <b>Östofan</b><br>Vegamótastígur 4   <b>E5</b>        |

# MENGI

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H



## Shopping

### 10 KronKron

Laugavegur 63b

If it's cutting-edge, international big name designers you are in the market for, then this store will be to you like Willy Wonka's factory to be to Charlie. Fully stocked in the choicest young names in fashion and some one-of-a-kind local designs too—the shoes are not to be missed!

### 11 Myrin

Hafnarbúðir, Geirsgata 9

Dealing in only the highest quality and aesthetically modern of local Icelandic design, this new branch of the Myrin story in the Kringlan mall is a fine new addition to downtown shopping. A perfect place to find that one of a kind gift for your loved one, or yourself!

### 12 Lucky Records

Rauðarárstígur 10

All freshly set up in their brand new, huge location just next to Hlemmur, this is hands-down the finest record store in town. Crate-diggers will marvel and fawn over their selection while the lay music listener can easily pop in to pick up the latest from their favourites. Live music and DJs are regularly scheduled for live entertainment.

#### Public Phones

There aren't many public payphones in the city centre. The tourist information centre at Aðalstræti 2, City Hall, Kolaportíð, entrance at Landsbankinn and in Lækjargata. Prepaid international phone cards are recommended for int'l callers.

#### Internet Access

Most cafés offer free wireless internet access. Computers with internet connections are available to use at: Ráðhúskaffi City Hall, Tjarnargata 11  
Ground Zero, Frakkastígur 8, near Laugavegur 45,  
The Reykjavík City Library, Tryggvagata 15

The National and University Library, Arngrímsgata 3

Tourist Information Centre, Aðalstræti 2  
Icelandic Travel Market, Bankastræti 2  
Reykjavík Backpackers, Laugavegur 28

#### Swimming Pools

There are several swimming pools in Reykjavík. The one in 101 Reykjavík, Sundhöll Reykjavíkur, is an indoor one, located at Barónsstígur. It features a nice sunbathing area and some outdoor hot tubs. Opening hours: Mon-Thu from 06:30-22:00, Fri from 06:30-20:00, Sat from 08:00-16:00 and Sun from 10:00-18:00.

#### Public Toilets

Public toilets in the centre can be found inside the green-poster covered towers located, for example, at Hlemmur, Ingólfstortorg, by Hallgrímskirkja, by Reykjavík Art Museum, Lækjargata and by Eymundsson on Skólavörðustígur. Toilets can also be found inside the Reykjavík City Hall and the Reykjavík Library.

## Museums & Galleries

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <b>ART67</b><br>Laugavegur 67   <b>F7</b><br>Mon-Fri 12-18 / Sat 12-16                                      | <b>Reykjavík Art Gallery</b><br>Skúlagata 30   <b>F7</b><br>Tue-Sun 14-18<br>www.artmuseum.is   |
| <b>Ásgrímur Jónsson Museum</b><br>Bergstaðastræti 74   <b>G4</b><br>Mon-Fri through Sept.                   | <b>Reykjavík Art Museum - Hafnarhús</b><br>Tryggvagata 17   <b>D3</b><br>Open 10-17<br>Thursday 10-20<br><b>Kjarvalsstaðir</b><br>Flókagata 24<br>Open 10-17<br><b>Ásmundarsafn</b><br>Sigtún<br>Open 10-17<br>www listasafnreykjavikur.is  |
| <b>The Einar Jónsson Museum</b><br>Eiríksgata   <b>G6</b><br>Tue-Sun 14-17<br>www.skulptur.is               | <b>Reykjavík City Library</b><br>Tryggvagata 15   <b>D3</b><br>www.borgarbokasafn.is  |
| <b>Hafnarborg</b><br>Strandgata 34, Hafnarfjörður<br>www.hafnarborg.is                                      | <b>Reykjavík City Museum - Árbæjarsafn</b><br>Kistuhylur 4<br>Daily tours at 13<br><b>The Settlement Exhibition</b><br>Aðalstræti 17   <b>D3</b><br>Open daily 10-17<br><b>Reykjavík Maritime Museum</b><br>Grandagarður 8   <b>B2</b><br>Open daily 10-17<br><b>Reykjavík Museum of Photography</b><br>Tryggvagata 15   <b>D3</b><br>Mon-Thu 12-19 / Fri 12-18 / Sat-Sun 13-17<br><b>Víðey Island</b><br>Ferry from Skarfabakki Harbour, Sat-Sun only<br>www.videy.com |
| <b>Hannesarholt</b><br>Grundarstígur 10   <b>F4</b><br>www.hannesarholt.is                                  | <b>Saga Museum</b><br>Grandagarður 2   <b>B2</b><br>www.sagamuseum.is   |
| <b>Hitt Húsið</b><br>Gallery Tukt<br>Pósthússtræti 3-5   <b>E3</b><br>www.hittthusid.is                     | <b>Sigurjón Ólafsson Museum</b><br>Laugarnestangi 70<br>www.iso.is  |
| <b>Hverfisgallerí</b><br>Hverfisgata 4   <b>D4</b><br>www.hverfisgalleri.is                                 | <b>SÍM</b><br>Hafnarstræti 16   <b>D3</b><br>Mon-Fri 10-16<br>www.sim.is  |
| <b>i8 Gallery</b><br>Tryggvagata 16   <b>D3</b><br>Tue-Fri 11-17 / Sat 13-17 and by appointment. www.i8.is  | <b>Spark Design Space</b><br>Klapparstígur 33   <b>E5</b><br>M-Fri 12-18, Sat 12-16<br>www.sparkdesign-space.com  |
| <b>The Icelandic Phalological Museum</b><br>Laugavegur 116   <b>F8</b><br>www.phallus.is                    | <b>Tveir Hrafnar</b><br>Baldursgata 12   <b>G4</b><br>Thu-Fri 12-17, Sat 13-16<br>www.tveirhrafnar.is   |
| <b>Kirsuberjatræð</b><br>Vesturgata 4   <b>C2</b><br>www.kirs.is  | <b>Wind &amp; Weather Gallery</b><br>Hverfisgata 37   <b>E5</b><br>www.windandweather.is  |
| <b>Kling &amp; Bang</b><br>Hverfisgata 42   <b>E5</b><br>Thurs-Sun from 14-18<br>www.this.is/klingogbang    | <b>ÞOKA</b><br>Laugavegur 25   <b>E5</b><br>www.thoka.is  |
| <b>Knitting Iceland</b><br>Laugavegur 25   <b>E5</b><br>www.knittingiceland.is                              |   |
| <b>Kunstschlager</b><br>Rauðarárstígur 1   <b>G8</b><br>Mon-Sat from 15-18<br>www.kunstschlager.com         |   |
| <b>Living Art Museum</b><br>Skúlagata 28   <b>E7</b><br>Tue-Sun 12-17<br>www.nylo.is                        |   |
| <b>Mengi</b><br>Óðinsgata 2   <b>F5</b>   |   |
| <b>Mokka Kaffi</b><br>Skólavörðustígur 3A   <b>F5</b><br>www.mokka.is                                       |   |
| <b>The National Gallery of Iceland</b><br>Frikirkjuvegur 7   <b>F3</b><br>Tue-Sun 11-17<br>www listasafn.is |   |
| <b>The National Museum</b><br>Suðurgata 41   <b>F2</b><br>Open daily 10-17<br>www.natmus.is                 |   |
| <b>The Nordic House</b><br>Sturlugata 5<br>Tue-Sun 12-17<br>www.nordice.is                                  |   |

G

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The vibe in **Osushi** is friendly and relaxed. The restaurant is located almost next door to Althingi (the parliament) which is in the heart of the city.

osushi.is



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# Best Of Reykjavík

Every year around the beginning of July, we make a BEST OF REYKJAVÍK ISSUE celebrating some of what makes Reykjavík-life worthwhile, posting some good entries into a hopefully never-ending discussion. The primary purpose of BEST OF REYKJAVÍK is celebration! It's about big-upping stuff, giving mad props to it and patting it on the shoulder. The following are some nice tips we pulled from BEST OF REYKJAVÍK 2014 which you can read in full at [www.grapevine.is](http://www.grapevine.is).



## BEST BAKERY: SANDHOLT

Laugavegur 36



Sandholt is another perennial Grapevine favourite that continues to deliver. And sure, its fresh croissants, pastries, breads, sandwiches and baked goods will set you back marginally more than some of the city's other top-of-the-line bakeries, but you won't regret spending the extra krónur, particularly if owner Ásgeir Sandholt has done the day's baking. A fourth-generation baker, Ásgeir still uses the same oven that his predecessors used when the bakery opened in 1920, although he has changed up nearly everything else about the place, including the bread recipe (a deceptively simple one which was in use 100 years ago). The bakery also expanded its seating area which makes stopping here for coffee and cake quite cosy, no matter the weather.



## BEST GALLERY: KLING OG BANG

Hverfisgata 42



At a recent exhibition including both a jar of peas and a video installation of a wiggling, polka-dotted ass, one Grapeviner nodded conclusively: "This is art." And yes, our panellists agree that Kling og Bang is the heart of Reykjavík's grassroots art scene, "the place where you see work by artists who aren't making money." But there's a lot of high profile work shown there, too. Recently, K&B hosted a five-part multimedia performance series in collaboration with New York's ESP TV, and "The Visitors" by fellow Reykjavík gallery i8's artist, Ragnar Kjartansson.



## BEST PLACE TO GET A TRENDY HAIRCUT: RAUÐHETTA OG ÚLFURINN

Skólavörðustígur 8



It turns out that restaurants and stores in Reykjavík aren't the only businesses benefiting from Iceland's tourism boom. Apparently, we've heard, hairdressers are getting a lot of drop-ins from tourists. "I want Icelandic hair," they say. "Give me Icelandic hair." While many (if not most) people go to the same hairdresser, and our hairdresser admitted that she would never just drop in somewhere random while vacationing in Rome, people apparently have great faith in Icelanders wielding scissors. Now, you don't have to go somewhere completely random though. Go to Rauðhetta og úlfurinn ('Little Red Riding Hood'), a three-time Grapevine winner that has stood the test of time, consistently delivering new and trendy haircuts.

## A GUIDE THAT FUCKS YOU UP

### A list of every Happy Hour in 101 Reykjavík

**101 Hótel**  
Every day from 16:00 to 18:00. Beer 600 ISK, Wine 840 ISK, Cocktails 1,500 ISK.

**Austur**  
Thursday to Saturday from 20:00 to 00:00. Beer 800 ISK, Wine 800 ISK.

**B5**  
Every day from 16:00 to 22:00. Beer 550 ISK, Cider 700 ISK, Wine 700 ISK.

**Bar 7**  
Every day from 16:00 to 20:00. Beer 350 ISK, Shot 450 ISK

**Bar 11**  
Thursday from 21:00 to 1:00. Beer 450 ISK  
Friday to Saturday from 21:00 to 00:00. Beer 500 ISK

**Bíó Paradís**  
Monday to Sunday from 17:00 to 19:30. 500 ISK all beers, 500 ISK selected wines.

**Bjarni Fel**  
Monday to Friday from 21:00 to 23:00. 2 for 1 Beer 990 ISK, single with mixer 1,300 ISK.

**Boston**  
Every day from 16:00 to 20:00. Beer 600 ISK, Wine 650 ISK.

**Bravó**  
Every day from 17:00 to 21:00. Beer 500 ISK, Wine 750 ISK.

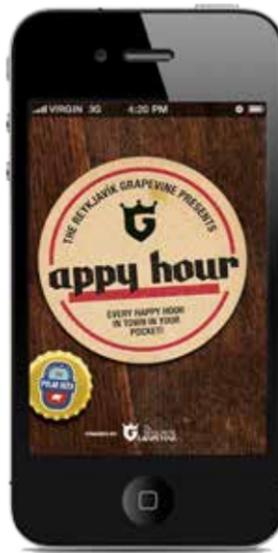
**Bunk Bar**  
Every day from 16:00 to 20:00. Beer 500 ISK, Wine 750 ISK.

**Cafe Haiti**  
Every day from 16:00 to 19:00. Beer 650 ISK, Wine 800 ISK.

**Den Danske Kro**  
Every day from 16:00 to 19:00. 2 for 1 Beer 1,000 ISK and 2 for 1 Wine 1,200 ISK.

**Dillon**  
Every day from 16:00 to 20:00. Beer 550 ISK, Wine for 700 ISK, Whiskey 550 ISK.

**Dolly**  
Wednesday to Thursday from 20:00 to 22:00, Friday to Saturday from 20:00 to 23:00. Beer 600 ISK, Wine 600 ISK.



## Download the FREE Grapevine Appy Hour app!

Every happy hour in town in your pocket. Available in the App Store and on the Android Market.

**Dubliner**  
Every day from 16:00 until 22:00. Beer 600 ISK, 2 for 1 Wine 1,000 ISK.

**Einar Ben** Every day from 17:00 to 20:00. Beer 500 ISK, Wine 800 ISK

**Frederiksen Ale House**  
Every day from 16:00 to 19:00. 2 for 1 Beer 1,000 ISK and Wine 1,100 ISK

**Gaukurinn**  
Every day from 20:00 to 22:00. Beer 500 ISK, Wine 700 ISK.

**Glaumbar**  
Thursday to Saturday from 20:00 to 00:00. Beer 500 ISK, Shot 390 ISK.

**Hótel 1919**  
Every day from 16:00 to 19:00. Beer 600 ISK, Wine 575 ISK, Cocktail 1,050 ISK

**Húrra**  
Every day from 18:00 to 22:00. Beer 500 ISK, Wine 700 ISK.

**Iða Zimsen**  
Coffee happy hour weekdays 8:00 to 10:00, weekends 10:00-12:00 All coffee 300 ISK. Every day from 19:00 to 22:00. Beer 445 ISK.

**Kaldi Bar**  
Every day from 16:00 to 19:00. Beer for 650 ISK, Wine for 650 ISK.

**Kiki Queer Bar**  
Thursday from 21:00 to 01:00. Beer 500 ISK, Shots 500 ISK.

**Kolabrautin**  
Every day from 16:00 to 18:00. Beer 450 ISK, Wine 500 ISK, Cocktails 1,000 ISK.

**Lebowski Bar**  
Every day from 16:00 to 19:00. 2 for 1 Beer and Wine 1,100 ISK.

**Loft Hostel Bar**  
Every day from 16:00 to 20:00. Beer 600 ISK, Wine 700 ISK.

**Micro Bar**  
Every day from 17:00 to 19:00. Beer 700 ISK.

**Mimisbar**  
Every day from 16:00 to 19:00. Beer 500 ISK, Wine 650 ISK, Cocktail of the day 1,100 ISK, Shot + Beer 1,000 ISK.

**Miðgarður Bistro bar**  
Every day from 17:00 to 19:00. Beer 500 ISK, Wine 600 ISK, all drinks half price.

**Nora Magasin**  
Every day from 16:00 to 19:00. Beer 650 ISK, House Wine 600 ISK.

**Park**  
Friday to Saturday from 22:00 to 04:30. Beer 500 ISK, Shot 400 ISK.

**Prikið**  
Monday to Friday from 16:00 to 20:00. Beer 500 ISK.

**Rio Sport Bar**  
Monday to Sunday from 12:00 to 19:00. Beer 500 ISK, Wine 700 ISK.

**Slippbarinn**  
Every day from 15:00 to 18:00. Beer 500 ISK, Wine 500 ISK, selected Cocktails 1,000 ISK.

**Solon Bistro**  
Weekdays from 15:00 to 18:00. Beer 650 ISK, Wine 700 ISK.

**Stofan**  
Every day from 17:00 to 20:00. Beer 750 ISK, Wine 950 ISK

**Thorvaldsen Bar**  
Monday to Saturday from 16:00 to 20:00. Beer 500 ISK, Wine 600 ISK.

**Tíu Dropar**  
Every day from 18:00 to 21:00. 2 for 1 Wine for 1,000 ISK and Beer 1,000 ISK.

**Vinsmakkarinn**  
Monday to Sunday from 17:00 to 20:00. Beer 600 ISK, Wine 700 ISK.

# ART

## ONGOING

### ASÍ Art Gallery

#### Ladies, Beautiful Ladies

Birgir Birgisson follows up on the questions at the heart of the politics of representation, addressed through the visual negotiations of blondes in our cultural environment. This exhibition presents a variety of works that reach from painting on canvas to installation, to works on paper and connects them to the issue of how identities are made, shaped, distributed and retold.

**Runs until December 31**

### Better Weather Window Gallery

#### 'Frámsóknarmaðurinn' by Snorri Ásmundsson

The opening exhibition for this new window gallery is by artist Snorri Ásmundsson who seeks to affect society with public events. He enjoys observing peoples response when accepted values are turned upside down.

**Runs until November 29**

### The Coooco's Nest

#### 'DEUS' by Þórdís Claessen

Visual artist Þórdís Claessen's newest painting exhibit is an ode to music, in which rock 'n' roll is taken to the divine level. The show consists of icons and holy imagery, where the religious aspect is replaced by instruments, pedals and other musical paraphernalia.

**Runs until November 9**

### The Einar Jónsson Museum

The museum contains close to 300 artworks including a beautiful garden with 26 bronze casts of the artist's sculptures.

**On permanent view**

### Gallerí Fold

Þorsteinn Helgason, who is known for his oil and acrylic paintings, has a new exhibit up. He's got quite a body of work and exhibits them at Gallery Fold.

**Runs until November 9**

Jóhann Smári exhibits two of his photographs of Eyjafjallajökull, that mountain that everyone was talking about back in 2010.

**Runs until November 30**

### Gallerí Skilti

#### Pura Vida

British artist S. Mark Gubb went to Costa Rica, got inspired by the casual atmosphere and the concept of "pura vida," the catchall phrase for positivity. So he brought it to Reykjavik with a sign that points anyone in the right direction to find their own Pura Vida, or good life.

**Runs until December 15**

### Gallerí Tukt

#### "Please come. It is important for me..."

Ganna Shvarova is a Ukrainian artist studying in Iceland whose exhibition dives into the perception of womanhood—she explores the transformation of the human soul, feelings and emotions.

**Runs until November 14**

### What Does A Person Experience When They Step Into New Surroundings?

A group of young Icelanders travelled to the southern part of Ethiopia this August, to experience a foreign culture in a country that has a drastically different infrastructure from Iceland. This group exhibit is a result of that journey.

**Runs until November 14**



**Impress and Depress**  
'New Works' by Jón Óskar

### The National Gallery

Fríkirkjuvegur 7 (F3) | Nov 7 - Feb 8 | ☎ 10-17 | 1,000 ISK

Jón Óskar's artwork is at once a part of, and unique from Iceland's chaotically diverse art scene. His works are often considered too large, too different, or too alien for Icelandic tastes—he frequently exposes his canvases to corrosive chemicals, hot wax, or other forms of damage, before then repairing them again, leaving his finished paintings bearing the scars of ill treatment. By using a narrow spectrum of colour, his paintings are bound to impress and depress. His works then explore the conflict between the surface of the picture plane and the subjects he portrays, whether they are portraits, historical themes, or personal references. **SV**

### Gerðarsafn

#### AIM XV

Sculptor Helgi Hjaltalín Eyjólfsson and visual artist Pétur Örn Friðriksson have a show together focusing on goals.

**Runs until November 15**

### Hafnarborg

#### Lip-Sticks

This is an engaging exhibition of paintings by leading young Icelandic artists who dazzle the viewer with colourful narratives and blunt attitudes. The artists are Gabriela Friðriksdóttir, Guðmundur Thoroddsen, Helgi Þórsson, Hulda Vilhjálmsdóttir, Ragnar Þórisson, Þorvaldur Jónsson and Þórdís Aðalsteinsdóttir.

**Runs until January 4**

### Hverfisgalleri

Sigtryggur Bjarni Baldvinsson's paintings, watercolours and photographic work. Water-based leitmotifs such as running water and oceanic surfaces are woven into his work, reflecting the elements of light, air and earth and nature's unique powers such as wind and gravity.

**Runs until November 22**

### Hornið (Gallery)

#### 'Take two' by Jóhann Vilhjálmsson

Artist Jóhann Vilhjálmsson is a chef by profession and has practiced singing, music and drawing from early age. Jóhann uses a collection of different pens, pastel colours and ink in his work. His pictures are steeped in symbolism and surrealism, with a fluid sense of form. The works include portraits, album covers, landscapes, animal and nature pictures, magic and witchcraft.

**Runs until November 18**

### i8

#### 'Along The Shore' by Lawrence Weiner

This is Lawrence third solo show at i8. Lawrence is one of the founding figures of the conceptual arm of post minimalism, and the exhibition features wall works, drawings and objects based on language, which is Lawrence's primary medium.

**Runs until November 29**

### The Icelandic Phallogical Museum

The museum contains a collection of more than 215 penises and penile parts

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### LIP-STICKS

Works by 7 contemporary artists  
**Works from the collection of Hafnarborg**  
by Elías B. Halldorsson

### Kópavogur Art Museum / Gerðarsafn

Hamraborg 4, Kópavogur  
Open 11-17 / Closed on Mondays  
www.gerdarsafn.is

### Hönnunarsafn Íslands / Museum of Design and Applied Art

Garðatorg 1, Garðabær  
Open 12-17 / Closed on Mondays  
www.honnunarsafn.is

### Hafnarborg / The Hafnarfjörður Centre of Culture and Fine Art

Strandgata 34, Hafnarfjörður  
Open 12-17 / Thursdays 12-21  
Closed on Tuesdays  
www.hafnarborg.is

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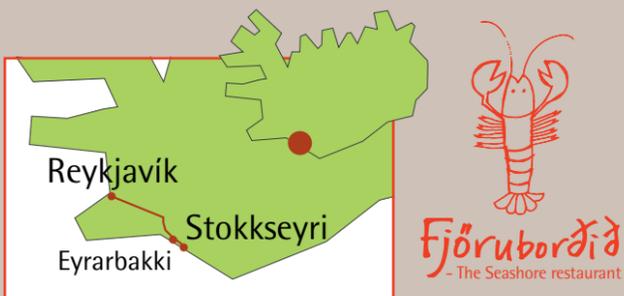


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# ART ONGOING



## Home Sweet Home

'Lumine Maris Ubique' by Alexander Zaklynsy

### Gallery Bakarí

Skólavörðustíg 40 (F5) | Nov 21 - Dec 5 | ☺ 12 - 18 | Free!

Home Sweet Home acts as a homecoming exhibition of sorts for artist Alexander Zaklynsy, who has been in a self-imposed exile for the past three years (ie: partaking in artist residencies all over the world). His new exhibit takes inspiration from the late Dieter Roth and his changing physical environments. In this particular exhibit, Alexander will be showing new works on paper and in bronze, aluminum and wood. **TD**

belonging to almost all the land and sea mammals that can be found in Iceland. There's also a penis sculpture honoring the Icelandic men's handball team, though confusingly it does not feature their actual penises.

**On permanent view**

#### Kex Hostel

#### Look Into The Light

A photography exhibition celebrating Reykjavik's beloved annual music festival. It featuring images from some of the best local music photographers and showcases a wide range of local and international artists, including Ásgeir, Emilíana Torrini, Fucked Up, John Grant, Omar Souleyman and Sigur Rós.

**Runs until November 25**

#### Kling & Bang

#### Bismuth

This is a solo exhibition by Daniel Björnsson examining the crystalline, colourful, brittle

post-transition metal element.

**Runs until November 23**

#### Kunstschlager Phenomenal

This project is a collaborative one between performance artists who use public space as their canvas. The exhibition at Kunstschlager then brings all the live performances together under one roof, recorded and documented in a variety of ways.

**Runs until November 22**

#### Listamenn Gallerí

**Oh no! Einar Örn used his time to draw**

Einar Örn is not widely known for his drawings. He is though known for his activity with The Sugarcubes and plays this festival with his band Ghostigital.

**Runs until November 22**

#### Living Art Museum

#### Laboratory Aim Density - FOREVER! just ended

Rebecca Moran is launching her solo exhibition in the museums' new project space in Völvufell 13-21. The museum is also opening its doors to the Living Collection; the new collection and archive space. Moran's work often delves into the subjective approach to the everyday.

**Runs until November 13**

#### Mokka Kaffi

#### 'Músik & Sport' by Stephan Stephensen

In this exhibition Stephan revisits an odd little shop from his childhood, that he cites as the starting point where he embarked on the journey to become the man he is today. The show offers a glimpse into that journey. As a founding member of electronic band Gusgus, the exhibition also features a photographic chronicle of his time with the group.

**Runs until 6 December**

#### Museum of Design and Applied Art

#### Are you ready, Madam President?

The exhibition displays clothing and other accessories from the wardrobe of former Icelandic President Vigdís Finnbogadóttir. The exhibition gives visitors a glimpse into Vigdís's preferences in choosing her wardrobe and style, and also the personal lives and habits of heads of state.

**Runs until February 22**

#### Prýði

To celebrate 90 years of the Goldsmith's Association of Iceland, 40 Icelandic goldsmiths will exhibit their works. Expect a diverse variety of jewellery and other pieces, with inspiration spanning from over the century.

**Runs until January 25**

#### National Gallery

#### Video Screenings at the Café

The Vasulkas have taken over the café video space, leaving visitors with material spread over three floors where they can experience many of Steina and Woody Vasulka's greatest work.

**Runs until November 7**

#### Vasulka Chamber

For the 130<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the National Gallery, the gallery will showcase the Vasulka Chamber, a department of video and media art.

**On permanent view**

#### The National Museum

#### Icelandic Silverwork

Visitors can see various silver pieces and the methods of their making at this exhibit commemorating the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the National Museum of Iceland.

**Runs until December 31**

#### Sodium Sun

Photographer Stuart Richardson exhibits a series of photographs on Icelandic streetlights, their locales and the weather.

**Runs until December 31**

#### The Making Of A Nation

This exhibition is intended to provide insight into the history of the Icelandic nation, from the country's settlement to the present day.

**On permanent view**

#### Snapshots Of A Moment

Þorsteinn Jóseppsson was a widely travelled author and journalist. Þorsteinn's photography presents an intricate panorama of Icelandic life and a rapidly changing rural landscape. His collection of photographs is one of the largest, most important and most comprehensive private collections from the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

**Runs until December 31**

#### Rammagerðin

#### Closing Down Event

The folks at Rammagerðin are moving shop from Hafnarstræti 19, as the building is being torn down. Designer Húgrún Ívarsdóttir will talk customers through her designs, and on Saturday and Sunday there will be free customly cut laufabrauð on offer.

**Runs until November 10**

#### Reykjavík Art Museum - Ásmundarsafn

#### A posteriori: House, Sculpture

A posteriori, or "from what comes after," is a selection of artworks with original references to buildings or houses. The artists involved in the exhibition have used existing or fabricated architecture to create new works.

**Runs until February 1**

#### Reykjavík Art Museum - Hafnarhús

#### 'Flatland' by Sirra Sigrún

In her exhibition, Sirra Sigrún juxtaposes structural stasis with movement by

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# ART

## ONGOING

integrating video with text, movement and sculpture. The exhibit's title is a reference, among other things, to a book of the same title published in 1884 which is a satirical portrayal of the social hierarchy using the language of mathematics and geometry.

**Runs until January 25**

### Synthesis

This international exhibition comprises works by seven artists. The artists make three-dimensional installations which share the qualities of reflecting a certain perception, thinking and rhythm, which may be seen as an echo of life itself, of primal forces, the structure of the fabric of the world and the ongoing genesis of the universe.

**Runs until January 15**

### Worlds And Ways

This exhibition is a selection of works by Gunter Damisch from the 1980s to 2013. On display are both graphic works which Gunter has given Reykjavik Art Museum and a selection of other works by him. The works are highly individual iconography and mythology oscillates between figuration and abstraction.

**Runs until January 25**

### Reykjavik Art Museum - Kjarvalsstaðir

#### 'Roundabouts' by Andreas Eriksson

Andreas Eriksson is one of the most acclaimed Swedish artists of his generation. The exhibition presents Eriksson's works from the last ten years, spanning his entire oeuvre including painting, photography, sculpture, film and textile.

**Runs until January 4**

### Top Soil

For the exhibition, artist Andreas Eriksson has selected paintings and drawings by Kjarval, which will be shown along with new work by Andreas himself in appreciation of Kjarval's art.

**Runs until January 4**

### The Reykjavik City Library

The collection centres around new Nordic literature, both fiction and nonfiction. The library lends out novels, academic publications, audiobooks and more.

**On permanent view**

### Reykjavik City Museum

#### The Settlement Exhibition

Archaeological findings from ruins of one of the first houses in Iceland (from 871 AD, give or take two years) and other excavations in the city centre.

**On permanent view**

### Reykjavik Maritime Museum

#### From Poverty to Abundance

Photos documenting Icelandic fishermen at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

**On permanent view**

### The History of Sailing

Iceland's maritime museum showcases the growth of the Reykjavik Harbour through history.

**On permanent view**

### The Coast Guard Vessel Óðinn

This vessel sailed through all three Cod Wars and has also served as a rescue ship to over 200 ships.

**On permanent view**

### The Reykjavik Museum of Photography

#### Girl Culture

The exhibit focuses on the central role occupied by popular culture in the construction or deconstruction of female identity. The exhibition consists of portrait images and interviews that cast a light on the experiences and expressions of women today.

**Runs until January 11**

### 'Iceland' by Beth Yarnelle Edwards

Fascinated with the relations between people, their living spaces and possessions, the San Francisco based photographer Beth Yarnelle Edwards collaborates with her subjects to recreate scenes from their daily lives. The Iceland series was created when she spent a summer month in Iceland. Her aim is to seek out intersections of the mythic and mundane.

**Runs until December 9**

### Sím

#### 'Single Lines' by Eriá Þórarinsdóttir

The exhibition consists of painted metal sheets where the paint is allowed to run down the sheet and continue in a straight line.

**Runs until November 25**

### Spark Design Space

#### 'Urban Shape' by Paolo Gianfrancesco

The exhibition by artist Paolo Gianfrancesco is a series of maps of



**Airwaves In Focus**  
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### KEX Hostel

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Airwaves fever has officially descended upon Reykjavik, and will linger on long after the festival finishes. To celebrate this ultra fun time of the year, some of the country's most talented photographers have pooled their talents to bring you some photographic delights, celebrating the Iceland Airwaves festival. **MC**

Photo by Magnús Elvar Jónsson

every European capital. Using Open Street Map (OSM) data, the maps are meant to represent a view of the cities rather than try to capture the reality of them, because cities are not static like maps but are continuously evolving over time.

**Runs until November 11**

### Týsgalleri

#### 'Are You Sure' by Björk Guðnadóttir

Björk Guðnadóttir's exhibits three photographic works and a video installation made over the last two years. Björk explores the eternal and ever challenging questions on the existence of mankind, the impulse of humans to make things and creating new dimensions in our conscience.

**Runs until November 22**

#### 'KOK' by Kristín Eiríksdóttir

Kristín exhibits illustrations from her latest book, 'KOK.'

**Runs until November 22**

### Volcano House

The exhibition gives a brief overview of Iceland's geological history and volcanic systems with superb photographs of volcanic eruptions and other magnificent aspects of Icelandic nature.

**On permanent view**

### Wind And Weather Gallery

#### 'Enter. Space.' by Auður Ómarsdóttir

The exhibit focuses on those two buttons: enter and space. Both make space. Enter gives you an invisible pass into another realm or a leap down as far as possible. Space gives you an invisible room that keeps words apart from each other.

**Runs until December 29**

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# FOOD

FOR YOUR MIND BODY AND SOUL



## As Icelandic As The Wind And Rain

### Café Loki

Lokastígur 28, 101 Reykjavík

#### What We Think:

Seems like a tourist trap, but it isn't.

#### Flavour:

Traditional Icelandic.

#### Ambiance:

Very clean. The sound system blares '50s Icelandic pop standards.

#### Service:

Very polite, enthusiastic young servers.

#### Price for 2 (no drinks):

5-6,000 ISK (very fair).



Is there any Icelandic culinary tradition to speak of? This is a question I've often struggled with. Some of our more "traditional" dishes might be rooted in Nordic culture—as our Scandinavian neighbours seem to have similar ones—but most of what gets called "traditional Icelandic food" these days was simply created out of chance or necessity.

Smoked lamb ("hangikjöt"), for example, only became popular in the late 19th/early 20th century, after failed attempts by Icelandic farmers to breed sheep for exporting purposes. Suddenly Icelanders had an overabundance of lamb meat to contend with, and the only way to keep it edible was to cure and smoke the hell out of it, in the style that our Danish overlords liked to treat their fabled pork. What we

got was "hangikjöt."

Hangikjöt quickly became popular among the locals and is by now ubiquitous—if you want a taste, you can find it at pretty much any supermarket (or gas station for that matter). However, if you want to properly feast on the recently traditional dish, in a nice and cosy setting, Café Loki is your place, as I learned one rainy, windy Sunday afternoon.

Without ever actually visiting the place, I had always considered Café Loki to be a tourist trap. My prejudice probably stems from the fact that the restaurant is located right across the road from Reykjavík's main tourist attraction, Hallgrímskirkja, surrounded by B&Bs, hotels and guesthouses. I am very happy to report that I was absolutely wrong on this account.

Arriving at Café Loki, my companion and I were given some of the best tables in the place, with a great view of Hallgrímskirkja and Skólavörðuholt. There is something quite comfortable about sitting in a warm and bright restaurant, gleefully observing passersby struggling with Reykjavík's strong autumn wind.

Café Loki offers a fine sampling of what's officially deemed "Icelandic food." They bake fresh rye bread daily (the kind of dense, almost cake-like rye bread that is sweet and malty in flavour) along with traditional Icelandic pancakes and flatbreads ("flatökukur").

Café Loki's menu basically consists of rye bread or flatbread topped with various delicacies, including pickled herring, eggs or lamb paté. For a starter we chose a rye bread with smoked arctic char and cottage cheese (1,290 ISK), which I highly recommend. The contrast of the salty and smoky fish against the sweetness and density of

the rye bread is really delicious, and goes wonderfully well with a crisp white wine or an ale with a sweet or malty finish.

For our main course we both had the crown jewel of Icelandic cuisine, Icelandic meat soup ("íslensk kjötsúpa") (1,750 ISK). This very traditional soup is basically a broth of lamb, carrots, yellow turnips and onions, flavoured with parsley and made a bit heavier with a handful of rice. This version is the classic, which most Icelanders grew up eating on a regular basis. It is a very comforting dish, even though it is often bland and sometimes too greasy. While it was perfectly balanced in the grease department, we found Café Loki's kjötsúpa to be a bit lacking in flavour—a bolder approach to the seasoning would have made a big difference. Still, the soup made for a very satisfactory meal, especially once we poured a bit of Tabasco in there (I'm not kidding, it makes ALL the difference!).

For dessert, we decided to share a house speciality, a rye bread ice cream topped with whipped cream (750 ISK), a delightfully simple dish that serves to underline the sweetness of Icelandic rye bread. And it was a real treat, the soft homemade ice cream contrasting nicely with the almost crunchy pieces of rye.

I must admit, Café Loki took me by surprise, and I learned my previous ideas about it being a tourist trap were entirely unfair and unfounded. With very fair prices and above-average food, it's safe to recommend Café Loki to anyone wanting to try a bit of local flavour.

✍ BJÖRN TEITSSON  
📷 ANNA DOMNICK

#109



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# FOOD

FOR YOUR MIND BODY AND SOUL



## Drive-Thru & Rib-Up

### Dirty Burger & Ribs

Miklabraut 101, 108 Reykjavík

#### What We Think:

Best ribs, so-and-so burgers

#### Flavour:

Smokey, fatty, tangy, meaty, American

#### Ambiance:

Dependent on the comfort level of your car

#### Service:

Fast and friendly

**Price for 2 (no drinks):**  
2,500-3,500 ISK



When I first heard that native Icelander Agnar 'Aggi' Sigurðsson, the founder of Michelin-awarded London restaurant Texture, was opening up a drive-thru in The Motherland, I immediately ran to the tallest peak of social media and let out a tweet of joy, which blew through its verdant fields. Hark! I harkened! I pictured gravlax and heirloom tomato sandwiches, trout ceviche with local herbs, and foie gras skewers wrapped in dainty quail omelettes. When I learned it was only going to serve burgers and ribs I collapsed like a puppet with its strings cut. I stared into the rainy Icelandic summer and nibbled forlornly at the celebratory prosciutto hats I had made for the dainty quail omelettes.

Eventually, I got over it and accepted that Aggi simply wanted to open a decent drive-thru burger shack. Personally I could go the rest of my life without hear-

ing another internet foodie evangelize about the Maillard reaction but I get it. People like burgers, and it's hard not to see why. Icelanders are gradually recovering from the recession, but, as before, it's the top percent who are profiting better than ever, and the bottom 50% are only just clawing their way to the lofty heights of living hand-to-mouth with rising food prices (unless they can get by on that 250 ISK/meal).

So, unless Reykjavík turns into London's successor, and the rich start moving here en masse, a moderately priced burger remains a more viable business plan than yet another high-end eatery. To drive the point home, Dirty Burger & Ribs offered free burgers on their opening day back in August, and the line stretched for hours—putting on display hundreds of Icelanders who valued their hour at no more than \$8 and change.

It's easy to assume Aggi may have taken two recent success stories from the UK—where he lives and works—as his inspiration. Firstly, there's the biggest overnight retail success story of an Icelander in London, ever, in the form of the Tommi's Burger Joint (aka Hamborgarabúlla Tómasar) franchise. Secondly we have the familiarly named franchise "Dirty Burger" in Kentish Town in London. In addition to the name, Dirty Burger & Ribs has trod a very similar path in terms of interior design. Both are faux-rustic seaside shacks, with the London one favouring corrugated iron and the Reykjavík one favouring something like driftwood. It would have made more sense if it was the other way around—as corrugated siding is the quintessential finish in Icelandic fishing villages.

That said, the bathroom looks nicer than my apartment. And it's a drive-thru

with barstools and a liquor license. Which is slightly odd when you consider that the place is very difficult to access without a motorized vehicle.

Dirty Burger & Ribs has four items on the menu: The burger (990 ISK), the fries (390 ISK), the pork spare ribs (990 ISK) and shakes (690 ISK).

The burger is good but suffered from excessive hype. An almost-slider with a well-cooked chunk of above-average beef, relish-mayo and unmelted cheese. The bread is good, the meat is good, and it all tastes quite a bit like Hamborgarabúllan.

The main attraction is the ribs. They get them completely right. Even down to offering extra BBQ sauce and wet wipes, two essentials that are too often overlooked. The ribs were dripping off the bone like a gaggle of Nazis spooning on top of the Ark of the Covenant, and the meaty fibres put up less resistance than Norway—if Quisling had been a sweet and tangy sauce. These are the best damn ribs I've had in Iceland. And Dirty Burger & Ribs is the best drive-thru join in Iceland (although with Aktu-Taktu as the nearest competition, this may be damning with faint praise).

(One last thing. Since we're naming places after storylines in Trailer Park Boys I would like to request that the next drive-thru to open in Iceland be named after episode two of season one: "Fuck Community College, Let's Get Drunk and Eat Chicken Fingers." They should serve chicken fingers, rum, and coke. Please make this happen.)

RAGNAR EGILSSON  
ANNA DOMNICK



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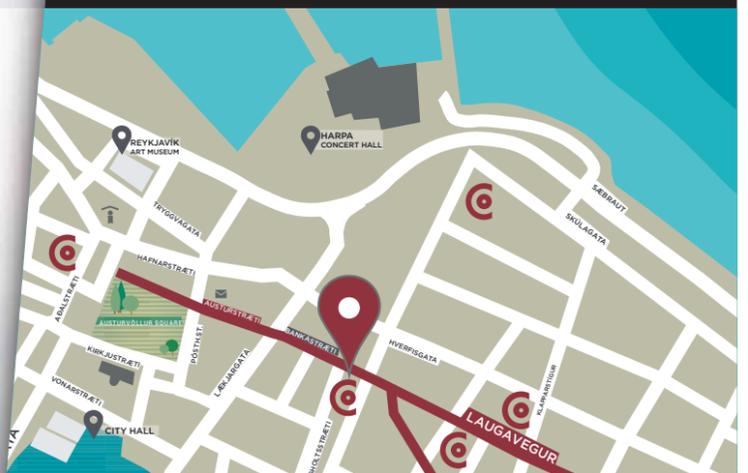
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