



The REYKJAVÍK GRAPEVINE



CULTURE NIGHT 
20.08 · 2011
FULL SCHEDULE INSIDE

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THE ESSENTIAL GUIDE TO LIFE, TRAVEL & ENTERTAINMENT IN ICELAND

IN THE ISSUE Issue 12 • 2011 • August 12 - August 25

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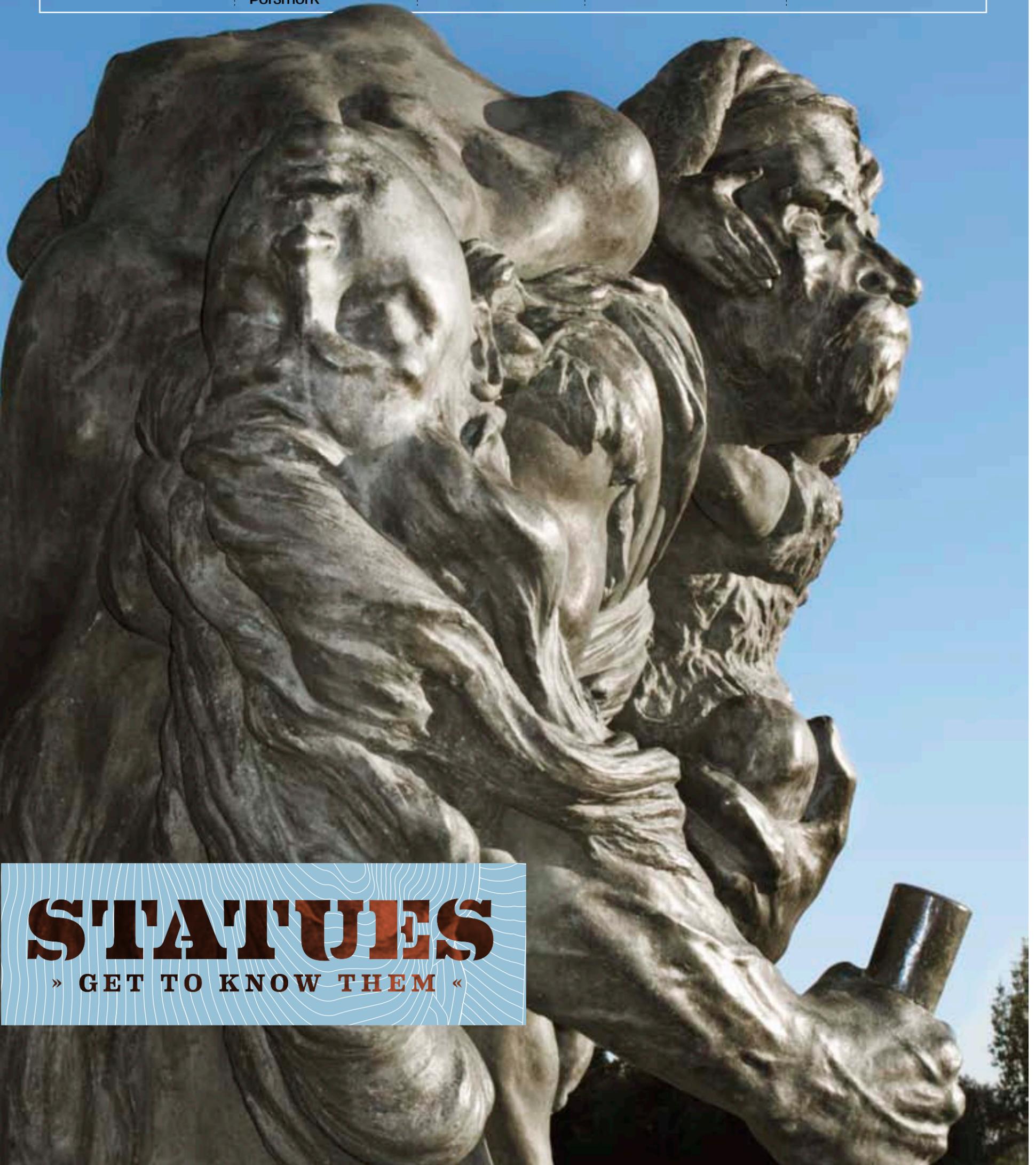
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You may not like it, but at least it's not sponsored (no articles in the Reykjavík Grapevine are pay-for articles. The opinions expressed are the writers' own, not the advertisers').



On the cover:
Útlaginn (the Outlaw)
by Einar Jónsson
Photo:
Hrafnkell Sigurðsson
www.hrafnkellsigurdsson.com

Who Are Our Übermenschen?

Anna's 2nd Editorial



It wasn't until two weeks ago when we decided to print a walking tour of some of Einar Jónsson's statues around town. And since then I've noticed people—well, tourists—noticing them, taking photos of them and taking their photos with them. It's rather curious to think about people's albums with photos of these statues and what it is about them that attract tourists.

I came across an interview on NPR in which Jón Gnarr suggests that the city build the ultimate tourist statue: "We should have this huge statue of Björk at the harbour like the Statue of Liberty" he told NPR, "and instead of a torch she would be having a microphone and she would shout out some information about Reykjavík in three different languages and she would be revolving, you know? And also there would be lights. Her eyes would shoot lights on interesting tourist spots in Reykjavík."

It sounds incredibly outlandish, but then there are some pretty outlandish things (stuffed polar bears on Laugavegur) that attract tourists. However, the statues in Reykjavík, which often attract a superficial glance or a photo from tourists, are really worth a closer look. They say a lot about a place—its history and its culture. Representing our Viking inheritance, for instance, there are Ingólfur Arnarson and Leifur Eiríksson. Icelanders often consider themselves to be like these brave, heroic and testosterone-bulging males—an attitude that led to the 'outvasion' and the financial collapse.

Then there are our Independence heroes, Jón Sigurðsson and Jónas Hallgrímsson, who appear brave and heroic as statues, but were nothing like the brave Vikings. "It is often said that the pen was his weapon," Egill Helgason wrote about Jón Sigurðsson in The Grapevine a few issues ago. And of course Jónas Hallgrímsson is perhaps one of the few historic Icelanders past Viking age to die

a heroic death—he fell down stairs in a drunken stupor, broke his leg and died of complications.

Perhaps the cognitive dissonance between this ingrained idea of Viking heroism and historical fact of non-heroism is partly to blame for widespread dysfunction in the Icelandic society. Even Chuck Palahniuk could not have dreamt up a society in which 10% of all living males over the age of 15 have been admitted for inpatient alcohol treatment. And what about the women? And where are their statues?

We should pay more attention to the statues around us, as they really say more about us than the cursory glance suggests. And perhaps Jón Gnarr's giant Björk tourist statue is not such an outlandish idea. It's arguably a pretty authentic representation of what we are today... Now I encourage everyone to go explore Reykjavík's statues, get to know them, and don't return home with JUST another photo of a statue in Reykjavík.



TRACK OF THE ISSUE

Djamm í kvöld
Steindi Jr. (featuring Ásgeir Orri)

Download at www.grapevine.is

Comedy, music and social commentary are seldom strangers to each other. Randy Neuman often blended the three, as have countless punk rock bands. Comedian and musician Steindi Jr. has now done the same with this track, 'Djamm í kvöld' (Party Tonight).

The song follows an ordinary guy who "drinks four light beers, and then goes straight back home in a taxi," and then disappears for a month as he careens into an alcoholic tailspin. This human disaster is driven ever-onwards towards self-destruction due to his unrelenting need to go clubbing and partying "tomorrow and the next day and the next day and the next."

The best part of the song, though, is the delivery. The track is a fairly infectious dance groove, replete with a solid beat, ear worming bass line and washes of strings that don't overwhelm. Steindi Jr's rap delivery is confident, clear and assured, which might explain why you can often see people unironically dancing to this track in clubs, perhaps oblivious to the song's statement on our fair country's famed love affair with drinking to excess. Or maybe because of it, who knows?

In any event, you can download this track from our website, www.grapevine.is for free, or head on down to a music store near you and buy Steindi Jr's CD. Án djóks samt djók (Not kidding but still kidding) and listen to what else he has to offer. As a rising star in Iceland's comedy world, it definitely helps that he also happens to be a competent musician.



BE SQUARE AND BE THERE

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

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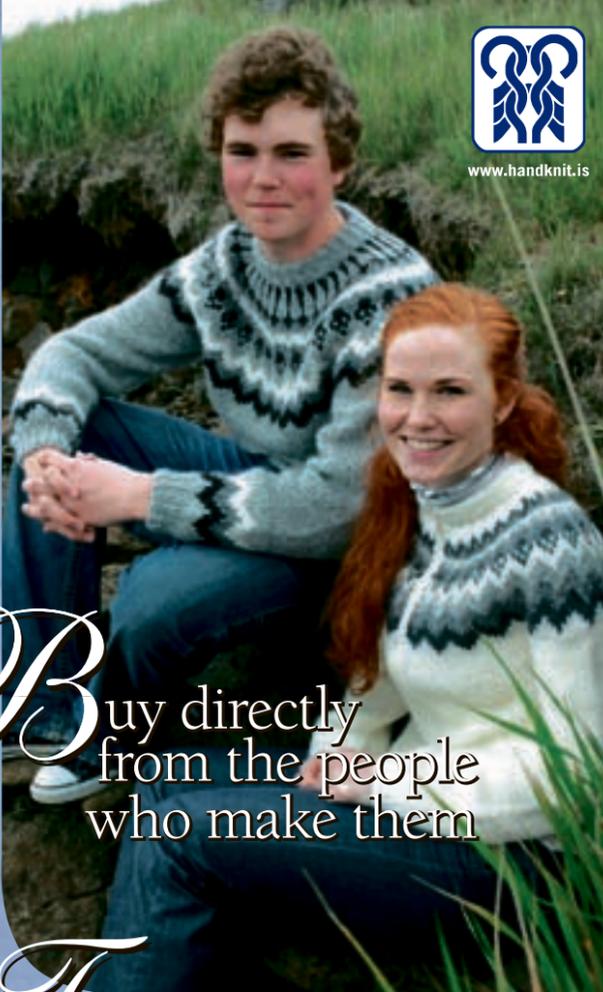
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Did you hear that? Write in and complain about something (in an admirable way), win a gourmet feast at one of Reykjavik's finest? **THIS IS THE DEAL OF THE CENTURY IS WHAT IT IS!**

What's in a 'lobster feast'? Well, one has to assume that it has lobster-a-plenty. Is there more? Probably, but still... Gourmet feast? Wow! **DON'T PANIC** if your letter wasn't picked **AWESOME LETTER**. There's always next month!

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

MOST AWESOME LETTER:

It is ridiculous that Don Freeman gets to write in this paper. [<http://www.grapevine.is/Home/ReadArticle/WHALING-IN-ICE-LAND>]

First of all, he is nothing more than a racist when it comes to Icelanders and wants to believe the worst about us. He leads his life writing badly of Iceland in all the papers, on the internet, and on his own Facebook page called Fuck off Iceland leave the whales alone <http://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=9242268006>.

I have sometimes talked to him on the net and the thing that annoys me the most is that he has no interest that Iceland stops whaling. His interest is in attacking the country with economic sanctions and will stand over us, laughing, when the Icelandic business world collapses and we go back 50 to 80 years.

And you let these kinds of people write in your paper?

I am for writing about whale hunting but to a person like this to write about whaling is like getting Hitler to write about the Holocaust.

If people like him get to write in your paper, then I will never read the paper again and will see to it that my associates, i.e. advertisers in your paper, learn what kind of people are allowed to write in this paper.

Thanks, Huguín

Dear Huguín,

Wow. We must say, this has been a most enjoyable and educational letter. We weren't aware that Icelanders were a race, for example, or that criticising the practices of one private business constitutes outright slander of an entire nation. Nor were we aware of Don Freeman's fiendish plot to crush the Icelandic economy. But the cherry on top would have to be invoking Hitler (although the metaphor is confusing – if Don writing about whaling is like Hitler writing about the Holocaust, does that not make Don pro-whaling, or Hitler anti-Holocaust?). Hitler classifies-up any argument, no matter what anyone says. Kudos, Huguín. You have elevated the discourse to levels normally only seen on 4chan. And for that we award you **MOST AWESOME LETTER!**

Hello.

This is a completely selfish letter, written and published (I hope!) for purposes entirely of my own self-gain (again, I hope!)

Woody by Reykjavik and her dangerously seductive nightlife last Saturday night (July 30) I managed to misplace my bright orange Panasonic Lumix DMC-TS2 digital camera whilst out (exact venues, unknown). It's not so much the loss of the camera that upsets me (easily replaceable) but the memory card containing two weeks of Icelandic adventure, discovery and emotion. And so I am writing this letter in the vain hope that someone met my camera during its runaway journey that fateful night and may be kind and honest enough to return to me the memories of this extraordinary country.

I place my faith and hope in you, good people of Reykjavik.

Kay-Dee, Australia

Hay Kay Dee,

What a bummer. Hopefully one of our readers has found your bright orange Panasonic Lumix DMC-TS2 digital camera, and hopefully they also have the decency to send it to you. We'd like to think our readers would be decent enough to do that (but then that might be naive). Anyways, we hope you are at least left with some non-photographic memories from your stay (given the odds).

Peace.

Amongst the concerns, are polar bears that have natural habitat in the waters around the west of Alaska, that have been swimming for hundreds of miles, and showing up in unusual places doing unusual things. To help defend us, needed is to further our understanding of bear animal behavior.

We are in times where it seems glacier melting is pushing these animals out of their normally associated setting, and into conditions they are not as well adapted to.

Unmarked, such as by conservationists, bears that have more experience underwater could have correlations.

There is Þorvaldur Friðriksson, who has erudition of sea creatures, and am seeking to send correspondence to him, so that he can provide me with knowledge and wisdom for the cause just explained. Does he have an e-mail, website, or method of reaching him, and if so, please send to me, as you may be permitted.

Þorvaldur Friðriksson is in an article written by Paul Fontaine, an author that writes for you. There stands the chance that Paul Fontaine might have access to how to reach him. What is the e-mail address of Paul Fontaine, in event this is necessary?

The article is 'Claims Sea Monster Lives In Fjord', dated 1.7.2011, [<http://grapevine.is/News/ReadArticle/Claims-Sea-Monster-Lives-In-Fjord>]

Árni Kópsson told Visir that he sent a deep sea camera into the bottom of the fjord to record what may be in one of the craters recently found there by the Marine Research Institute a few years ago. Apart from fish and shrimp, Árni says he saw something else.

"There was some kind of creature that you couldn't see really well," he said. "Something that was quick to make itself scarce when you got near it."

Þorvaldur Friðriksson, an expert in monsters, who accompanied the trip, says

that the purpose of the investigation was to gather evidence for sea monsters in the area. Þorvaldur has collected monster stories from all over the region, which is famously rife with tales of sea monsters.'

In the foreseeable future, Þorvaldur Friðriksson would be invited to lecture those of us in the U.S. so that we can better prepare ourselves for possible interfaces with bears and these kinds of animals. Your newspaper will receive much credit for your assistance.

There stands a high chance that polar bears are included in the animals that Þorvaldur Friðriksson covers. The 1000 page book on creatures he has prepared, may have content which would be helpful to us.

Founder of ETIS International, a company which works for betterment of the environment, we sincerely look forward to hearing from you.

Many thanks, A, Luqman

Dear A, Luqman,

Oh, yes. We in Iceland know all about the dangers of bear landings. We also emphatically believe that this country is not doing enough to prepare for a possible monster landing. I mean sure, polar bears haven't killed anyone in recent Icelandic history, but why take chances (and not murder them)? The same goes for sea monsters. If a polar can tear a man in half with the casual swat of his paw, there's no telling what the much larger sea monster could do. Not to mention, those lizards.

It would be our pleasure to put you in touch with Þorvaldur Friðriksson, and we believe he may be of some assistance. Best of luck in all your preparedness endeavours.

Licensing and registration of travel-related services

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

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

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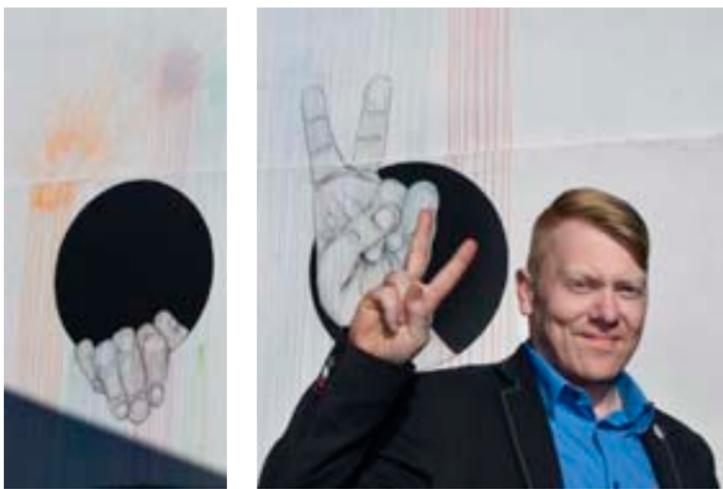
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Reykjavík | Welcome to!

Mayor's Address: WELCOME TO REYKJAVÍK



Dear reader,

Welcome to Iceland. Whether you're here for fun and travel or for business, I hope you'll enjoy a good time here and will get to know some locals. I would also like to make a special request that you spend a lot of money throughout the duration of your stay. Do not save on dining and drinking. Allow yourself some luxury. You deserve it, and it is good for the economy. I ask that you do not visit the retail outlets run by the Salvation Army (Gardastræti 6, 101 Reykjavík) or the Red Cross (Laugavegur 12, 101 Reykjavík). Even though they are fun shops, they are rather inexpensive. You should rather visit more expensive shops.

A lot of tourists that visit the country wonder why it is called Iceland, because—despite what the name might indicate—it isn't at all cold here. The average temperature in Reykjavík is 1°C. Nowhere in the world has better summers than Iceland. It might snow in the month of June, however. That is called 'a spring snowfall'. July is the hottest month. When it comes around you better have a t-shirt handy, because the temperature can reach up to 20°C. Weather.com often states a temperature followed with a "feels like" temperature. When the heat in Reykjavík reaches 20°C, they will often say it "feels like" 15°C. That is probably due to something known as 'the wind chill factor.' No Icelander understands this. If we had this "feels like" feature in our

weather reporting, we would say that it "feels like" 40°C whenever the temperature reached 20°C, without exception. This demonstrates the importance of 'mentality' and 'attitude.'

But how can it be that such a warm country came to possess such a frigid name? Yes, the explanation is simple: MISUNDERSTANDING. Ingólfur Arnarson, the first man that found Reykjavík, wasn't on his way here at all. He was en route to the United States of America, to buy grapes and other fast food that grew wild there in those days. He was very interested in food. And also homicide. On his way he noticed a cloud of smoke ascending to the heavens from an unknown country. His curious nature got the best of him, and he changed his course and set sail to Reykjavík (Reykjavík literally means "smoky bay").

As he disembarked his ship, he saw that the smoke was in fact steam rising from Reykjavík's many swimming pools. He was therefore quick in tearing off the suit of armour that he had worn in case he'd encounter some Native Americans while picking grapes, and jumping into some swim trunks. After swimming a good 500 metres he sat in the hot tub and relaxed. After a fun chat with the locals he had forgotten all about America. Who needs to travel all the way to America to pick grapes when there's a shop on Laugavegur called Vínberíð (Vínberíð literally means: "the grape")? Ingólfur decided to settle here. He rented a small apartment along with his wife, Hallveig Fróðadóttir, who

many claim was the daughter of Frodo from 'Lord Of The Rings,' Nothing has been proven about that, however.

One day Ingólfur and Hallveig were taking a stroll around town. They were walking their dog, who was called Plúto and was a Great Dane. It was a sizzling hot summer's day. It was long before the t-shirt was invented. They were both dressed in full suits of armour, with swords and shields and helmets and everything. They stopped by at Ísbúð Vesturbæjar in Hagamelur to get some ice cream and cool down. The story goes that Ingólfur asked the clerk whether she knew what the country was called.

She thought it was called Thule. Ingólfur felt that was a stupid name.

"No country can be called Thule," he said.

Outside the ice cream shop, a crowd had gathered. They had heard that foreign visitors were in town. A lot of those people were elves. Ingólfur then approached the crowd, raised his ice cream cone aloft and shouted:

"Henceforth this country will be called Iceland, because one can get the world's best ice cream here!"

Today we have a statue of Ingólfur. The statue depicts Ingólfur dying of heat, leaning on his dog.

Don't be a stranger, be like Ingólfur!

Best regards,

Jón Gnarr
Mayor of Reykjavík

Opinion | Malcom Kenneth Fraser

Piles Of Trash And Pigs In Traffic



Since the beginning of the year, garbage in Reykjavík has been collected once every ten days, rather than once a week as it was before the city council voted for drastic budget cuts. For the past few days, trash has been piling up in my backyard. I went to find out on the internet when exactly the dustmen are supposed to come by my street and do their magic. As it turned out, the convoy is six days overdue, which is why I decided to write an inflammatory email to the people responsible for the nuisance. I got a response the next morning informing me that while the calendar detailing the frequency of garbage collection in my area is accurate, access to my backstreet is very often blocked by badly parked cars. The email went on: "We will try again tomorrow at 11 am and hopefully no cars will block the entrance."

Oh all right, that sounds legit. No, hang on a second... you will try again tomorrow? It's not like I'm asking you to do me a favour. Collecting garbage is not exactly a matter of trial and error. Either it is done or it isn't. I forgot about the pile of trash in my garden for a minute and started to think about another problem raised by the answer I got from city officials. Cars blocking the entrance to my backstreet... Isn't Reykjavík equipped with tow trucks? Wouldn't it be possible to forcibly remove offending cars from their unlawfully acquired parking spaces?

For as long as I have been living in this town, I've noticed that drivers have a tendency to park their cars anywhere, with neither consideration for pedestrians nor for other drivers. It is not uncommon to see people pushing a stroller crossing to the other side of the street because of a car parked on the sidewalk, while in such a situation, a person in a wheelchair is left to their own fate. Foreigners in town are often surprised at how drivers in Reykjavík parallel park. More often than not, your typical driver in Reykjavík will steer front first into the parking space rather than slowly driving backwards into it. Several reasons can explain this kind of behaviour: the lack of driving skills, the lack of consideration for others, but mostly the lack of a penalty for parking like an incompetent and inconsiderate pig on wheels.

While drivers in downtown Reykjavík can be sure that they will get a ticket the minute they exceed the parking time they paid for, they needn't worry about getting their car towed away for blocking a sidewalk, a fire hydrant, or access to my backstreet. Only in Reykjavík have I seen cars parked on speed bumps or on roundabouts. I tried Googling the price of a ticket for illegal parking plus towing fee. It seems to add up to around 30.000 ISK. Looking out my kitchen window, I can already see 60.000 ISK worth of uncollected community money. If I were to walk to the end of my street that amount could reach 150.000 ISK. But instead of harvesting the bountiful amounts of low-hanging fruits, local authorities have decided to space out the frequency of garbage collecting, leaving me to contemplate the pile of crap in my garden, expecting that dustmen will hopefully come by after the weekend and try again. 🐷

Reykjavík | Recycling

Catching Up To The 21st Century

Recycling In Reykjavík

A couple of weeks back, we ran a news story about a city proposal to give police the power to issue tickets for littering on the spot. Anyone who has walked down Laugavegur on a Sunday morning probably understands the motivation behind such a proposal. The photo we ran with the story showed the aftermath of Independence Day celebrations on Austurstræti, to which one astute reader commented, "That's funny. I'm seeing a lot of trash there, but no trash cans."

Therein lies part of the problem: the city is woefully lacking in trashcans. While it can be argued that all one needs to do is walk a few metres before finding one, there's one thing you definitely won't find and that's a public recycling bin.

LAGGING BEHIND IN RECYCLING

Recycling is a relatively new concept in Iceland. Karl Sigurðsson, chairperson of the Environmental and Traffic Committee for the city, admitted when he spoke to us that, "We are lagging a bit behind other nations, such as Sweden and Germany in the area of recycling. It's not very advanced."

This is certainly the case for those of us living downtown. It is possible to find some recycling dumpsters here and there—on Skúlagata, for example, there are bins for paper and milk cartons—but for the most part, making the effort to recycle your waste is quite a challenge.

In order for city residents to effectively recycle, they first need to sort their own recyclables. Perhaps a minor inconvenience, but in other countries—such as in the province of Québec, Canada—all recyclables can be placed in a single bin, which a special recyclables garbage truck collects curb side. In Iceland, how-



ever, city residents must transport their own recyclables to a recycling centre, such as Sorpa. There is exactly one Sorpa in 101 Reykjavík (on Eggertsgata), three on the west side of town, and five on the immediate east side of town. And if you don't have a car, good luck.

Having to sort and transport one's own recyclables may explain why there is so little enthusiasm for the process, and why most recyclables seem to be bottles and cans collected directly from trashcans by people hoping to trade them for cash. Karl is aware of this and says that the number of people actively recycling in the city are "few and far between." Considering the drawbacks of the current system, he says the city has a plan in place to change this.

THE CITY'S PLAN TO CATCH UP

The plan—which begins later this year and extends into 2013—is still in the tentative stages, so details such as

exactly when different stages will be implemented and how much they will cost have not been fully worked out. But here's the thumbnail sketch of how the city intends to confront the recycling problem:

First and foremost, city officials want to issue a recycling bin to every city resident. Whether residents will have to pay for these out of pocket, or whether they will be funded through the budget, has not yet been decided, but Karl says the target is to initiate this before the end of this year.

City residents will still be encouraged to sort their own recyclables, beginning with separating paper and plastic from regular trash. In the next stage of implementation, items such as metal and glass will be added to the list, followed by organic matter, by 2013.

As with other municipal systems that affect surrounding communities, such as the bus system, the city wants to be

sure that towns in the capital area follow the same example. Such a system, in its completely realised form, would bring curb side recycling services to over half the population of the country.

At a time when budget cuts are the order of the day, these broad steps over a period of two years is pretty ambitious, but Karl says it's a subject close to his heart. "We have employees constantly working on ideas [for recycling]," he says. "We're a little behind, but we will catch up. We don't want to be the laughing stock of Europe." 🐷

Karl emphasises that the plan is far from a top-down process. He encourages all residents of Reykjavík and surrounding areas to submit their own ideas and questions to the city by emailing sorphirtha@reykjavik.is.

PAUL FONTAINE
JULIA STAPLES

This is Vatnsnes at 65° 40'
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Reykjavík | An outward looking city

A VIEW FROM THE CHURCH TOWER



A few weeks ago I was wandering around Skólavörðuholt where Hallgrímskirkja—the large church dedicated to the poet and psalmist Hallgrímur Pétursson—stands. From the top of the church tower there's a great view over Reykjavík and the surrounding landscape. Reykjavík is arguably not a beautiful city in itself. It is very spread out and the architecture is chaotic, but the way it interacts with the surrounding nature can be rather lovely. Thus Reykjavík is in many ways an outward looking city—looking out to the sea and the hills.

THE POETS WHO DISCOVERED REYKJAVÍK

It is sometimes said that the poet Tómas Guðmundsson was the first to discover the beauty of Reykjavík, which had generally been frowned upon as a place without culture and grace (surely Akureyri in the north was much prettier). Tómas, who was born in 1901, wrote poems about summer nights in Reykjavík, lovers meeting by the Pond, and the girls on Austurstræti. Some people think these poems are more pastoral than urban, which is perhaps not so strange, as Tómas originally came from a farm by an idyllic river in the south.

Then the poet and cynic Steinn Steinarr—possibly the most widely read poet in Iceland—came along with a harsher view of the city. Steinn was also a farm boy, but he was bought up in poverty and hardship, and Reykjavík is marked by an existential anguish in his poems.

COLORFUL ROOFS

From the top of the church tower, you will see some of the oldest neighbourhoods in town: Þingholt, Skólavörðuholt, and Skuggahverfi. You will notice that the roofs are painted in a most colourful array of reds, blues, and greens. They are mostly made from corrugated iron, a building material much appreciated in a country with a lot of wind and rain. Corrugated iron is also cheap and it was very popular in

Iceland in the early twentieth century.

In the same way that the doorways of Dublin with their many forms and colours are a symbol of that city, the colourful roofs could be a symbol of Reykjavík.

DIVERSE STYLES

Looking east and a bit to the north from the tower, you will see two main thoroughfares of central Reykjavík—Laugavegur and Skólavörðustígur—as well as the maze of small streets between them. You will notice the small scale of the buildings and their diverse architecture. There is little architectural tradition in Iceland so people have basically built houses anyway they liked. The authorities cared little about symmetry and form, and the architects studied in many parts of the world,

meet. This was in a way fitting, for Morgunblaðið dominated the media and public discourse for a long time (it is said that governments were formed in the offices of its editors), not losing its overwhelming influence until about ten years ago.

POVERTY, COLD AND DAMP

Many felt ashamed of the old timber houses. A famous union leader said they reminded him of poverty, the cold and damp. For a long time most of the timber houses in town were in a state of decline—they were mostly the abodes of poorer people—and many of the larger ones burnt down. In the 1980s, fires were quite frequent in the city centre and the authorities seemed almost glad to be rid of them.

It was not until the late 1980s that

“Jónas Jónasson, a priest who put together a big book about the folksy ways of the Icelanders, has very vivid descriptions of the general lack of cleanliness. Many never bathed, and only turned their clothes inside out every once in a while.”

bringing home with them different ideas.

It is even said that Moorish influence crept into the architecture when Icelanders started going to the south of Spain in the late 1960s. An Icelandic tourist might have come home with a picture of the Alhambra and told his builder, “I want something like that.”

REYKJAVÍK CLASSIC AND MODERNISM

During the first decades of the twentieth century, taller buildings like Hotel Borg and Austurstræti 14 (which houses Café Paris) were built in downtown Reykjavík. These buildings look rather affluent and ornate, and the style is sometimes referred to as “Reykjavík classic.” But the financial crash in 1930s hit Iceland very hard and this style of building was soon history. When construction began again after the war, the period of modernism had taken over and its impact can clearly be seen on the cityscape. Some say that unfortunately Reykjavík was built during the wrong time, in a period when modernism, functionalism and brutalism were dominant in architecture.

Old houses were torn down to make way for new modernist structures. One such building, which houses the conservative newspaper Morgunblaðið, towers over the rather modest square where Austurstræti and Aðalstræti

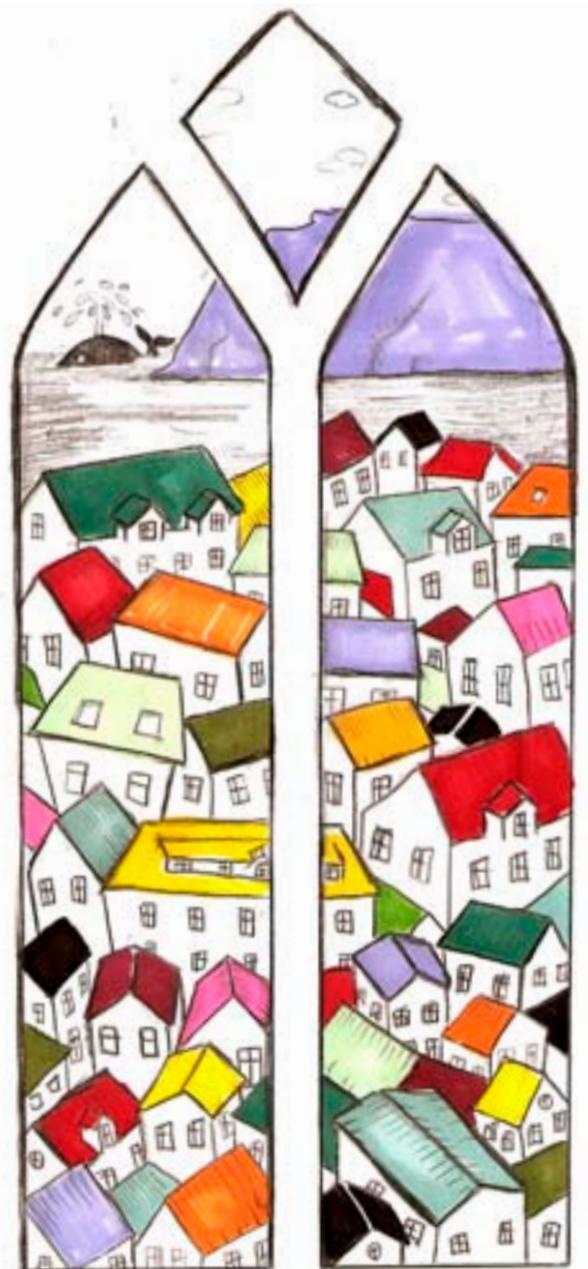
preservationist efforts became popular. The turning point was when it was decided to rebuild Bernhöftstorfa, a row of old timber houses facing Lækjargata, now housing the restaurants Lækjarbrekka and Humarhúsið.

ENTER THE SPECULATORS

Still, a lot of harm had been done and more was yet to come. During the boom years from 2000–2008, speculators started buying up old buildings downtown in order to tear them down and build larger and more profitable ones. Plans were even drawn up for a huge shopping mall at the top Laugavegur.

These structures were mostly to be made from black stone, glass and steel—the favourite building materials of the boom. This would surely have added to the stylistic diversity of these streets. But there was quite a bit of resistance to these projects, especially from young people, and alternative plans to preserve old houses were also put forth.

Ultimately, it was once again the economy that intervened; the crash of 2008 put a stop to these big projects. Even so, the battle is not quite over. Speculators still own many of the old houses and they have been allowing them to fall into disrepair so that they can get permits to tear them down when the economy picks up again.



THE ARMY CAMPS

Back to the streets that you see from the church tower, the name of Skólavörðustígur comes from a mound that stood at the top of the hill where schoolboys from the old Latin School used to meet in the nineteenth century. At that time the hill was extremely rocky and the town didn't reach further than the building that now houses the Eymundsson bookshop. It was a bank until the economic collapse. Further up the hill there were just a few vegetable gardens.

During the war there was a big corrugated iron barracks for British soldiers on the hill. The British and Americans left a lot of these camps around Reykjavík and after the war, they became homes for people who couldn't afford other housing. Some of these camps lasted until the 1960s and being a child raised in one of them was not always easy.

DRINKING IN THE SHOPS

Laugavegur was traditionally the main road to the countryside. In the old days one would have seen farmers on horses

riding down the street to town, dressed in their best attire, but maybe returning in a dishevelled state. There were not many bars or restaurants in Reykjavík in those days, but the travellers hung around the shops where they would be given strong alcohol. Hanging around the shops was considered quite problematic in those days. The streets were sometimes muddy or dusty, and open sewers used to run down them with an overwhelming stench, so if you fell onto the ground while inebriated you were liable to get dirty.

Jónas Jónasson, a priest who put together a big book about the folksy ways of the Icelanders, has very vivid descriptions of the general lack of cleanliness. Many never bathed, and only turned their clothes inside out every once in a while.

But there were also those who practiced cleanliness. On Laugavegur there was heavy traffic of women, many of them servant girls, taking laundry about a mile from town to the hot springs in Laugardalur where clothes

Continues on page 40

Words

Egill Helgason

Illustration

Lóa Hjálmtýsdóttir

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Sahai wrote: Monday, August 08, 2011 - AH78 Whale Watching & Blue Lagoon to Keflavik Airport

★★★★★★

"Loved it! Saw loads of whales, very good guide, and overall the entire tour was great."

Lis wrote: Monday, August 08, 2011 - AH11 The Golden Circle Afternoon

★★★★★★

"This was a great tour. It gave such a great overview of icelandic landscapes around Reykjavik. The guide was very knowledgeable and even took us to two more places that were not on the itinerary. There was enough time to see the waterfalls and the geysers, also the amazing fault in the earth. Excellent value, well organized."

Schmitt wrote: Monday, August 08, 2011 - AH100 Keflavik Airport to Reykjavik - One Way

★★★★★★

"A++ Service. Was picked up and dropped off right on time and had no problems at all. Would use the service again!"

kovalev victor wrote: Monday, August 08, 2011 - AH32 Landmannalaugar by bus

★★★★★★

"My estimation of round - it is excellent 5. Free time presence especially was pleasant, however it would be desirable to wish, that this free time was given more."

kovalev victor wrote: Monday, August 08, 2011 - AH35 South Coast & Jökulsárlón Glacial Lagoon

★★★★★★

"Very interesting tour. My estimation of tour - it is excellent"

Barr wrote: Monday, August 08, 2011 - AH29 The Blue Lagoon

★★★★★★

"This was not really a tour per se; it was simply transportation to and from the Blue Lagoon. Our visit to the Blue Lagoon itself was well worth it. An amazing place and very relaxing soak in the warm waters. I highly recommend the massage in the water. The facilities were beautiful, clean and spacious."

Barr wrote: Monday, August 08, 2011 - AH35 South Coast & Jökulsárlón Glacial Lagoon

★★★★★★

"This day trip was great. The company was prepared for the road and bridge wash-out along the ring road (due to massive glacial melt caused by a volcano) and provided us with an off-road vehicle capable of fording streams. The driver was excellent

and got us back safely to Reykjavik in spite of a two-hour detour through the mountains (the beautiful Landmannalaugar area) along a very narrow, and at times steep, dirt road. The tour could be improved by adding a glacial walk (in addition to the boat ride in the lagoon) since the drive to get to the Jokulsarlon Lagoon is so long."

Barr wrote: Monday, August 08, 2011 - AH27 The Viking Horse & Golden Circle Afternoon

★★★★★★

"This was a wonderful tour. The horseback riding was a lot of fun. The owners of the stables provided a delicious lunch for a nominal charge and we had time for a quick visit to the nearby Halldor Laxness museum before being picked up for the remainder of the tour. The tour guide and driver were great. The bus and vans were all in good working order and clean. The drivers for all the Iceland Excursions were careful, courteous, respected the speed limit, and made us feel safe. We would have liked to have had more time at the Pingvellir National Park though, and wished we could have gotten off in Hverageroi town to see the geothermal green houses in operation."

Kloppmann wrote: Monday, August 08, 2011 - AH13 The Golden Circle Evening Tour

★★★★★★

"We loved the tour and highly recommend it to any visitor to Island! It was a wonderful introduction to the islandic landscape, an experience we'll cherish for a long time."

singer wrote: Friday, August 05, 2011 - AH89 ATV and The Blue Lagoon

★★★★★★

"On a practical level, despite pouring rain, everything worked perfectly, the bus to the Blue Lagoon, hand over to the ATV company, etc. Your staff were polite and helpful. Again, despite the rain, the ATV ride through the black volcanic rocks was exciting and surreal and our guide even managed to find a photo opportunity for us in some shelter near the sea. We all thoroughly enjoyed it. The Blue Lagoon was slightly surreal and strange; lifeguards in yellow waterproofs yet you're bobbing about in hot, milky, turquoise water with a white mud facepack, drinking wine and eating ice cream! Wonderful and we stayed much longer than we'd intended. Thank you for both experiences."

Magsambol wrote: Friday, August 05, 2011 - AH30 South Coast & Þórsmörk

★★★★★★

"I highly recommend this tour-- getting up close and personal with the infamous volcano Eyjafjallajokull was pretty exciting, and getting there on a sturdy truck navigating gulleys and rivers on the desolate but starkly



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beautiful valley below doubled the excitement. A short wondrous trek through a nearby gorge, and a hike up the lush hill in the woods of Þórsmörk completed the adventure, allowing for endless opportunities to take in nature and to take gorgeous photos. The side trip to Seljalandsfoss, a picturesque and lush setting for a beautiful waterfall, was a nice treat. Quite a memorable day ---- Andrew Magsambol, Toronto, Canada"

Mclean wrote: Friday, August 05, 2011 - AH12 The Golden Circle Classic

★★★★★★

"Had fantastic time"

Varca wrote: Friday, August 05, 2011 - AH11 The Golden Circle Afternoon

★★★★★★

"The tour was a nice length from the afternoon/evening and we saw some of the well-known East Iceland highlights including the National Park, waterfall and Geysir. Our tour guide gave great commentary on the tour bus about all sorts of things; quite educational. Perfect for someone who does not have a lot of time to do the full day tour but wants to see the top sights and learn more about Iceland. Also great for the solo traveller."

Drezdovicz wrote: Friday, August 05, 2011 - AH100 Keflavik Airport to Reykjavik - One Way

★★★★★★

"We have absolutely nothing negative to report about the service. Everything went smoothly, precisely and reliably."

Nagel wrote: Friday, August 05, 2011 - AH100 Keflavik Airport to Reykjavik - One Way

★★★★★★

"I booked the transfer from Keflavik to Reykjavik and the return transfer - everything can be done online, from booking to payment, this was very comfortable, quick and easy to do. When we arrived at the airport, we could not find the driver right away, because there was of course more than one Iceland excursions bus - but one of the other drivers in the arrival hall told us to look after a person in an orange jacket (he was waiting right outside the door). Apart from this, there were absolutely no problems, our luggage was stowed into the bus and we were taken right to the doorstep of our guesthouse. When we went back to the airport 2 weeks later, it was the same: the bus came to our guesthouse, the driver put our suitcases into the bus and asked how we liked our stay - very friendly :-). The service is really good and I will definitely use the airport express again the next time I'm in Iceland. Takk fyrir!"

Durchslag wrote: Wednesday, August 03, 2011 - AH35 South Coast & Jökulsárlón Glacial Lagoon

★★★★★★

"A relaxing, fun, informative way to see the glacial lagoon. Great guide, great pace, and a day to remember."

Lambourn wrote: Wednesday, August 03, 2011 - AH12 The Golden Circle Classic

★★★★★★

"Great tour, great guide. He (french)

made us all feel special ie not just another coach load. Weather was not great but it stopped raining when we were at the sights! No faults to be honest. Right amount of time at each stopping point. Thanks for great holiday! I would definitely recommend your company."

BEATTIE wrote: Tuesday, August 02, 2011 - AH120 River Fun

★★★★★★

"enjoyed this trip - went with my 13 year old daughter (who really enjoyed herself) Rafting maybe a little tame for me, but well organised and jump off cliff into river was good fun."

Booth wrote: Tuesday, August 02, 2011 - AH18 The Blue Lagoon to Keflavik Airport

★★★★★★

"What could be nicer than spending a few hours at the Blue Lagoon on the way to the airport? I love the convenience of getting picked up at my hotel and then not having to worry about luggage while relaxing in those magical waters."



The Mouse That Roared

How small nations have more influence than you might think

If you've taken even the most cursory glance at recent Icelandic history, chances are you're familiar with the Cod Wars: big, bad Britain sends warships up against plucky little Iceland's fishing boats, and the underdog wins. But the incident was hardly a fluke. Norwegian author Jacob Børresen, in his new book, 'Torskkrig! Om forutsetninger og rammer for kyststatens bruk av makt' ("Cod War! The conditions and limits for the coastal state's use of force"), explains that small nations actually have more power at their disposal than many would suspect. We called him up for some tips on how we might abuse this power....

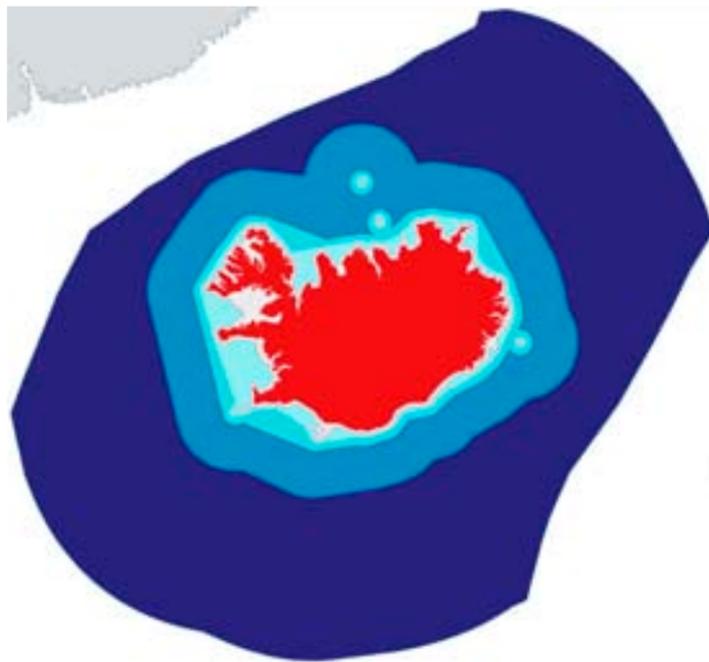
Do you think the Cod War had any international implications? Did the world theatre, with regards to relations between large and small nations, change as a result of it?

No. The Cod Wars took place within the framework of the Cold War and was solved without upsetting that framework, i.e. Iceland did not leave NATO. There are no traces, as far as I can see, of the Cod Wars in international relations. On the other hand, the Cod Wars were an expression of a new paradigm after World War II and the creation of the U.N. and the prohibition of war in the U.N. Pact, where there were stronger political limits for major powers' use of force against minor powers, and thus more room for minor powers to manoeuvre. I doubt that Iceland could have succeeded, let's say, 50 years earlier.

FIRST WE TOOK THEIR COD...

Tell us a little something about your theory of small states and the use of power.

My key concept is "The balance of perceived interests." When the issue under dispute is much more important to Nation A in a conflict than to Nation B, the balance of perceived interests is in favour of Nation A. My proposition is that when the balance of perceived interests is in favour of the small state, it tends to cancel out the balance of power in favour of its bigger adversary, creating wiggle room for the small state that otherwise would not have been there. In the Cod



Expansion of the Icelandic Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ).

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Wars, national control of the fish resources around Iceland was a question of vital, almost existential, proportions for Iceland, while in Britain it affected only a few communities. The development of the international law of the sea was in

him, and more important to him than to his adversary, has succeeded in tipping the balance of perceived interest in his favour. An issue that immediately may upset the balance of perceived interests in favour of the small state, however, is

"Small states have in common that they usually have no colonial past, and relatively few heavy international security obligations"

line with the Icelandic point of view. The Icelandic people and Iceland's government stood squarely behind the Icelandic claims, while the British government was split on the issue, and the British population at large was indifferent. All in all, this led up to the balance of perceived interests being decisively in Iceland's favour. As a result, it was not politically possible for the British government to use the amount of force that it had at its disposal and that had been necessary to break Iceland's will.

My other major point is that both the value of the interest under dispute, and the balance of power between the parties to the dispute, are subjective factors that can be manipulated. The party to the conflict who succeeds in communicating to the opposition that the issue under dispute is a key issue of vital importance to

if it conducts itself in a way that triggers the prestige of the larger state. Prestige was part of the reason why Great Britain resorted to the Navy in the Cod Wars, but in this case the balance of perceived interests was so firmly in Iceland's favour that in the end it did not matter.

THEN WE GRAB THEIR MONEY...

This naturally leads us to talk about Icesave. Do you think your theory applies to the Icesave situation?

I am not very well acquainted with Icesave, but in principle the theory of the balance of perceived interests is applicable to any conflict.

One of the big concerns that the anti-EU camp in Iceland has is that as a small nation, they will not have the kind of sway that countries like

France or Germany might have within the organisation. How would you respond to this?

Again, I think that in questions of vital importance to Iceland, and that are of more marginal importance to the other EU members, Iceland will be able to "punch above her weight." Fisheries come in this category, and it strengthens Iceland's position that many of the EU nations, in principle, share Iceland's concerns about a sustainable takeout of fish resources. A key point when it comes to the demonstration of commitment and resolve of a small state to uphold and protect a key interest (which then—by definition—makes it a key interest), is what I have called "a strong home base."

US AND WHOSE ARMY?

I suppose one of the more obvious vulnerabilities of a small nation is the military one. With a small military—or, in Iceland's case, no military at all—what recourse do small nations have when it comes to self-defence?

I am not so concerned about the military as such, as I am with the power at the disposal of the state in general. Iceland has a renowned Coast Guard, it has valuable natural resources, it has debt that its debtors would like to see repaid—which is also a source of power—and it is a sovereign state, member of the U.N. and NATO, which are also not insignificant sources of power. Finally, to repeat myself, a united people behind its government is not an insignificant source of power in itself. I talk in my book about the value, even the necessity, to small nations of alliances, formal or informal. Another form of defence is, of course, to make oneself so insignificant that nobody would have any conceivable interest in mingling in ones affairs. Iceland is not there. The bottom line is that even if Iceland spent all its resources on military defence it would not be enough to protect it from a dedicated aggressor. It therefore has to use its other power resources with that much more skill.

Is what ways is it good for small nations to join up with larger international organisations, and in what ways could it be detrimental?

Small nations, that are not invisible because they are totally insignificant, cannot survive unless they are able to mobilise some kind of external support. That does not mean that E.U. membership is necessarily or automatically a good thing for Iceland. A small state member of a large international organisation dominated by major powers is dependent on skilful diplomacy to be able to take care

of her interests. Again, a strong home base in the form of a people united behind its government can be an asset. On the other hand, a government in a weak parliamentary position at home may also play that weakness to its favour by telling the international organisation that it is unable to do this or that, because it would create a political crisis at home, or tell the home audience that it is unable to do this or that because of its formal obligations to the organisation. There are no straight answers to questions like these.

THE LUXURIOUS MORAL HIGH CHAIR

On a global scale, do you believe we're trending towards larger nations, or are we moving more towards "balkanisation", i.e., larger nations splitting into smaller ones?

Hard to say. There seems to be a development toward multiple competing centres of power in the world (Beijing, Washington, Delhi, Brasilia, Moscow, Berlin, Paris, London). At the same time, the U.N. is in trouble, apparently incapable of renewing itself. It is still a reflection of the power equation that resulted from World War II. Important states do not have a seat in the Security Council. Consequently, we see the growth of a number of competing organisations like the G8, G20, the IMF, the Arctic Council and so forth. Small states like Iceland (or Norway for that matter) are completely dependent for their security that major powers respect the prohibition of war in the U.N. Charter. In that regard, developments of concepts like "responsibility to protect" and the increasing willingness of major powers to use military force as an instrument of diplomacy, is worrisome.

What role do you see small nations playing in the global stage in the near future?

Small states have in common that they usually have no colonial past, and relatively few heavy international security obligations. They can therefore enjoy the luxury of taking the moral high chair in a lot of questions like human rights, nuclear weapons, peace and so forth, and allow themselves to discuss such issues on a purely ideal and principal basis. As such they constitute a resource of insights and knowledge that major states can tap into as and when they feel the need. Secretary Generals of the U.N., for example, often come from small states, and that is not a coincidence.

Words

Paul Fontaine

Illustration

Kjallakr at en.wikipedia



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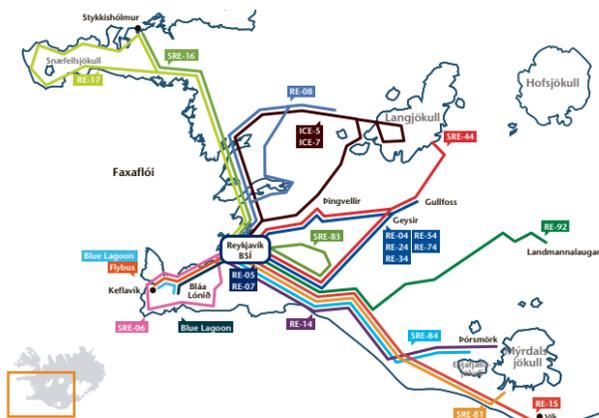


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Icelanders On The Anarchy In The U.K.



Riots and looting have spread across London City over the last few days, with copycats spilling over into Birmingham, Liverpool and Bristol on Monday night. What began as a peaceful vigil outside the Tottenham Police station for the police shooting of Mark Duggan has descended into anarchy that has not been seen in the U.K. since Thatcher's '80s. The Grapevine has been catching up with Icelanders caught up in the violence.

Anna Hildur Hildibrandsdóttir was in Islington on Monday having a meeting at a pub when the landlord suddenly announced that he was closing.

What did you see happen?

I didn't see anything, but I decided to hurry up and get a bus before public transport was closed.

Did you see a police presence?

During the meeting I saw eight armoured vehicles heading towards Hackney.

Did you feel unsafe?

No, but I was here during the IRA bombings in the 1990s and knew that I didn't want to get stuck at a tube station.

Do you think social media has played a part in the events?

I'm not sure whether that or the national media is more to blame; word spreads fast either way.

What do you think of the people involved in this?

A lot of the news that you see makes you think these are just thugs. But there is clearly an underlying frustration that is breaking out and our society is not able to control this. It is also obviously a mixture; some of these kids are just getting an adrenaline rush out of kicking in a window.

Do you think the police did the right thing?

I think they did what they could, but they were clearly outnumbered.

Hafdís Arnardóttir is based in Islington, but works in central London. As she was attempting to come home from work on Monday, the train stations began to close down and she had to stay at a friend's house. I spoke to her on Monday night as the worst of the looting and violence takes place.

What have you seen happen in your area?

I've been trying to stay as far away from it as I possibly can, but there were hooded youngsters running around the Victoria line yesterday. We have locked ourselves in my friend's flat now, but there is smoke all around and we can hear explosions.

Have you seen a police presence?

No sadly not. They are arriving late and not staying long. It seems like they can't handle this. It's the third day in a row now and it just keeps getting worse.

Do you feel like it's unsafe to go outside?

I'm very scared and I've gotten very scary messages from many friends. I've never felt unsafe in this city, but now I just feel like crying.

What do you think of the people involved in this?

I find it all very sad and scary. They seem to be from the age of 12 to 17 and you can't help but wonder where are the parents?

What do you think can be done to end this?

I'm not sure, but they need more help. They should have brought in the army.

Do you think the constant media coverage has made it worse?

I think the media is having a difficult time keeping up with everything because it's spreading so fast. The worst thing is the social networking sites where people are lying about things that are happening and confusing people.

They are calling it the BBM riots (Blackberry Messenger). What role do you think social media has played?

I think it has helped both the rioters and the people trying to prevent it or stop it, but it seems to be randomly happening in every area of London now and outside the city.

Would you like to comment any further?

It all just seems like a movie. You don't believe this kind of stuff happens until you see it with your own eyes and even then it seems unreal. The most ridiculous story I have heard is kids breaking into Footlocker (a shoe shop) and taking the time to try on the shoes to find the right size! I just hope they manage to calm it down soon and not too many people have been hurt.

When I went out at 1:00 AM to check out the action in my local area, which boasts a wide variety of charity shops, a Tesco's 24 hour supermarket and a McDonalds, I was confronted with small pockets of young people walking through the high street. Unsurprisingly, they were coming from the direction of the local council estate. When I drove back down the road, they were breaking into a TV shop and casually walking away with their haul.

What seems clear is that the police are visibly not in control, whether that is because they are outdated in their methods, the kids were too clever or they are understaffed and underfunded (why does it seem most likely they will say this?) Social media has, as in Búsáhaldaþytingin [Iceland's Pots and Pans Revolution], been a key factor in taking the police by surprise. Unlike other recent social unrest around the world, the rioting in London seemed to be most utterly gratuitous. Clearly this was born out of a wider social problem and general attitude amongst a generation of children that have few prospects and little to lose. Many questions are being shooed away by angry and frightened Londoners today. Was this an attack on capitalism, a demonstration of disenchantment amongst our youth? Why was it laughter rather than angry shouting that could be heard echoing across London for the past three days? What is so special about the clothes from JD sports*? Welcome to the Olympics.

**JD Sports is a shop that sells sports clothes or chav gear. For more information about chavs check www.urbandictionary.com*

News | Iceland in the International Eye: August

Revoked: License to Kill

007 is pissed off with Iceland—that's right, James Bond, with his license to kill. In his capacity as 'goodwill ambassador' of the US National Resources Defense Council, Pierce Brosnan has publicly requested President Obama impose stern sanctions and "make Iceland pay a steep price for its inhumane and illegal slaughter of whales."

This statement comes just a few days after the US Department of Commerce declared Iceland to be in violation of the International Whaling Commission (IWC) global commercial whaling ban and the Obama administration decided to cite Iceland under a US law, which, according to the Associate Press (AP), "allows the president to act against foreign nationals or countries who flout international animal conservation rules." President Obama has 60 days to decide. As a general rule "threat of sanctions is enough to make targeted countries change their policies."

As stated in the International Business Times, "If Obama were to take action, this would be the first time trade sanctions would be imposed on another nation for this reason, setting a conservation precedent that nearly every nation would heartily welcome." The fact that Pierce Brosnan is encouraging Obama to do just that seems to imply that Hollywood's thinkers and left-wingers are firmly behind the move.

"Iceland has increased its self-allocated fin whale quota to 150 animals per year, three times what the IWC considers sustainable for the species' survival," AP notes. AP also goes on to point out that "in recent years the IWC has been beset with allegations of corruption..."

Nuff said. Just a week earlier, the IWC met in the Channel Islands, but after a four-day session, pro-whaling nations led by Japan, but including Iceland, walked out on a vote on the creation of a whaling sanctuary in the South Atlantic. Quoted in The Australian, head of Monaco's delegation, Frederic Briand said: "You can only conclude that this commission—which, despite a moratorium, does not have a mandate to stop the large-scale hunting still going on—is generally dysfunctional."

The Independent ran with a piece on July 27 with the title: "In Iceland, hunters and watchers battle over whales." They spoke with Hördur Sigurbjarnarson, of Húsavík's North Sailing tour company, who said, "Whaling is bad for business...And it's useless...there's no market for whale meat." Apparently, during the main season, Hördur takes out over 30,000 tourists to whale watch. "You get more revenue out of watching the whales than out of hunting them," he told the Independent.

Continues on page 40

Words
Álfrún Gísladóttir

Photo
Christian Lendl



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Post-Financial Crisis Iceland

A Success Story?



'The Pots and Pans Revolution' of 2008 and 2009, which happened during the aftermath of the total failure and collapse of the financial sector, had two distinct demands; firstly, the resignation of the right-wing government and a call for general elections; and secondly, for a new constitution made by the general public in a 'Constitutional Assembly.' Both demands were met.

BRIGHT AND SHINY?

As demonstrations rage in Spain, Greece and other European countries that are struggling with the financial crisis, many look to Iceland for inspiration. The Icelandic flag is seen at demonstrations against the protection of banks all around Europe. And with some good reasons. Two and a half years after the greatest financial disaster in the history of Iceland the economy is supposedly on the up, and the probabilities of Iceland defaulting are all but gone. The Constitutional Committee has finished its draft for a new constitution. And the general public got to vote, two times, on whether the Icelandic public should pay for the enormous losses of private banks. And said no on both occasions! For those living in countries where huge amounts of money have been spent on bailing out banks that are once again paying out ridiculous bonuses, and where governments are cutting down welfare systems; in countries where the general public has not been allowed to participate in the decisions made, circumstances in Iceland surely look bright and shiny.

And once again Icelanders hear and see in the media glowing reports from abroad about the progress made in Iceland, both economically and democratically. But this time, contrary to the news of the financial masterstrokes of 2007, the response of many Icelanders is that someone should go and tell these foreigners the truth: That 'The Pots and Pans Revolution' was a failure and that things are not as bright and shiny as they seem to be.

MAKING WAVES

In late 2009 and the beginning of 2010, it became clear to many that the new left-

wing government was not going to make effective democratic changes to the political system nor to the economic system. The new government, lead by harsh opponents of the IMF in the past (most notably in the months before taking office), worked closely with the IMF and other international protectors of global capitalism. The welfare system was protected, with some exceptions, but almost no steps were made to use the privatised profit of the financial boom to pay for the nationalised debt of the financial crisis. Little seemed to change as the leaders of the political parties made decisions without involving others in serious discussion or debate.

In late 2010, I took part in founding the Democratic Alliance Alda (www.alda.is).

"What other nations can learn from Iceland is to protect their welfare system, even if that is expensive"

Our objective is to fight for a sustainable society with a truly democratic economy and political system. Those who formed the alliance saw that those in power were not taking the necessary steps to democratise Iceland and reach sustainability. The Alliance looks for real examples of successful democratisation and incorporates them into its policy. Amongst those examples are the participatory budgeting of Porto Alegre, the Co-operative enterprise of Mondragón—Spain's seventh largest enterprise—and the Randomly Selected Citizen Assembly of British Columbia. Many more success stories are to be found all over the world, and the Constitutional Committee of Iceland might become one of them, despite its shortcomings. Alda sets itself apart from other organised political groups in Iceland in that it calls for core systemic changes rather than adjustments to the current representative democracy, where the economic sector is exempt from the rules of democracy. Power should be diffused and decisions made by the general public more often and using different processes—both in the political arena and the economic sector.

NEW AND OPEN POLITICS?

Alda sent Iceland's parliament ideas for democratisation but has yet to even receive a reply—a clear example of the work to be done. Parliament committee meetings are closed to the public and they do not hold transcripts, let alone publish them publicly. So much for the new and open politics of the left-wing government. The same is true of the Constitutional Committee, which also decided to have its committee meetings, where the deep discussion took place, closed to the general public. Although the Committee welcomed ideas and feedback from the public, those who submitted to it could not count on receiving a formal response, what arguments were laid against it or any other

information. Some have described the Committee's work as a crowd-sourcing process, which is a rather generous way of describing its process. Only the formal voting sessions were open and the Committee mostly used a thick report, written by a committee appointed by the political parties, with a selection of constitutional amendments. Alda thinks that it is a basic democratic right that the public can observe the dealings and discussions of its own representatives and that when changing the constitution the process should be more open and diverse, with sufficient time and resources made available. It should be more crowd-sourcing and less of a replica of the representative system in place.

The general poll on Icesave was objected to by the political leaders, those elected in general elections after a unprecedented public revolution in Iceland—with a call for a deeper democracy. And the argument against a popular vote: The wait for a result and a result contrary to the one reached by those in power would be too costly for the economy. What it showed was that the left-wing government placed direct democracy second behind their own rule and the economy—pressure from global capitalism.

CAN WE TRUST THE PUBLIC WITH IMPORTANT MATTERS?

The Constitutional Committee has suggested that a certain percentage of voters can call for a general poll but not on financial issues. General polls like the one on Icesave will become impossible if the amendment is passed. One gets the feeling that decisions on financial issues should only be made by politicians and most preferably right-wing politicians. At least, these matters should not be left to the public, which is not to be trusted in such important matters! The Constitutional Committee is not supposed to discuss or come up with amendments pertaining to the economic system—yet the reason for making a new constitution was the failure of the political AND economic system. The political and economic system seems to be reproducing itself with some changes but few that diffuse power, redistribute resources or seriously jeopardise the power relations.

What other nations can learn from Iceland is to protect their welfare system, even if that is expensive; that the general public should be allowed to make decisions on financial matters through general polls; and that a popular constitutional assembly is more than capable of making a new constitution. What others should be aware of is that power relations are not easily broken or changed by simply electing new political parties; that popular assemblies need to be in deep connection and discussion with the general public or face the danger of being isolated and inadvertently controlled by the political system; that global capitalism is a force to be reckoned with which left-wing political parties do not have the resources or ideology to fully test—even when the cracks are obvious to all; and, finally, that although revolutions can bring about change the end result might be the same and therefore it is necessary to make clear demands, both ideological and practical, for changing the corrupt system of power that we call democracy today. ☘

KRISTINN MÁR ÁRSÆLSSON
HÖRÐUR SVEINSSON

The New Idea Of Europe: United In Diversity



The idea of a United Europe is not new, but if you brush up on your history knowledge you will soon remember that there have been many different ideas about how to unite the continent. The newest and the most successful idea is the European Union.

Europe has a history of violence, instability and bloody wars. After World War II, people started to think about how to do things differently, how to avoid another World War and keep a peaceful Europe. In order to secure lasting peace six countries—Belgium, France, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands and West-Germany—began to unite European countries economically and politically. This was the birth of the European Union that is celebrated every year now on May 9, in 27 countries, by millions of European citizens.

Ever since the start of the European integration project, it has been growing rapidly and changing greatly. Today the European Union covers a large part of Europe and is involved in most aspects of world matters. It has its own single market, its own currency, the Euro, and it is the world's biggest trading power. It includes a European Central Bank, European Parliament and the Court of Justice of the European Union. It has a wide range of different policies, all from a common agricultural policy to a common foreign policy.

But is that all that the European Union stands for? What does the slogan "United in diversity" really stand for? And why am I convinced that Iceland should become the next member state of the European Union?

The answer to the first question is a big no. The European Union is not just some gigantic institutional entity that does a lot of business; it stands for so much more. Example: Through the inner market of the European Union we have the four freedoms which means the free movement of people, money, goods and services, which means for the normal citizen of the European Union that he or she can live, work or study in any other member country without a problem. Sounds good right? That same citizen holds a citizenship of the European Union, which comes with rights such as that every citizen of the Union, regardless of nationality, has the right to vote and to stand as a candidate in local elections in his or her country of residence and in elections to the European Parliament.

The slogan of the European Union is 'United in diversity.' As you can imagine, the 27 member states are not all the same, some are bigger than others, some have over 80 million citizens while others have less than 500,000 citizens.

Continues on page 40

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Surfing Couches Around The World

How to save money on accommodation and live unforgettable experiences



A new type of tourism has been steadily growing over the last decade. It's Couchsurfing, which is based on an online community whose main objective is to provide accommodation to tourists wishing to stay in the hometown of another member. What you may not know is that Couchsurfing actually has its roots in Iceland.

INSPIRED BY ICELAND?

Casey Fenton, an American, created the project in 1999 after finding a cheap flight from Boston to Iceland. Casey e-mailed 1,500 random students from the University of Iceland asking them if they could provide him accommodation. The avalanche of positive responses was the germ of a new philosophy of travelling. On the return flight to the US, he began to develop the ideas that led to the Couchsurfing project.

In 2003, Casey Fenton launched the site in beta and it was officially opened to the public in January 2004. Since its creation, Couchsurfing has been a non-profit organisation, funded entirely by the donations of its members. Some of them choose to make independent donations while others support the community by getting verified—the identity check that includes a payment.

MORE THAN FREE ACCOMMODATION

Although it may just seem like a simple way to find a free place to stay, there is much more to this philosophy of travelling. "It's about connecting with people and getting the local perspective when you travel. The free accommodation part is just a nice added bonus," Icelandic host Auður Ólafsdóttir tells me. She has 35 references from other users on the site. All of them are positive.

Couchsurfing's mission statement is to "create inspiring experiences." The hosts have the opportunity to meet people from around the world without leaving home and the 'surfers', or travelers, can participate in the local life of the places they visit. Of course, hosts can specify how many days and how many guests can stay, and include other restrictions or interests.

But you are not required to offer your own home to be part of the Couchsurfing community. "Don't offer your couch out of a feeling of obligation: that doesn't make a good experience for you or for your couchsurfers," the website says. Each user chooses what he or she wants to offer the community. "Being a member of Couchsurfing, you know that anywhere you go in the world, a friendly face is only a message away, even if you don't host or surf," Auður adds.

Stina Engquist, a Swede spending time going back and forth between her country and Iceland, uses Couchsurfing to meet people. "In the past years, I've lived in small rooms and shared apartments, which has made it difficult for me to host people. I have used the forum in order to know what's going on in the town that I'm in, ask for and help out with tips and information, and meet people for dinners, parties and walks around town," she says. "I've met lots

of nice people. I'm sure I'll stay in touch with some of them for a long time. I've received lots of good information about what's going on, do's and don'ts, and so on."

In the community, you can find different groups about Iceland, including one to find housing. "I bought a bike and found my August accommodation through Reykjavik's groups," Stina says. If you search through posts, you can find valuable information to help you with your visit to the country.

In addition, the forum works as a meeting point between users. "In Iceland, it's more active in summer than in winter time," Katla Hólm tells me. Katla has 20 positive references, and

firmation of the name and address of the person with the credit card and it can help users gain others' trust.

In addition, Couchsurfing has a system of evaluations by which, for every meeting, the surfer evaluates their experience with the host and vice versa. Also, you can report website abuse if a person is using Couchsurfing in a way that's against the terms of use. Katla, who had a bad experience with a surfer, says "it's important to give negative references because people need to know if you didn't have a good experience with somebody." She prefers vouching, one of the ways to give feedback, because "it is better than the credit card verification." Members can only vouch

"Some of the things I've shared with my hosts and surfers have changed my life for the better"

has hosted around 30 travellers since she started to reply to requests seven months ago. "We need an official Couchsurfing place and I would like to have an event every-two-weeks meeting or something like that."

There are many ways to harness the potential of couchsurfing. The photographer Fiann Paul is touring around Iceland with an outdoor art exhibition and uses Couchsurfing facilities to find the accommodation, also employing wooden surfaces of the town buildings or fences around the schools as gallery walls. "I decided that not only the content but also exhibition logistics and management field should become an art. I would like this exhibition to promote Couchsurfing awareness as an anti-commercial method of travelling," Fiann says.

SECURITY & PRIVACY

Although staying in the house of someone you've just met online may seem foolhardy, the community has quite reliable mechanisms for avoiding shocks to users. "I've never really had a problem with anyone. I remember a couple of surfers that I just didn't click with, but they were still quite polite and considerate and they didn't give me any troubles," Auður said.

Couchsurfing gives you the information you need to make informed decisions with a verification system and with references from other surfers. The verification involves paying a contribution to the site, the cost of which depending on where you live. In Iceland, you have to pay only \$2.11 (around 240 ISK). This optional step gives you con-

for other members they have met face to face and feel are trustworthy people. "It's exciting when someone vouches for you," Katla adds.

Regarding privacy: members decide what they want to share with other users by customising their privacy settings. Through these settings, members can choose which personal information to display, who can see or search their profile and whether or not other members can see when they're online.

WELCOME TO THE WHOLE WORLD

As of July 2011, there were over 3 million people registered with the site. Couchsurfers represent 81,722 towns in 247 countries. Around 20% of the users had registered their country as being the United States, followed by Germany, France, Canada and England. The city with the largest number of users was Paris, with 53,143 surfers, followed by London and Berlin.

Auður concludes, "I would recommend Couchsurfing to almost anyone. Staying with a local who can share their insider knowledge doesn't only enrich your travel experience, but also enriches your life in general. Some of the things I've shared with my hosts and surfers have changed my life for the better."

There is a world of cultures to discover. Couchsurfing lets you do it in a cheap way and provides unforgettable moments to tourists who might normally follow a typical guided tour. ♥

Words

Félix Jiménez

Photo

Julia Staples

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THE FELLOWSHIP OF THE ORDER OF THE FALCON

Iceland has awards for 'Outstanding Achievements in the Field of Excellence', too



You could say that the Order of the Falcon is to Iceland what the Purple Heart is to The United States. Well you could say that—kind of—in the sense that the President of Iceland doles out Order of the Falcon awards and other things, while the President of The United States doles out Purple Hearts and other things.

Only Falcon awards aren't granted to wounded soldiers; Iceland has never had an army for that matter, unless you count the lone soldier Herdís Sigurgímsdóttir who was sent to Iraq (and subsequently profiled on The Daily Show). No, they are really nothing like Purple Hearts. They are really more like Presidential Medals of Freedom—but who's heard of those?

Falcon awards are granted to Icelanders and citizens of other countries for the excellent work they do in the interest of the nation. The Order of the Falcon consists of five ranks, beginning with the least prestigious and most commonly awarded:

1. Knight's Cross ("Riddarakrossinn")
2. Grand Knight's Cross ("Stórriddarakross")
3. Grand Knight's Cross with a Star ("Stórriddarakross með stjörnu")
4. Grand Cross ("Stórkross")
5. Collar with Grand Cross Breast Star ("Keðja ásamt stórkrossstjörnu") - Reserved for Heads of State

MEET ICELAND'S PRESTIGIOUS KNIGHTED CLASS

While the wounded vet carries their Purple Heart with them so to speak, there are actually loads—too many to list—of knights in the Order of the Falcon running around in disguise of ordinarily talented Icelanders.

Though the awards can be worn

according to rank and file, their owners probably have them stowed away somewhere secure for the physical award itself is incredibly divine. Selling the insignia is illegal—that 'Grand Knight's Cross' on sale for \$16.50 on eBay is most likely a fake—and when a recipient dies, it must be returned to the State.

SOME FAMOUS KNIGHTS

Ólafur Eggertsson, a farmer, received the 'Knight's Cross' in 2009 for his innovation in farming. After Eyjafjallajökull erupted in 2010, photos of his farm featured prominently in the international media.

Ólafur Elíasson received the 'Knight's Cross' in 2008 for his work as an artist. He has since then designed the façade of Harpa, Iceland's new concert hall and conference centre.

Iceland's national handball team received the 'Knight's Cross' in 2008 for winning silver medals at the Olympics. Icelanders take their handball very seriously.

Baltasar Kormákur Baltarsson received the 'Knight's Cross' in 2007 for his contribution to theatre and film. He has directed films like '101 Reykjavík' and 'Jar City'.

Arnaldur Indriðason received the 'Knight's Cross' in 2004 for his work as an author. He is a best-selling crime fiction novelist (who incidentally authored the book that 'Jar City' is based on, 'Mýrin').

Ómar Ragnarsson received the 'Knight's Cross' in 1998 for his TV programmes on Iceland's nature.

Vigdís Finnbogadóttir received the 'Collar with Grand Cross Breast Star' in 1980 for being President of Iceland. She also received the 'Grand Cross' in 1996 for her work on behalf of the Icelandic nation.

Sigrún Hjálmtýsdóttir (Didú) received the 'Knight's Cross' in 1995 for her skills as an opera singer.

Friðrik Ólafsson received the 'Knight's Cross' in 1972 for being a chess master.

SOME LESS FAMOUS KNIGHTS

Dóra Guðbjört Jónsdóttir, a goldsmith, received the 'Knight's Cross' in 2011 for her contribution to the gold and silversmith industry.

Hildur Sæmundsóttir, a midwife, received the 'Knight's Cross' in 2009 for her contribution to health care and preventative measures.

Áslaug Sigríður Alfreðsdóttir, a hotel manager, received the 'Knight's Cross' in 2007 for her work in the travel industry in the countryside.

Sigurður Sigurðarson, a vet, received the 'Knight's Cross' in 2006 for his work in veterinary studies and disease prevention.

Finnbogi Eyjólfsson, an employee at Hekla, received the 'Knight's Cross' in 2004 for his "innovative work in Iceland's automobile industry." He passed away last year at the age of 84.

Kaj Elkrog, Director of Customs in Denmark, received the 'Knight's Cross' in 2003.

SOME INFAMOUS KNIGHTS

Sigurður Einarsson received the 'Knight's Cross' in 2007 for his "leadership in the outvasion of Iceland's financial system." As former president of Kaupþing when the bank crashed, Sigurður is now known as one of Iceland's 'banksters'.

Björgólfur Guðmundsson received the 'Knight's Cross' in 2005 for his work as a businessman. As the former president of Landsbankinn when the bank crashed, Björgólfur is also known as one of Iceland's 'banksters'.

Geir H. Haarde received the 'Grand Cross' in 2006 when he was Prime Minister and the 'Grand Knight's Cross with a star' in 2005 when he was Minister of Foreign Affairs. He is now on trial for negligence for his role as Prime Minister when Iceland's banks crashed.

Davíð Oddsson received the 'Grand Cross' in 1991 when he was Prime Minister. After the economic collapse, he became head of the Central Bank, and then went on to become editor of the newspaper Morgunblaðið. He must be a man of many talents.

How To Be Conferred To The Order Of The Falcon

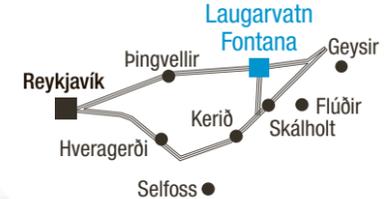
- You must be an Icelander or a citizen of another country—anybody—who has done something great in the interest of Iceland.
- You must be nominated—anybody's mother can do this by sending mail to: Falcon Order Council, c/o Office of the President of Iceland, Sóleyjargata 1, 150 Reykjavík, ICELAND, or email president@president.is.
- The Order of the Falcon Committee must select you from a batch of 80 to 100 other nominations received yearly.
- The President of Iceland approves the Committee's selection and hands out your award on either January 1 or June 17.

Carl XVI Gustav received the 'Collar with Grand Cross breast star' in 1975 as King of Sweden. A book called, 'Carl XVI Gustaf - Den motvillige monarken', published last year, reveals his less than glamorous life as "a philanderer who attended wild sex parties abroad and in underworld Stockholm clubs while the secret police kept guard," according to 'The Independent'.

**Last year there was some discussion about confiscating Björgólfur and Sigurður's awards, but nothing came of it. Sigurður told tabloid Séd og Heyrt that he would not be turning in his award voluntarily in any case.*

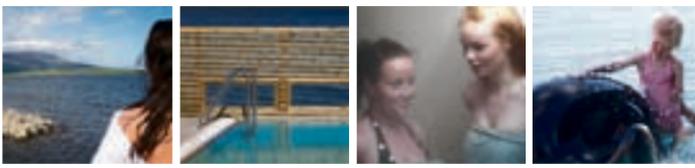
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Too Huge For A Monument



When Helgi Hóseasson passed away two years ago, he had since the 1930s fought a harsh fight to get the National Church to revoke the baptismal covenant that was forced upon him as an infant in 1919. Using a vast variety of methods—from draining all possible juridical channels, including the European Court of Human Rights, to throwing traditional Icelandic dairy product skyr on the Icelandic power elite—Helgi was systematically denied his simple demand, but was instead met with repeated arrests and forced to spend time at a mental hospital, along with other forms of humiliation. All on offer by the state power—glued together with the words of former bishop Sigurbjörn Einarsson—was that by a proper examination no one can doubt the existence of God.

Following his death, a few thousand people signed a petition for the construction of a monument on a street corner in Reykjavík where Helgi often demonstrated his highly anarchic ideology on religion, the Church and State. The monument was built, but his struggle—which highlighted, analysed and deconstructed the superpower of the State over all breathing life, from its first day to the last—was gone. The news of his death recalled a question, asked by an outraged viewer of 'Iceland's Protester,' a documentary about Helgi—a question still as relevant today: Why were the authorities not willing to meet with his demand?

A NIGHTMARE, INDEED

That same question awoke recently when Sævar Ciesielski, one of the defendants in Iceland's most historical criminal court case, passed away. In 1977 Sævar, then 25 years old, was sentenced to lifelong imprisonment (which was three years later scaled down to 17 years), for the murder of two men named Guðmundur and Geirfinnur (both Einarsson, but not related at all). The two of them were actually never proven to be dead at all, let alone murdered, but both disappeared within ten months in 1974. Sævar and several other young people were soon accused of responsibility for the alleged murders and were, before the actual trials, isolated (Sævar for 106 weeks) and tortured by the Icelandic State.

This treatment, which included sleep deprivation, submersion of the head in water, beatings, threats, medication and, in the case of the only woman accused, sexual violence, eventually led to several confessions, a well-known result within the science of juridical torture. But as the bulk of them were soon withdrawn, as well as the majority of witness statements, the Icelandic authorities imported a German pensioner named Karl Schütz, who before retiring had served as an investigative police officer who specialised in State security. He was asked to tie the knots in a way that, according to his own words when back in Germany, saved Iceland's government from toppling. "A national nightmare has been averted," said juridical minister Ólafur Jóhannesson early in 1977, following Schütz's announcements about the mystery having been "solved." Yet

the sentences to follow were based on the withdrawn confessions alone.

Sævar spent nine years in prison before being released. On the exact day when 17 years had passed, he and his lawyer, Ragnar Aðalsteinsson—who still today is Iceland's most ambitious human rights lawyer—turned in thousands of pages of content, the work of a whole year, asking the High Court to pronounce the rehearing of the whole case. To shorten a long and complicated story: The court ruled against their wishes, arguing that no "new source material" had been provided, thwarting Sævar's and Ragnar's arguments that the extensive concept of "new source material" not only applied to actual evidence concerning the two Einarssons' alleged murders but also material that touches on new material concerning guilt and innocence, new interpretation of already existing material, information about the condition when confessions were made and the illegitimacy of the case's research methods—only to mention a few of them. Sævar's demands—to quote his own words: "to be freed of the accusations and compensated the humiliation he went through"—were never met but instead passed away beside him.

WHOSE MONUMENTS?

Following the news of Sævar's death, a very understandable anger has arisen. Many people ask themselves the rightful question why his case was never taken up and some have encouraged the current Minister of the Interior to rehear the case now. For certain this would be to honour the memory of Sævar, and not only his memory but also his and Ragnar's passionate work, aimed towards a situation where the word "justice" would maybe gain an actual meaning. Rehearing the case now, in the shadow of Sævar's demise, would at the same time stand on a thin line between justice on the one hand, and demagoguery and populism on the other. It is always easier to fight someone's cause when that same one is not among us any more—and it is always easy to build monuments. But whose would the monument be? Sævar's or the State's?

During parliamentary debate in October 1998, when Davíð Oddsson, then-Prime Minister (later Central Bank director, now editor of Morgunblaðið newspaper), asked for the case to receive proper treatment, as it would be very hard for "us" to live with such a "miscarriage of justice." These are strong words, but note that they were said after the Supreme Court's decision, which Davíð Oddsson stated had been a personal disappointment to him. Nothing ever happened; the Icelandic State did not treat the case properly, but Davíð built himself a monument so huge that

now, when the case is discussed, people mention that "even he" wanted it to be reheard in court.

Let's say that this would happen and the whole case would be reheard, taking into account new evidence, information about the torture and so forth. It is not unlikely that the court would come to another conclusion than it did thirty years ago. This would then again affect the history books and free five individuals from a horrible judgment. But a clear conclusion lies already in front of us, namely that these young people were picked out and arrested, tortured and forced to confess, sentenced and

"Another question arises: if it actually is in the nature of the State Powers to apologise and undergo fundamental changes. Judging by Sævar's case, the answer is no"

imprisoned, and finally refused rehearing—all this by the one and the same State. Rehearing might result in the pardoning of these people but this pardoning would come from the same State responsible for the whole affair. More importantly the pardon would be too late for Sævar Ciesielski. This conclusion may not be forgotten because it brings forth the essence of the State, sharply articulated in between words in the already mentioned question: Why can the State not meet with the demands of their own victims like Helgi Hóseasson and Sævar Ciesielski?

THE ANSWER IS NO

Entailed in that question is the idea that not only should the State apologise and compensate their victims but also learn from its wrongdoings and not do them again. But then another question arises: if it actually is in the nature of the State Powers to apologise and undergo fundamental changes. Judging by Sævar's case, the answer is no. A good example is the career of Valtýr Sigurðsson, a lawyer who was in charge of the investigation that finally led to Sævar's imprisonment. After his work as an agent of Keflavík's town sheriff, he was awarded with one good job after another, as a district judge, town sheriff, director of the prison and probation authority, and finally in 2007 as the State Prosecutor. As State Prosecutor, he stated things such as that victims of rape should go beyond 'freezing and staying passive when being raped,' because in court it would not be 'recognised as a 'proper protest.' Nevertheless Valtýr enjoyed this job until early this year when he retired in great style.

And this seems to be a standard. When Chinese president Jiang Zemin officially visited Iceland in 2002, members and supporters of Falun Gong—a spiritual movement whose members

have systematically been persecuted by the Chinese authorities—flocked to Iceland to protest. By request of the Chinese, the Icelandic authorities drew a plan to keep even the tiniest opposition away from the President's eyes, meaning that Falun Gong members were to begin with given certain free-speech-zones in Reykjavík but later denied arrival and kept imprisoned in a school close to the Keflavík airport. Icelandair was handed a list of people not to be let on board to Iceland and particular hotel guests were kicked out of their rooms in Reykjavík. The one officer mostly in charge of the execution of this plan, Stefán Eiríksson,

who was then the Ministry of Justice's office manager, was later rewarded with an even higher position that he still serves today, as the police commissioner of Reykjavík capital area. Now, a little less than a decade later, Iceland's authorities have apologised to Falun Gong—building themselves a monument for history, which anyway does not alter any of the already performed violations.

IN THE WAY OF FUNDAMENTAL CHANGES

Sævar Ciesielski once stated that in a state governed by law, admitting juridical mistakes should not be a source of embarrassment. But not everybody would agree that Sævar's and the other defendants' imprisonment was a mistake. In his recent biography, entitled 'November 19,' former detective Haukur Guðmundsson states that the sentences were ruled against innocent people, meaning that the case is still today completely unsolved. Questioning the reason for the High Court's decisions not to rule in favour of the case's rehearing, says Haukur, leads one back to the protection of the State's interests. Ironically, this former police officer has answered the question above: The State's interests stand in the way of fundamental changes. And without detailing those interests, it is certain that people like Sævar Ciesielski, Helgi Hóseasson and Ragnar Aðalsteinsson do not come under that category. Full success in their struggles would create a rip in the concrete wall of State Power—too huge for any demagogic monument to ever fill. ♡

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📷 JÓNA ÞÓRUNN



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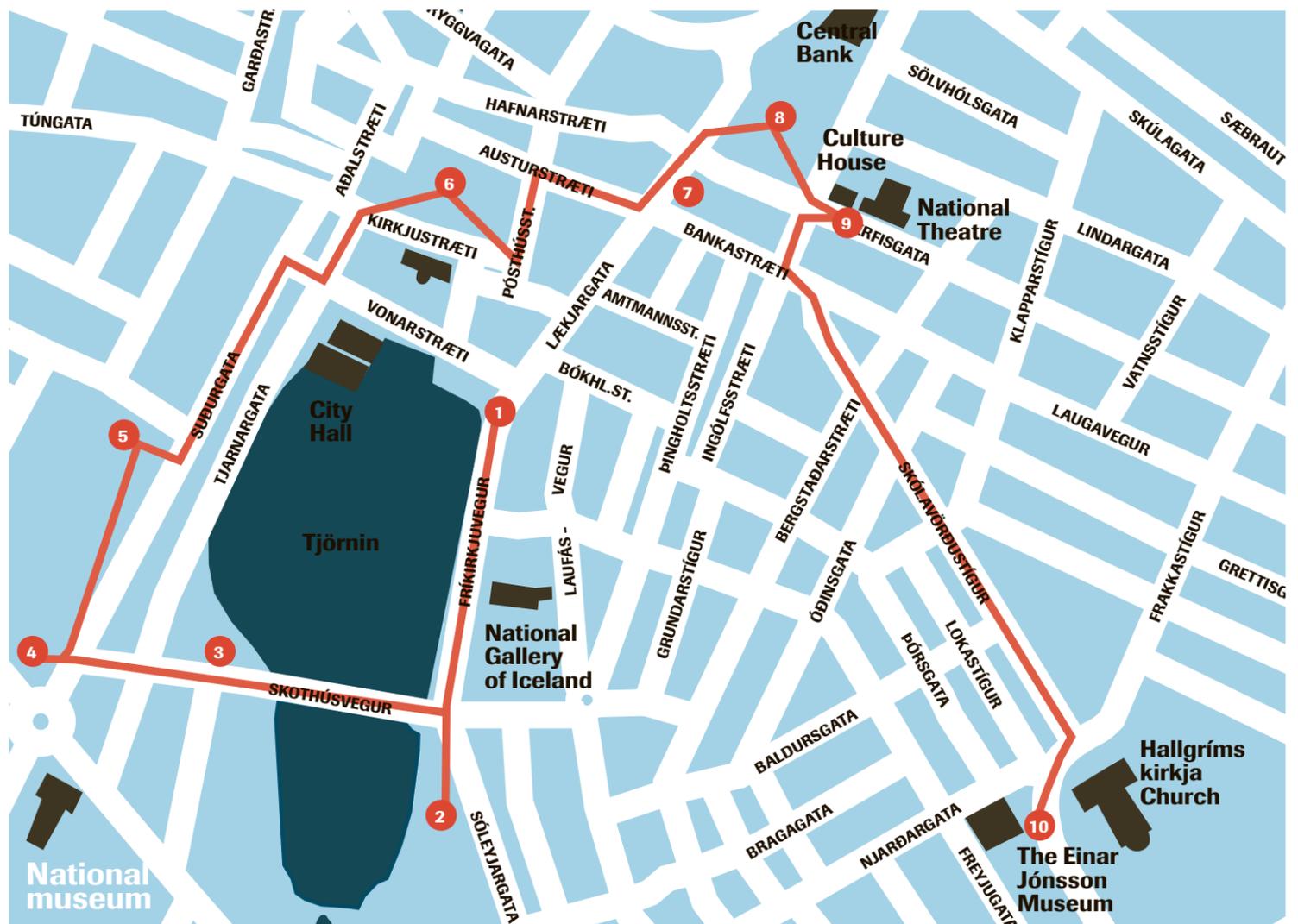
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WALKING IN THE



There are many sculptures and attempts at public art strewn over Reykjavík. Most of the time we don't notice them, blinded by the familiar surroundings of our day to day. We should stop and look every now and again. A lot of them are beautiful, and almost every one of them has an interesting story that goes with it. To encourage this, we made you up a short walk which should take about 40–50 minutes of your time. In the walk, we focus exclusively on the work of famed sculptor Einar Jónsson (1874–1954), who is one of Iceland's most celebrated artists and is responsible for some groundbreaking sculptures. Do read on, and get to know some of the stern-faced green figures dotting our urban landscape, and why they are there.

WORDS
Sigurður Trausti Traustason

PHOTOS
Natsha Nandabhiwat

1. This is a pretty good spot to start. If it is a nice day there will be some people feeding the ducks and if you have some bread you could do that too. The ducks sure seem to appreciate it. Afterwards head on up Fríkirkjuvegur alongside the pond.

2. At our first stop we find Icelandic poet Jónas Hallgrímsson. Jónas was a prolific writer with a keen interest in Icelandic nature, on which he wrote many studies. He passed away at the young age of 37 due to blood poisoning caused by a broken leg he sustained after slipping on the stairs at his home in Copenhagen. This depiction by Einar Jónsson was the first statue by an Icelandic artist to be erected in a public place. It was supposed to stand in front of where the Culture House (Þjóðmenningarhúsið) now stands, but because it was not finished at that time the statue was 'temporarily' placed at the corner of Amtmannstígur and Lækjargata in 1907. There it stood until 1947, when it was moved to this spot.

Einar was never happy with this statue, because he was forced to make a 'lifelike' depiction of Jónas by the men who were paying for it. He thought he could just as well be making the man's shoes as making him a monument in this manner. He wanted to do something that would symbolise the admired man and his work, and much later on, in 1948, he made another statue of Jónas Hallgrímsson called 'In

the memory of the poet', which can be viewed at his museum.

It is worth mentioning that further into the garden stands the self-portrait of famed Danish sculptor Bertel Thorvaldsen. Even though he never set foot on Icelandic soil, he is often regarded an Icelander as he had an Icelandic father. This statue was a gift from the city of Copenhagen in 1874 to commemorate Iceland's settlement one thousand years earlier. It stood in the middle of Austurvöllur before being moved here, where almost no one sees it.

3. Overlooking the pond is 'The Spell Broken'. Many connect it to the legend of St. George and the dragon, where St. George slew the dragon so he could save the princess from being eaten by it. In fact it is a mixture of a few old legends. Einar sometimes took pieces from different folk tales and religious fables and pieced them together to fit what he wanted to say. It depicts the victory of good over evil, and the rewards that follow when you choose the right path. Here the young woman is freed from an evil spell when the dragon is slain. She sheds the skin of the old crone she was cursed to look like and revealed is her beautiful true form. The statue was unveiled here in 1987.

4. 'Outlaws' is one of Einar Jónsson's most famous works and one that many Icelanders identify with: the free spirit who does not walk the beaten path.

Einar here draws inspiration from the old folktales of 'the outlaw' condemned to a hard life of solitude and isolation. Here he may be seen carrying his dead wife down from the highland so that he can bury her in hallowed ground. There is a quiet sadness in the strong look on his face as he does what has to be done, while carrying his only child in his other arm. This was the first piece Einar showed publicly, and was unveiled in Copenhagen in 1901. It got mixed reviews from the Danes but the Icelandic people were thrilled and thought Einar had captured the spirit of the Icelandic people. Once this statue of the outlaw looked mournfully to the mountains—now he just watches the national library and is partially hidden by trees.

5. Hólavalla cemetery was ready for its first occupants in the summer of 1837 but the first person was not laid to rest there until the winter of 1838. There were two main reasons for the delay. There is an old folktale that says that the first person buried in a cemetery becomes its watcher. This person does not rot and its purpose is to watch over the garden and welcome everyone that will be buried there. People in general want their relatives to rest in peace, so very few wanted to nominate their loved one to become the watcher. In the Einar Jónsson museum, you can find a statue named 'The Watcher' which is inspired by this folktale. The other reason was that church officials did not want just anyone to be the first person buried in the cemetery, so even though quite a

SHADOWS OF GIANTS



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few people died that year, and the cemetery stood empty, it was deemed that none of them were of the right standing to be its first patron. Finally, the lady Guðrún Oddsdóttir was deemed worthy enough, she and her family were considered to be in good standing in Reykjavík and her grave is marked by the largest iron cross in the cemetery—maybe you can find it?

Hólavalla cemetery is a beautiful, serene spot in the city, it is very interesting to walk through, and there are many hidden gems of art on the headstones. A few of them are by Einar Jónsson, three of which are very close to each other. They are 'Come to me' and 'Morgunroðinn' on the grave-stones of Hannes Hafstein and his wife Ragnheiður Hafstein. Look for graves marked with two broken black marble pillars. Hannes was a poet and the first Icelandic minister. Einar also made a statue of him, which you will observe later on this walk. The third is the gravestone of Þorsteinn Erlings-son and his wife Guðrún. Þorsteinn was a journalist and a poet. He could be called radical, often writing against norms and traditions that he thought were hampering the Icelandic nation. Einar designed the shape of the stone, which seems to depict either a candle or a tear. On it is a small bronze plate, which shows a scene similar to another work of Einar called 'Brautryðjandinn' which can be seen later on the pedestal of Jón Sigurðsson. Þorsteinn was a dear friend of Einar and died at a relatively young age, so it comes as no surprise

that Einar would have wanted to show his respect in this way.

6. Here stands Jón Sigurðsson, with his head held up high and his back straight as an arrow, watching the parliament building. Jón Sigurðsson was a pioneer in Iceland's struggle for independence. This statue originally stood in front of the government offices and was unveiled there in 1911. In 1931 it was moved here to replace the aforementioned Bertel Thorvaldsen self-portrait. Note the smaller work on the pedestal, it is called 'The pioneer', and it depicts how Einar viewed Jón and how he wanted him to be remembered; as a strong pioneer who paved the way for the rest of us. It was a gift from Einar Jónsson, one which allowed him to look past the fact that he was once again forced to do go against his artistic vision and make a lifelike statue. Einar never liked this pedestal they placed Jón on. He reportedly always thought the statue looked like it was leaning backwards, like it was falling. What do you think?

7. Two statues by Einar stand here in front of the government offices, the one to the left is King Christian the 9th of Denmark (and Iceland at the time), holding a rolled up piece of paper which is supposed to be the first Icelandic constitution. Einar finished this statue in 1907, but it was not unveiled here until 1915 due to Icelanders' prevalent ambivalent attitude about erecting the

king of Denmark a memorial. This was when Iceland was still trying to gain more independence from Denmark, so praising the king seemed a little contradictory to some.

The statue on the right depicts Hannes Hafstein, whose grave you will have stopped by if you are following our map. He was the first Icelandic Minister and a poet. He was actually a damn good poet; look up the poem 'Stormur' ("Storm") for conclusive proof of that. Hannes was one of the men that paved the way for Einar Jónsson's art education, by agreeing in congress to grant him a sizeable amount of money so he could pursue his studies abroad. Einar would have felt honoured to be able to repay the favour in this way. Another thing of note is that this is actually the pedestal on which the statue of Jón Sigurðsson stood first, if you remember the shape of 'The Pioneer' you will notice that the shield on which Hannes Hafstein's name is on is in the same shape as 'The Pioneer'. Jón Sigurðsson and 'The Pioneer' were both moved over to Austurvöllur when the statue of Hannes Hafstein was put here in 1931.

8. The Icelandic Craftsman Association (ATH – Iðnaðarmannafélagið) in Reykjavík donated money and held fund raising events so that a memorial to Ingólfur Arnarson (who was the first Icelandic settler, as legend would have it) could be raised on Arnarhóll. Einar had actually started working on a statue of Ingólfur before being approached by

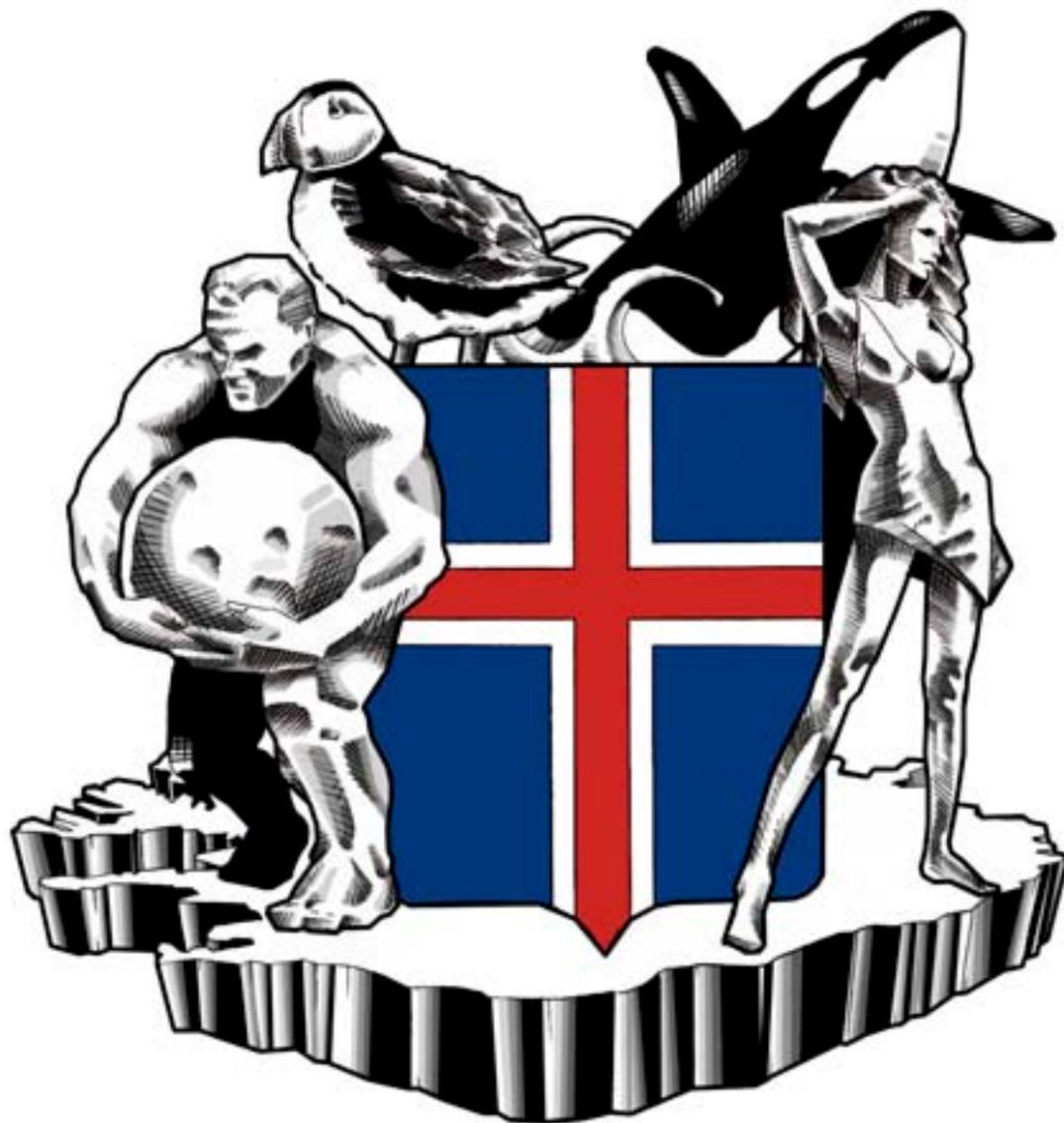
the association. He even wrote in a letter to a friend in 1902 that he would want it erected on Arnarhóll. Because of difficulties raising funds and problems between the Craftsman association and Einar, the statue was not unveiled until 1924. The whole process took around 22 years. The committee from the association was happy with the statue of Ingólfur himself, but they had a big problem with the four reliefs Einar wanted to accompany the statue. They depicted scenes which the committee thought were offensive and had in fact nothing to do with the strong Viking man Ingólfur was supposed to have been. Einar wanted to show the story of why Ingólfur chose to come to Iceland, the committee especially disliked the sentence "You should lead yourself," or "Sjálfur leið þú sjálfan þig"—words that Einar thought defined what Ingólfur was all about. The men in the committee thought this was too radical and went against what the Old Icelandic sagas said about Ingólfur. So the statue was raised without the reliefs or the pedestal Einar had designed. Einar himself did not show up to the unveiling. The statue is often used as a kind of a logo for Reykjavík.

9. The Culture House was built to house the national library and national archives of Iceland, the National Museum and Natural History Museum were also housed there for some time, and it became known as the Museum Building. It is one of the most beauti-

ful buildings in Reykjavík and is mentioned here because the statues of Jónas Hallgrímsson and Jón Sigurðsson were originally supposed to stand in front of it. Today it houses a permanent exhibition of Old Icelandic manuscripts that are very much worth a look.

10. This is the final stop, the home and studio of the sculptor Einar Jónsson, built for him by the Icelandic state after he donated all of his work to the people of Icelandic. The house was designed by Einar himself in collaboration with the architect Einar Erlendsson and is sometimes said to be his biggest sculpture. It was given the name Hnitbjörg by some of Einar's friends. Hnitbjörg in Norse mythology is where the poetic mead was kept and Einar was sometimes referred to as the poet sculptor. The museum first opened its doors to the public in 1923 and has welcomed guests ever since. A good place to start is the sculpture garden behind the museum, which contains quite a few examples of Einar's work in bronze. The museum itself contains around 300 works of art made by Einar in his lifetime as well as his studio and living quarters in their original state. ☺

STATUES OF THE FUTURE?



We asked a handful of clever people to think about a statue of the future. Specifically, we asked, "which person, place or thing from the twenty-first century do you think should be made a statue in the future? And, why?" Here's what they said:

WORDS
Anna Andersen

ILLUSTRATION
Búri

SIGRÍÐUR ÞORGEIRSDÓTTIR
Philosophy professor, University of Iceland

 I always liked that LOVE-sculpture on 6th Avenue in New York City. It is reminiscent of a pop and hippie culture of love and peace in the second half of the twentieth century. I could imagine a variation of this theme as a statue for the twenty-first century. This time with the phrase: "LOVE OF THE WORLD." This is a phrase that the philosopher Hannah Arendt coined (and it also sounds great in Latin, 'AMOR MUNDI'). With this phrase Arendt reminds us to love the world, which entails caring for our society. Recent ecological and financial crises display a

lack of care for the world, lack of global justice, lack of concern for nature and future generations. Greed and short-term time thinking have prevailed. So let's begin taking seriously the need for LOVING THE WORLD. (By the way, a collection of essays on political philosophy by Arendt was recently published in Icelandic with the title "Af ást til heimsins" or "For Love of the World").

GUÐMUNDUR ODDUR (GODDUR)
Artist and professor, Iceland Academy of the Arts

 Standing still is for statues. People, places and things are what you attach yourself to though expressive memo-

ries, good or bad. Those who write history are the winners—namely the patriots whose ubiquitous statues and photographs, draped with flags, serve as official icons. The image of the super-hero or Übermensch is something that belongs to the bad past. They are monuments from a period of depressive ego-trips. The statues of the future in my mind should surpass these local threshold guardians and regain a collective consciousness. They will be something closer to Freyja, Thor and Odin—something closer to sacred geometry and a deeper understanding of our journey. The gods should stand still like statues—the human beings must move on.

SIGURLAUG RAGNARSDÓTTIR
Art historian, wrote a master's thesis on statues in Reykjavík

 This is a difficult question because I believe that one must keep in mind that when statues are constructed, they should not be thought of first and foremost in terms of the subject, but rather from the artist's perspective with the location of the statue being part of the artist's vision. However, if I had to pick a particular concept, then it would be the statue "Óþekktá mótmælandanum" or "The Anonymous Protestor." In the twenty-first century, Icelanders learned to protest on an international scale and to demand justice. Those voices should never be silenced.

HEIÐA HELGADÓTTIR
Reykjavík Best Party Manager

 I would like to see a statue of Vigdís Finnbogadóttir. She is a symbol of strength and poise. It is a sad fact that there are hardly any statues of women in Reykjavík and I think that a statue of Vigdís would be a great start.

HAUKUR VIÐAR ALFREDSSON (HAUKUR MORDINGI)
Singer and guitarist in Mordingjarnir

 Bubbi Morthens should definitely be made a statue at some point. He is not only a popular musician (and has been for 30 years), but he is also a leader to many different groups in society—the working class, suit-wearing yuppies, fly fishermen, countryside folk—Bubbi fans are everyone.

Vigdís Finnbogadóttir is a given. Is there not already a statue of her? Well... she is the first democratically elected female president in the world. That's not a small feat.

Ok, I know Jón Páll Sigmarsson is not a twenty-first century man, but I'm including him. He's Iceland's most famous strong man. He was a colourful character who died far too young. Well, his statue image would definitely be nice and fit.

Björk is a must. Let's put her in front of Hallgrímskirkja church. The guy who's been there has been there long enough. Björk in her swan dress would be far more cool.

I don't Fjölfnir Þorgeirsson will be made a statue, but it's my personal suggestion, a bronze statue of Fjölfnir in the middle of the Reykjavík pond, holding a horse over his head. For real. I'm not joking. That would be NUTS!!!

HUGLEIKUR DAGSSON
Artist, regularly contributes comics to the Grapevine

 I think we should build a giant fountain statue showing four dead polar bears with water squirting out of their gunshot wounds. Red water maybe? Food colouring doesn't cost too much. It would be a tasteful way of telling visitors that even though we totally luuuuuuu nature, we don't hesitate to shoot it in the face. 🐻



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THREE NOTEWORTHY REYKJAVÍK STATUES

I appreciate a good statue more than most people. This may be because of my background as a stonemason. I have more than a rudimentary understanding of what it takes to reveal the form that resides within a block of stone, or to transform a shapeless piece of metal into something recognisable. And while I do not claim any expertise on the aesthetics, I believe my statue fetish makes me fully qualified to give you a reasoned list of three noteworthy statues in Reykjavík.

WORDS

Sveinn Birkir Björnsson

PHOTOGRAPHY

Natsha Nandabhiwat



20 LOGAR
by Hagatorg
Artist: Hulda Hákon

While this is strictly not a statue, but rather a sculpture, 20 Logar is an artwork worth pointing out. The name translates to 20 Flames, with each flame representing a member state of NATO. The sculpture was commissioned to artist Hulda Hákon and revealed in 2002 to commemorate the meeting of the 20 foreign ministers of the NATO states. Since its unveiling, it has repeatedly been targeted to protest NATO's military efforts around the world. It has been covered in red paint on more than one occasion, and currently consists of a mere 18 flames, as two have gone missing over the years, most likely at the hands of anti-NATO enthusiasts, or possibly Communists. While other countries have many memorials dedicated to various war efforts, Icelanders have shown little tolerance for this little reminder of our involvement in NATO.



ALBERT GUÐMUNDSSON
by Laugardalshöll
Artist: Helgi Gíslason

Dedicated to Iceland's first and most successful professional football player, Albert Guðmundsson, who played with powerhouses such as Arsenal, Glasgow Rangers and AC Milan, to name but a few, during a particularly industrious career. Albert would later move on to politics, but that's probably another statue waiting to happen. This is a noteworthy statue for the simple fact that it may be the most ugly statue in Reykjavík. Statues of athletes often strike a posing figure. Manchester United's "Holy Trinity" of Sir Bobby Charlton, George Best and Denis Law, outside their stadium is a good example. Or the graceful rendition of Michael Jordan outside Chicago Stadium. Albert Guðmundsson, however, strikes an awkward pose, as if leaning into the bar counter in an effort to swoon a bypassing lady of notice. The overall effect is less than gracious, and does little to do justice to this former great player.



ÓÞEKKTI EMBÆTTISMAÐURINN
Lækjargata, port
Artist Magnús Tómasson

The Unknown Bureaucrat is a popular favourite, as it manages to be both humorous and provocative, while truthfully depicting something that most everyone can relate to, the trivial existence of the working bee. The block of rock is a perfect metaphor for how everyday life crushes down on us, while at the same time depicting the narrative of the faceless official who is only a cog in the wheel, and never a person to most of us. Even the location is a thoughtful comment on the trivial existence of the Unknown Bureaucrat, in a closed off back alley. You really have to make an effort to find him, sealed off from any relevance, and the rest of the world in his isolated little corner of the universe.

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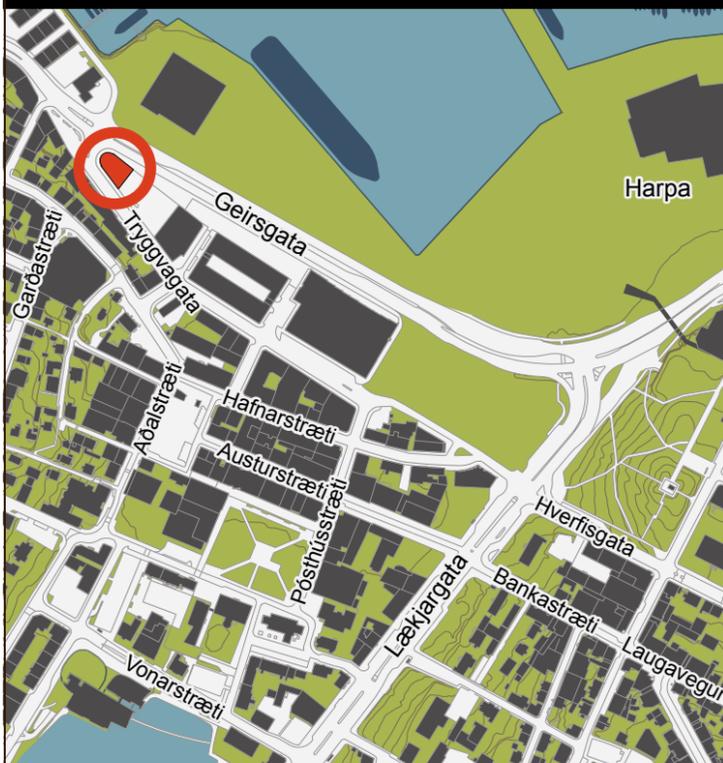
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Reykjavík Runway

Assistants Of Fashion



Reykjavík Runway, Iceland's first fashion consultancy, has provided a fantastic design competition with a twist: where a group of PR and marketing mentors have come together to nurture the nation's young talents.

CRAFT VS. COUTURE – A BRIEF HISTORY

To understand the relevance of Reykjavík Runway, you first need to know a brief history of the fashion industry in Iceland. The contemporary fashion scene is a new concept for design and craft traditionalists. The fashion community has found a constant struggle in defining the difference between craft and couture. This has led to debates and slight conflicts from the different generations.

When The Icelandic Fashion Council was founded in 2001, fashion began to distance itself from craft and be taken more seriously within the design community. However, support for the profession was never abundant and some fashion designers say it was not until Steinunn Sigurðardóttir was awarded Reykjavík's Artist of the Year in 2009 that fashion design truly got the status it deserved.

Now in 2011, the young scene has grown at an incredible pace with events such as The Reykjavík Fashion Festival (RFF) and Design March gaining international reputations. The mood in the fashion scene has begun to change—closer collaborations are developing

with stronger support networks, and a sense of solidarity is now being felt. Taking all these elements into consideration, it's not surprising that Reykjavík Runway is blooming just in the right season and springing up to help the fashion industry and its young talents.

MODEST BEGINNINGS

The original idea of Reykjavík Runway started from a small and informal design workshop held by CEO, Ingibjörg Gréta Gísladóttir. The group of designers were asked: what do you really need in order to grow and develop your career?

Through their collective efforts and discussions, there seemed to be several missing links within the industry, whether it was marketing, funding, costs or manufacturing.

Ingibjörg began to think of ways she could help support the fashion community through her own personal experience. Her humble intention was to work with designers, considering their point of views and improving their difficulties. She created the competition to excite designers into the company's innovative service.

THE 4 FINALISTS

EYGLÓ - A vibrant designer with a flare for dynamic shapes. She has worked under some legendary contemporary designers such as Will Bernhard Helm and Jeremy Scott.
ROSA-BRYNDIS design - Launching

their brand in 2010, the duo say they take their inspiration from architectural and organic shapes. The designer's handpick their material with care, as well as giving delicate finishes to the garments.

SHADOW CREATURES - The sisters contrast the soft, femininity of their silks and woollen materials with their dynamic animalistic prints, working closely with the concept of narrative within their brand.

ZISKA - Her intense illustrative textures and spiritualistic elements connect her work as an artist and designer. Coolhunter.com once described her work as having "a slightly more sinister take on tribalism...".

CATWALK FINALE

Each designer is given two months to produce a 2012 spring/summer collection with a budget of 150.000 ISK. The Collection will then be presented to a panel of expert judges in the form of a "catwalk-off" and exhibition.

The selected panel of judges will be from The Icelandic Fashion Council. One designer will be chosen to receive the 500.000 ISK prize and their own Reykjavík Runway personal design agenda. Bring a butterfly net to catch the beautiful styles! 🦋

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Breaking My Spell

A performance endurance piece



Michelle L. Morby has come all the way from San Francisco to Reykjavík to participate in the Reykjavík half marathon on August 20. Not planning to set any records, Michelle is here to do a performance endurance piece called 'Breaking My Spell,' involving nine costume changes.



It's based on a fairy tale she wrote about an enchanted horse-turned-walrus going on a transformational journey to find itself. On the journey, the walrus meets different animals—a puffin and then a fox, for example—and each time it gives something of itself away until little by little it discovers itself as a horse again.

"The idea is that the different things that the walrus sacrifices are all defence mechanisms to get back to the original vulnerability and strength of self," Michelle explained. "The tusks are about defence, the blubber is about creating a boundary, and the skin is about creating tough skin. When you shed all these layers, you reveal your true self."

The piece is very much part of Michelle's own transformational journey. "I had gained a bunch of weight, and just going to gym was not enough," Michelle said. "I'm really disciplined in my art practice, so I thought, what if I made this into my art practice. It's a different way of contextualising discipline and eventually it becomes a ritual. I'm creating this transformation. I'm still in the

walrus body and I'm transforming into the horse as I get stronger and more fit and flexible."

She adds: "One of the reasons I wanted to do a walking performance is because it is referencing the circumambulation that people do in different religious sites. It's a sort of walking meditative preponderance of the transformative quality."

The whole art project, which will span three countries over the next three years, will also wind up being a film. Visit www.breakingmyspell.wordpress.com to find out more, and if you catch Michelle in the act of transformation during, she encourages you to send in your photos. 📷

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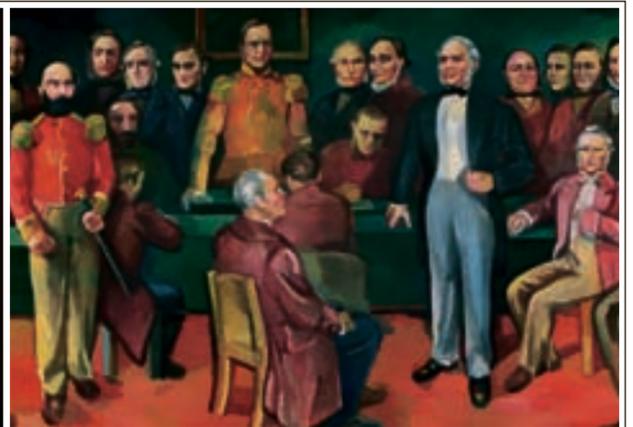
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High Streets And Piss Pots

An introduction to Einar Már Guðmundsson's new book 'Bankastræti Núll'



Before the authorities plugged them up in 2006, there used to be underground, public toilets on the corner of Bankastræti and Lækjargata. In his most recent book, Einar Már Guðmundsson recounts how the toilets were once the hub of Reykjavík's seedy area, where boozers and drug users mingled and where teenagers procured condoms. The area was commonly known as Bankastræti Núll ("Bankastræti Nil") or simply Núllið ("The Nil") as it marks the spot where Austurstræti turns into Bankastræti and a new house number count begins.

'Bankastræti Núll' is also the title author Einar Már Guðmundsson uses for his most recent book, a collection of interconnected essays, stories, poems, quotations and memoirs that attempts to piece together some of the scattered remains of reality after Iceland's bubble burst in 2008. It is written in a similar vein to his preceding book, 'Hvíta Bókin' ("The White Book," 2009), which first appeared as a series of political essays in newspaper Morgunblaðið in the wake of the collapse. Although Einar Már is better known for his prose fiction, most notably the Nordic Council Prize winning novel 'Angels of the Universe' (1993), his last two publications reflect his re-engagement in politics as an outspoken critic of the neo-liberal policies that precipitated the financial crisis.

'Bankastræti Núll' opens with the narrator's lament: the current political situation has stifled his ability to write poems to his lover. Although he foresees a future where "reality wakes up" and poets can once again sing the praises of love and nature, the resounding sound of social injustice presently overwhelms him and beckons him to first engage in the struggle against the free reign of the stock exchange, privatisation and greed.

Just as natural resources have been privatised, so the arts have been appropriated by big business and made

to serve its interests. The comedian John Cleese became the main commercial spokesperson for Kaupthing bank, and hundreds of Icelandic artists came together to act in a Landsbanki advertisement under the direction and patronage of Björgólfur Guðmundsson, former billionaire and banking mogul. Einar Már further interprets one of Kaupthing's mottos, "kaupthinking,"

"The persistent division between the sciences and the arts and an ever-increasing specialisation of labour only heightens our sense of fragmentation and alienation"

as cleverly constructed doublethink, 'to think so as to buy' or 'to buy so as to think,' which could have been sent to the Venice Biennale had it been labelled art.

Einar Már is no less critical of certain forms of popular contemporary literature, most notably crime fiction. He shows how crime novels have come to reinforce neo-liberal values by emphasising the singularity of criminal actions, evildoers, and lone detectives while avoiding systemic analysis. It becomes apparent that the poet cannot write poetry and the novelist cannot write novels, not because they must leave their armchairs and desktops to join the revolution but because the forms have been corrupted. Reality has been turned on its head and churns out its own fictions: "In fact, it is no longer necessary to write novels in Iceland these days, because they happen in real life. Iceland is like a reality show, with live broadcasts of erupting volcanoes and a financial crisis that transforms bank directors into wanted men."

Thus Einar Már leaves off the traditional novel in search of new literary forms, which he hopes will more thoroughly encompass and make sense of a fragmented social reality rife with contradictions. He questions how his own generation, which welcomed the student revolution of 1968, the Beatles and radical left politics could later endorse Iceland's transition toward reck-

less capitalism. He delves into the past and weaves together fragments of various, mostly non-fictional, accounts of seemingly random events in his life which nonetheless coalesce into a narrative about the elliptical yet steady rise of neo-liberal ideology in Iceland.

Although digressive and playful, 'Bankastræti Núll' remains an earnest effort to retrieve lost connections be-

tween past and present, politics and poetry, prosperity and poverty. Iceland's economic collapse was not an isolated event but part of a global system that now binds Iceland and Haiti closer together as captives of the IMF. Moreover, the persistent division between the sciences and the arts and an ever-increasing specialisation of labour only heightens our sense of fragmentation and alienation.

Einar Már's medium reflects his message: just as a more integrated and long-term approach is needed in politics so 'Bankastræti Núll' combines various literary genres to create a multifaceted narrative. It does not read simply as a political manifesto but as an experiment in narrative building that strings together various stories, legends, ideas, personal memoirs, poems and quotations. It is a convergence of form that finds its social counterpart at the intersection of Lækjargata and Bankastræti, where the Prime Minister's office still stands next to the remains of the old public toilets and across from where Útvegsbankinn ("The Fisheries Bank") once stood before its scandalous collapse in 1985, reminding us of the fine line between the most respectable and least respectable members of society. ♥

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An excerpt from 'Bankastræti Núll'

Words by Einar Már Guðmundsson

Translation by Alda Kravac

XI Disciples of Milton Friedman

It is written somewhere that all cats are grey in the dark, but here in Iceland, official reports are all black, no matter how bright it is outside. Alþingi's Investigative Commission's Report is black. The Central Bank's Report on the status of household debt is black. And the government and International Monetary Fund's Memorandum of Economic and Financial Policies is also black, dark as a coal mine, and sure enough, it was drafted in April, the cruellest month. It is a reminder of the misery that the IMF has presided over in countries all over the world, and directly refutes the notion that the IMF plans to apply different methods than those it has adhered to until now.

In Greece, the public has risen up against the Fund's plans, but here the labour movement and employers get into bed with it and are almost more devout than the Pope in getting investors to come here with their baggage of off-shore profits and dummy corporations. In one district, where neo-liberals have sold everything and there is nothing left to mortgage except the harbour, efforts are being made to set a precedent by selling natural resources through a shelf company just so politicians can save face after having handed over the entire district to their associates and relatives on a silver platter.

What should the poets write about? Will the IMF supply the country with a literary writing programme? No, I do not think it has any interest in literature. Thank goodness for that. They just have graphs and bar charts, economists, advisers, and—if the confessions of former employees of the Fund are taken seriously—so called 'economic hit men,' who see to keeping politicians quiet, paying them off, or even ousting them. I do not trust myself to make more of this matter, except to say that automatons from Washington have been sent here, men who know all about the state deficit and nothing about our history and culture. They go on about "economic growth" but do not want to know anything about the public's welfare; they are indifferent to whether nations are literate or illiterate. They are only interested in whether it is possible to squeeze money and proceeds out of the state in the interest of investors and big industry. Here is one big lemon. We will squeeze a whole tub of lemon juice out of it. Here are natural resources. Money can be squeezed out of them to pay hedge funds that have bought the debts of banks and financial corporations at bargain rates. The economist Michael Hudson has described the IMF as a sort of henchman for international creditors, collecting property and industry revenues on their behalf. But what is more incredible, he remarks, is that nations around the world are sacrificing their economic and monetary independence without resistance.

The first mission chief the IMF sent here was Mark Flanagan. He was succeeded by a woman, Julie Kozak. They were both assisted by a man named Franek Rozwadowski; and all of them were assisted by a woman who headed Landsbanki's research group and almost everything they once reported turned out to be false. In any case, the Icelandic public had to listen to the bubble economy wisdom of the research group when Landsbanki was supposedly in its prime. Those from other research groups were no better but I call her out in particular because she is an employee of the IMF, which is in command of this country. It may be leaving now, but it will only truly be felt after it departs, having tightly bound everything according to its plans. It is really quite remarkable that most of the Social Democrat cabinet ministers collect their assistants and advisers

among the ruins of the banking system. The IMF mission chief gives more orders than the President and the government, regardless of the mission chief's gender. The mission chief can tell the Minister of Finance to stand on his hands, and the Minister of Finance will stand on his hands. But whoever gives orders to the mission chief is another story.

I once met Mark Flanagan. It was at a meeting in The Central Bank requested by a group of people who opposed the IMF's economic plans for different reasons and on various grounds. I had a copy of Naomi Klein's book 'The Shock Doctrine' with me, a beautifully bound book with a yellow cover. I asked Mark Flanagan whether he had read this book and whether he wanted to discuss its contents. He looked down at me from above his table and replied that the author of this book was not an economist. Then he turned to his bar charts on trade deficit, which he supposed should level off in the very short-term. It was obvious from Mark Flanagan's arguments that he was a disciple of Milton Friedman, the man at the centre of 'The Shock Doctrine,' the man who laid the groundwork for the period of neoliberalism as an ideologist and prophet, and has left his fingerprints on historical events, from the military coup in Chile to the privatisation of Icelandic banks.

The most prominent disciple of Milton Friedman in Iceland was Hannes Hólmsteinn Gissurarson [...]. Milton and Hannes were friends and were members of the same club, which shaped the most recent era of history. In the middle of the seventies, Hannes Hólmsteinn sat in the Student Council of the University of Iceland and I also sat there for a time, as a stand-in if I recall correctly. He was the only one among those on the right who took part in debates with those of us who were furthest to the left. Others on the right had little interest in global issues and generally knew little about politics and history. In light of history, Hannes Hólmsteinn Gissurarson is probably the most influential politician to have sat on the Student Council. But we did not take him seriously, and rather regarded him as an ultra right-wing individual who probably did not mean half of what he said. We thought he was joking. But we were wrong there. We were satisfied with dreaming, discussing and being in the right. But Hannes Hólmsteinn was the messenger of an ideology that was pushed into practice. I fancy that he gets the shivers when he thinks about the consequences of these theories. He talked about bringing dead capital back into circulation, that is to say, placing natural resources and public goods in the hands of private individuals. As such Hannes Hólmsteinn Gissurarson had no power but a lot of influence.

There were other famous right-wing personalities present, in addition to Ingibjörg Sólrún Gísladóttir and Össur Skarphéðinsson. Ingibjörg Sólrún was president of the Student Council and Össur Skarphéðinsson, the current Minister of Foreign Affairs, was vice president. He had been president before her, exactly as it transpired later in The Social Democratic Alliance (Samfylkingin). It could be said that this Student Council was like a miniature picture of the nation's failure. It was a little picture of the future, of the people who were to take charge and govern. Several Student Councils have since come and gone but it is always the same story. For many, the Student Council works as a springboard to the seat of power. When I sat there, it did not occur to me that I was surrounded by future heads of state, Members of Parliament, municipal mayors and some three cabinet ministers.

The left was in the majority and I supported the majority, but I was in a minority within the majority. Those of

us who were to the extreme left and identified with revolutionary change and socialism did not adopt all the views of the majority and did not expect the majority to assume responsibility for our views. We had our own particular discourse on, for instance, overthrowing the social order, stopping wars and freeing political prisoners; views we thought should be heard but which did not explicitly fall within the jurisdiction of the Student Council. The Student Council was like any other special interest group, and it had student struggle on its agenda, just as recovering alcoholics join together to stay sober and stamp collectors to collect stamps. Or unions consolidate to protect the rights of their members. The struggle of the Student Council dealt with pressing interests such as student loans, student services and so forth. This is not to say that we did not regard the world revolution as a pressing interest but the majority on the left was not of the same opinion.

And so the winter went by. During this time, creative writing was taking hold of me and I was not always tuned in to the political scene. Yet I wanted to participate in the discussion even though the discussion was not always objective. I was not particularly objective either. Sometimes I grew bored at these meetings, twisted things around and tried to be funny, causing trouble in a flippant sort of way. Sometimes I would let slip a remark that the opposition would put in the books and which would often amuse the Council. One time, for example, the right took up the issue of facilities for student associations, undoubtedly a necessary discussion. Among other things, it had to do with providing facilities for the respective associations affiliated with the left and right. While this discussion took place, I turned to the person sitting next to me and said to him: "Do those right-wingers need anything more than a wardrobe for their old Nazi uniforms?" We laughed at this sardonic joke. Meanwhile heated discussions were taking place over the issue itself, so that nobody heard what I said except one girl from the right-wing faction. This was of course merely crude humour, perhaps not particularly funny considering how sensitive Nazism is as a topic, especially for people on the right. But the girl insisted upon my words being recorded. I requested that she repeat my comment, and when she did, the room exploded with laughter as if she had been hearing voices. I still fail to understand what end was served in recording such a comment.

This girl was surely a fine individual but most of the others said little at these meetings and let the men present the arguments. Then they raised their hands and voted as they were supposed to. They contributed little to the discussions and did not keep up with world affairs. Nobody on the right kept up with world affairs except perhaps Hannes Hólmsteinn Gissurarson, the disciple of Milton Friedman. Today everyone agrees that this compliance and conformity, this subordinate way of thinking, is one of the causes of the collapse. I was myself turning away from political orthodoxy, which always toed the same line, and within a few years, I had completely turned my attention to story-telling and poetry. I found myself giving way to the facts and my view of society was expanding and becoming more variegated. Even so, the radical left continued to provide essential provisions for my journey in this world. It is also fair to point out that I would later meet many of those who sat with me on the Student Council as upright citizens who attended to their jobs with knowledge and solicitude, and it did not make a difference whether they had been on the right or left side of the spectrum. ☘

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Back To Root Of It All



Grapevine Grassroots Hemmi og Valdi 5/8/2011

Words

Bob Cluness

Photography

Alisa Kalyanova

The 30th edition of the Grapevine Grassroots concerts shows off some of the series' favourite acts – Enkíú, Arnljótur, Ahma, Sóley, and Nóló

So this was the 30th Grapevine Grassroots concert? My god, has it really been that many? I could swear that it felt like it was only yesterday when the Grapevine and Arnljótur Sigurðsson half-inched a tiny PA and set up a series to root out (see what I did there?) and showcase fresh and interesting Icelandic music. And tonight, they were introducing some of their favourite art-

Photos

1. Sóley
2. Arnljótur
3. Nóló

ists who've passed through those hallowed doors.

When I arrived at Hemmi og Valdi, the place was packed to the gills and Enkíú was already toiling away at his laptop blast furnace. Enkíú's set consisted mostly of electronics that had ambient noise loops and stacked synth sounds set to some decent trip-hop beats. You could say it was styled along the likes of Flying Lotus, but it sounded more like the equivalent of throwing his laptop down a long flight of stairs which is all well and good, if it weren't for the chatting and general apathy from the crowd, which rendered his music interesting sonic wallpaper. Bloody ingrates.

Man, I love Arnljótur. The venerable MC and curator of Grapevine Grassroots always has a stuttering, slightly uncomfortable demeanour whenever he speaks to the audience, as if he's trying to explain quantum physics to a bunch of unruly hipster squirrels. But don't let that fool you; he knows what he's doing. He even gave a sly dig at the audience at the start of his set ('This is my music. Maybe you'll like it. Maybe you'll completely hate it. But at least I will have invoked some sort of reaction out of you.').

With his intuitive tape manipulation antics, he kicked off with rather trippy bleeps and whoops with a growing bass throb creeping up underneath,

before settling into a tropical hypnagogic dub sound that wouldn't sound out of place on the Not Not Fun label (Matrix Metals, LA Vampires, etc). All vaseline smeared bass and chewed up reggae beats. He pulled out a surprise at the end when he started to sing over a track that sounded like a deranged kid's TV show theme tune (Muppet Babies go mental?), as if he was DJ Flúgvél og Geimskip's big brother. Very compressed and twisted.

This heavy dub feeling was further emphasised when Ahma started to play a wall of ambient noise that sounded like the winter sea at Vík before a heavy dub techno beat came in. It was all a bit Kangding Ray with an IDM chill more suited to an abandoned factory with lots of dry ice and blue arc lighting. With scuttling insect percussion and weird whale call sounds, it was tight and packaged rather nicely, even with it being played live.

But enough of all this electronic piffle. We want some REAL music dammit! And the call was answered with the next act, a 'special guest' tango music project whose name I never heard properly (I simply gave them the name 'Tango and Cash'). Their rather short set was smooth musically with tight arrangements that sounded contemporary, only playing more traditional tango music towards the end. It certainly

made a change and forced several yakkers in the audience to shut up for at least 5 minutes.

Sóley's music is exquisitely poised with a dark, almost gothic sensibility that sets her apart from many of her contemporaries in the scene. But the fact that she had to help Tango And Cash pack up (she was the accordion player), then setup her own equipment in front of everyone—nearly blowing out the PA in the process—did slightly lack the air of mystery about it. You wouldn't expect Bat For Lashes or Cat Power to do stuff like that would you? Also, because of the rush to get things set up, she started off like a flustered librarian who'd mainlined her eighth espresso in a row. Sentences would often drift into cul de sacs, or disappear into space altogether ('and this track... err... well it's... um... yeah, right!').

But that all changed when she started playing. Playing a mix of old and new material, it was a stripped down affair that still retained a lot of the song's mystery. We were also introduced to her new 'loop track' toy, which she used to create layered vocal tracks and 'boom chicka chicka' beat. A little rough perhaps, but it did the job in fleshing out her sound. She even got the audience clapping along to her track 'Black Books.' Judging from the new material, we can expect more

decent dark pop in the near future.

Now many people I know really don't like Nóló. Me, I actually have a bit of a soft spot for the little munchkins and their melted, warped psych-pop. But their sound is something best listened to on record. In a live setting, even on something as loose and ramshackle as a Grassroots concert, their sound tends to wilt under the restrictions of their equipment. They certainly can't sing or harmonise for shit and some of the keyboard sounds set your teeth on edge. For example, their last song had hints of early New Order, only for them to spoil it when they started singing and playing jarring plastic piano sounds.

And this is a bit of a shame as underneath the clunkiness, there are some really stylish elements, such as the guitar, which has a dry, crystalline sound that's unlike anything else you can hear around. And there are some sublime pop moments underneath the roughness. The bastard sons of Raw Sex, they would be a great soundtrack for entertainment on cruise ships.

Overall, judging from the music of the night, the Grapevine Grassroots concert series has to be doing something right to have gone on for so long and to have had such a decent success rate in finding new acts. Here's to another 30 concerts. 🍷



Music | Live Review



Manslaughter
FUCK LIFE CHOOSE DEATH

thevintage

GRRRRRAAAAAAGH!!!! Hear that tribal roar!

Things are actually starting to look rather healthy in the Icelandic hardcore scene right now. With the Grange Hill grindcore of Logn and the slightly bleak worldview of World Narcosis coming at you like a procession of gobby meerkat, we now have the goodtime counterpoint of Manslaughter's debut album.

Made up of the scrag ends of Muck, Plastic Gods and Catarpil-larmenn, they've tightened and refocused their sound a bit since their split 7" with Logn. Forcing their doom metal and crossover thrash together means a sound baby that sounds half like Municipal Waste/Asshole Parade and half like tweaking Celestine (not a bad thing really).

And with song titles that veer from nihilistic ('Facial Birth', 'Reject Conformity') with the puerile ('MILF', 'Beer (It's What's For Dinner)'), this is one of the more cathartically dumb releases I've heard this year. Yes there's gallons of piss and venom, but they'd much rather have a party at the end of the day.

This is the album to listen to when you want to, in the words of Henry Rollins, 'Fuck on the floor and break shit!'

☞ - BOB CLUNESS



Deep Jimi and the Zep Creams
Better When We're Dead

deepjimi

It ain't pastiche when you believe in it

Start this album on track 7—'Don't Let Your Dreams Go'—which will tell you everything you need to know about the style, approach, personality and proper-rock-song attitude of the now-veterans. It's an early-70s long-hair Zeppish rocker with a satisfying hint of desperation about it and the lyrics speak for themselves. And with a little bit more guitar hysterics and vocals it could be the White Stripes quite easily. Not that they want to be; the whole point is that this is classic rock played timelessly by a bunch of longhairs who've made a few bad decisions in their career but very few, on this evidence, in songcraft. Check out Nothing Can Go Wrong for a perfect example. It's a niftily-controlled album of prog-tinted hard rock in a just-pre NWOBHM sense—something like Samson circa 1981. This is an LP which isway, way better than the band name.

☞ - JOE SHOOMAN



The Vintage Caravan

The Vintage Caravan

thevintage

Dillon bar has found its new princes

People will often give a bunch of kids that play wholly derivative genre music a free ride if they play said genre music well. And this applies wholly to The Vintage Caravan.

Now the thing is, their self titled album sounds really good. The production gives their music an edge and attack that you really don't get with other bands, say Deep Jimi and the Zep Creams. The guitars squall, the drums clatter and the bass punches. But the actual music they play, which is heavy blues rock, has already been played to death a million times before, in a million different iterations over many, many decades. But as I said, they play this schlock really well so most people won't care. Perfect for those dads who complain that you don't hear any 'real music' nowadays.

☞ - BOB CLUNESS



Daniél Ágúst

The Drift

danielagust

Compelling to generation after generation

Blues doesn't get the appreciation it deserves. But if Daniel Ágúst has got anything to do with it, that's gonna change, cowboy. And though the form itself is based round familiar chords and licks, in the hands of someone with something to say and the skills with which to say it that self-same anchor allows a great amount of contemporary context. Check the title track—country blues with an irresistibly insistent synth line blubbing around a live-and-lifeforce age-old-tale. Elsewhere, Falling In Lust has more than a hint of Nick Cave about matters, and the epic Snowlake is The Who as produced by the mighty Alabama 3. Give us a collaboration with em please Mr. Á? An idea of the continued motivation to create comes across very strongly in Yeah, Yeah, Yeah, which despite some worryingly-Mobyish moments is a cracking celebration of music and possibilities. Okay, meanwhile there is an end-of-night hazy squashy out-of-mind piece with all the claustrophobia of self-searching and the release of the same through love. Such subjects are of course timeless; it's how they're delivered that's what makes them continue to be compelling to generation after generation.

☞ - JOE SHOOMAN

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¡El Arte No Es Para Todos Los Bolsillos!

Segundo editorial de José!



Recuerdo que cuando hace unos meses llegué a Islandia quedé maravillado desde el primer momento por la belleza y espectacularidad de su naturaleza, por las decenas de actividades de ocio y turismo que ofrece, y por la extrema cordialidad de sus gentes. Estaba encantado, no lo niego, pero había algo que echaba mucho de menos. Sí, bueno; está la familia, los amigos y la gastronomía patria. Pero sentimentalismos a un lado, lo que en verdad me mortificaba era llegar cada día a casa y no poder masacrar un preludio de Chopin.

Para recuperar mi hobby sibirita decidí comprar un piano electrónico barato que calmara mi "mono" musical durante mi estancia en la isla. Recorrí la mayoría de las tiendas de instrumentos de Reikiavik -escasas por otro lado- y enseguida choqué de frente con la terrible realidad: Islandia es un país carísimo!

En todas las tiendas que visité los precios eran ostensiblemente

más altos que los de sus homólogas de la Europa continental, llegando a encontrar diferencias de hasta el 40% en el mismo artículo; tendencia aplicable a cualquier producto de electrónica en el país.

Desesperado, pensé en la importación y con esperanza volví la vista a la tierra de las oportunidades, donde sabía que hallaría los mejores precios. Encontré verdaderas gangas en Estados Unidos así que opté por comprar on-line mi anhelado piano. La emoción era máxima, hasta que recibí un nuevo jarro de agua fría: Gastos de envío de varios cientos de euros, más la suma del IVA islandés -que solo es del 25,5%- a lo que hay que añadir una tasa de aduana de porcentaje misteriosamente variable. En suma, en el viaje oceánico iba a perder más monedas que las que Francis Drake birló al Imperio español.

Conclusión: Si llueve de más este verano es porque servidor se ha metido a cantante. ●

Somos Casi Libres



El aislamiento geográfico de Islandia contrasta con la temprana llegada de la cultura urbana al país de los frailecillos. Los grafitis comenzaron a tinter Islandia a mediados de los ochenta. El mundo de los aerosoles, combinado con el hip-hop y los deportes de estilo urbano, como el skateboard o el BMX-Flatland, han ido ganando adeptos a un ritmo vertiginoso entre los jóvenes islandeses, que expresen su creatividad al máximo. Describir la cultura urbana raya lo inefable por ser un estilo de vida en sí mismo, paralelo al mundo que toda persona suele vivir.

En Islandia el hip-hop impera y las tablas de skate son parte del decorado diario de Reikiavik. En la capital islandesa existen tres lugares donde los grafiteros transforman pintura en arte y expresión de ideas. El más conocido, por excelencia, es Hjartatorg, o la Plaza del

Corazón, accesible desde Laugavegur, la calle principal. El corazón del suelo da nombre a esta plaza formada por casas abandonadas y muros que algún día fueron habitados. Empresas que entraron en quiebra con la crisis económica eran dueñas de numerosas viviendas del centro de Reikiavik. Allí, alojaban a jóvenes drogadictos e indigentes. La pregunta, ¿por qué empresas con dinero descuidan casas en el centro de la ciudad? Un objetivo ilógico: poder derruir las para construir un centro comercial al lado de Laugavegur. Finalmente, la crisis económica y la razón dieron nacimiento a una plaza llena de arte urbano que, a día de hoy, se sigue regenerando. Actualmente el Ayuntamiento ni apoya ni frena la inspiración y acción de esta cultura.

En Islandia existen tres grupos de grafiteros: CMF, 30S-DAT y RWS. El primero es el que impera y todos participan en los murales. Los "kekos" caricaturescos pueblan los muros de

casas que cayeron cuando también lo hizo el país en 2008. La policía, a día de hoy, no reprime estas expresiones de hecho, en numerosas ocasiones, las aplauden.

En las fiestas que se organizan a menudo en la Plaza del Corazón con DJs y cantantes de hip-hop se aúnan música, pintura, baile, ritmo, color y deporte. Existen competiciones de skaters en Islandia, celebradas en Ingólfs-torg, una plaza de Reikiavik en la que siempre hay pies haciendo acrobacias con el monopatín.

La cultura urbana continúa extendiéndose y progresando. En la fiesta que tuvo lugar el pasado jueves 21 de julio en la Plaza del Corazón, un joven grafitero pronunció un grito esperanzador: "We are almost free!" ("¡Somos Casi Libres!"). ●

Marta Bardón
Foto por Marta Bardón



Donde El Mar Invade La Tierra

Déjate enamorar por Westfjords



Westfjords, la región más remota y fascinante de Islandia, tiene un encanto incomparable a cualquier otro lugar. El paisaje, formado con la erosión volcánica, nos permite disfrutar de fiordos, valles, islas y multitud de cascadas. Actualmente hay pocos habitantes en la zona y no es raro encontrarse granjas abandonadas hace tiempo.

Las carreteras parecen no terminar nunca mientras las vistas se vuelven cada vez más espectaculares. Un vehículo normal es suficiente para recorrer Westfjords, aunque siempre es recomendable un 4x4, sobre todo por los caminos que no están asfaltados.

Desde Reikiavik podemos tomar la carretera de circunvalación hacia el norte hasta llegar a la 61, que sigue su camino a lo largo de la costa este de la región. También podemos ir a través de la península de Snaefellsness, circulando por la 'Ring Road' hasta coger la carretera 54, con dirección a Stykkishólmur. Desde allí, el ferry Baldur

comunica con Brjánslaekur, pasando por la pequeña isla de Flatey.

Otra vía para llegar es el avión. Air Iceland tiene conexiones frecuentes entre Reikiavik y el pequeño aeropuerto de Ísafjörður. El autobús es una alternativa, pero no la más recomendable.

La opción más asequible para dormir es hacer acampada. Casi todos los pueblos tienen un camping. Incluso, puedes encontrar zonas habilitadas junto a granjas y hoteles en medio de la nada. También nos queda la opción del albergue, aunque los precios en verano no son precisamente baratos.

Los Fiordos del Oeste son un paraíso que no debes dejar de visitar. ¿Te animas?

PARADAS IMPRESCINDIBLES:

Ísafjörður, la capital de la región. A pesar de su aislamiento histórico y que apenas cuenta con 4000 habitantes, la ciudad tiene una atmósfera urbana.

La península de **Látrabjarg**, el punto

más occidental de Europa sin contar las Azores. Si hay suerte, encontraremos frailecillos entre sus altos acantilados.

La majestuosa cascada de **Dynjandi**, que se compone de siete caídas de agua. Un espectáculo indescriptible.

El **Museo del Monstruo Marino** ('Skrímslasetur') en Bíldudalur. Tiene una mesa con una gran pantalla que permite moverte virtualmente por el fiordo mientras descubrimos historias de la zona.

La cala de **Skálavík**, a la que se llega pasando de largo Bolungarvík. Un lugar ideal para dejar pasar el tiempo y relajarse entre la naturaleza. ●

Félix Jiménez
Fotos por Julia Staples



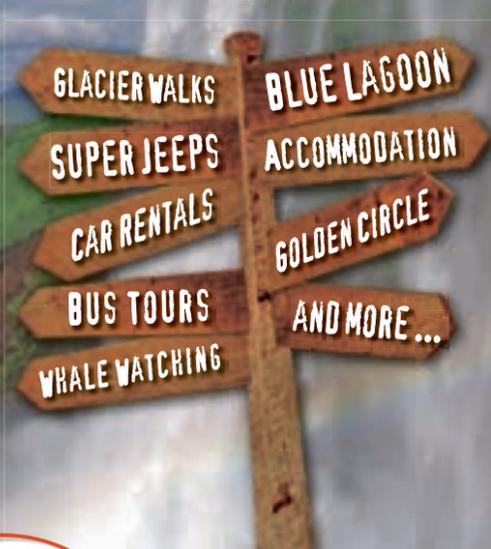
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How you can take a piece of Iceland home with you?

Or several hundred pieces ...



In my opinion, the pleasure of receiving presents has somewhat diminished by the time you reach your 30th birthday, but this gift was different. It had been chosen with care and thoughtfulness. It was a beautifully packaged jigsaw puzzle, containing a stunning image of Hvítserkur in northern Iceland. I'm not usually into this sort of stuff, but this really caught my imagination. A clear product of yet more ingenious Icelandic creativity; I wanted to find out more.

The Icelanders behind 'Puzzled by Iceland' are Þóra Eggertsdóttir and Guðrún Heimisdóttir. The two, who describe themselves as "two blue eyed, blonde haired moms," came up with the idea of starting a company when they were both on 18 months maternity leave from work. Puzzled by Iceland became the antidote to changing nappies.

Perhaps unusually, they didn't have any idea what they would like to do, other than to start a company of some sort. Inspiration often comes from the strangest places. This time inspiration

came from the Swedish Royal Family. Guðrún came across a puzzle featuring a photograph of the Swedish monarchy. It got them thinking that in Iceland, you couldn't buy a puzzle of say, the Icelandic President. This was somewhat tongue in cheek; any such puzzle would be a comedic novelty, but nothing more. Slowly, the concept changed and evolved into what is now Puzzled by Iceland.

Since its inception in August 2010, Puzzled by Iceland has produced beautifully designed puzzles displaying picturesque Icelandic scenes and stunning Icelandic wildlife. They are packaged in neat little boxes, and come with an information leaflet. Even this filled me with delight: "some say it looks like a rhino drinking from the sea, others say it looks like a dinosaur."

I caught up with Þóra to find out more. I asked whether puzzles were a bit old fashioned in this day of super electronics, apps and consoles. "They are, of course, competition for us," explains Þóra, "but we wanted to encourage families to spend time together, to do something together. We wanted more quality time. This is something



close to our hearts." I am won over. The thought of wiling away cold winter evenings completing puzzles with your nearest and dearest whilst the very worst Icelandic weather rages outside seems almost impossibly cosy and romantic.

"A puzzle, so simple, yet so ingenious. It feels like I'm taking a piece of Iceland home with me"

I can see why the puzzles have become so popular. Regardless of whether they are of tourist hotspots, lesser known sights, or Icelandic fauna, the images are visually stunning. Northern lights flashing over Oxarfoss. The cutest puffin caught in a close up. A white Icelandic horse against distant, snow-capped mountains. The neon-streaked landscapes of Þeistareykir in North Iceland. Evocative of Iceland's natural rugged charm and beauty, each piece of the puzzle clicking into place leads you to the next, until the beautiful image is complete once again.

Guðrún is apparently the puzzle master, and is the first to complete new designs to test out. This doesn't sound like a bad job to me, but there is much more to it than just building puzzles. The first batches of designs were released in November 2010, in time for the Christmas market, and went so well that a new batch of designs was released earlier this year. They have already teamed up with UNICEF to produce a charity puzzle. They have an online presence and social media. They have the global rights to the "Puzzled by" name, and they have their sights set

on Norway next, although they don't plan on stopping there. In fact, Þóra says that they are aiming for "world domination."

Þóra is excited to tell me that Mayor of Reykjavík Jón Gnarr unexpectedly popped into the office last week. He must have loved the puzzles as much as me, as Þóra says that he left with a puzzle in his hands. With puzzles this beautiful and adorable who can blame him?

I hold the boxed jigsaw puzzle in my hands and look at the photograph of Hvítserkur on the front. Its white and black jagged rock form looms out of the light blue sea, against a green-blue sky. Arches cut through the rock reveal the Icelandic landscape behind. The picture is just stunning. A puzzle, so simple, yet so ingenious. It feels like I'm taking a piece of Iceland home with me. Or several hundred pieces. If world domination looks and feels like this, I'm all for it.

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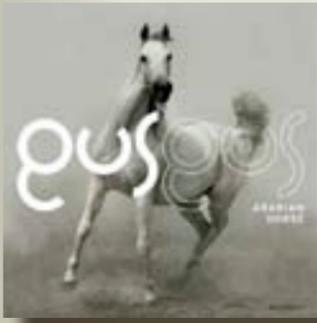
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Full Metal Racket!

Moonshine! Elf abuse! Nipples! Fifteen hour road trips! Eistnaflug 2011 had it all!



The annual sweaty moshfest that is the Eistnaflug metal festival descended upon the tiny Eastfjords village of Neskaupstaður like a bearded raven of the Apocalypse. As Eistnaflug features more molten metal and noise than a dozen volcano eruptions, we sent our most rugged reporters to cover the event. What follows is their account of three days of metal, hardcore, punk and... an Alice In Chains cover band.

Thursday dawned upon us with intense cold. Last year was chilly, this year felt as if God himself scooped up Neskaupstaður and shoved it into the back of his freezer. Surveying the campsite as everyone nursed their hangovers, everyone seemed in need of fireworks and searing metal heat.

FOREVER ALONE!

Shame it didn't really kick off with festival openers Dánarbeð. A bunch of kids from Akureyri, they played what one friend described as "the sound you get when you try to recreate a demo of a Swedish death metal band from 1992." They were a bit all over the place. The drumming struggled to keep up with the pace, the singer's guitar solos were rudimentary, and there wasn't much stage presence to speak of. It felt like the start of a long day.

Thankfully my spirit was heightened with the arrival of Manslaughter and some decent moshing to bring out my inner bastard. Or rather lonely bastard, as once again I find myself forming a moshpit of one. And this is a shame as Manslaughter were shockingly fast, brimming with violent energy and, surprisingly, very funny. Also, their song 'Eistnaflugslagið' sums what's so great about the festival in under 2 minutes.

Unfortunately, due to my exertions, and the fact that this reviewer has a BMI of a pork scratching, I suffer a bad wardrobe malfunction and spent all of Hamferð's set in a bar across the road while I sewed up my shorts.

TANGY MANFAT, FETID ZOMBIES

After a beer and a couple of shots I

ventured back to take in the performance from Dimma, but I really wished I hadn't. Their '90s hard alt-rock sound was bland enough, but their stage presence was the most preposterous I've seen from an Icelandic rock band since... well, ever! Like the 'serious' band from the film 'School Of Rock,' their cock rock antics were so full-on I could feel the tangy manfat from their mighty metal wangers at the back of my throat. They made Magni Ásgeirsson look like Black Flag.

My psyche is soothed a little when I come in to see what Carpe Noctem were up to. Despite being slightly non-plussed with their take on black metal, it was certainly 100% better than what preceded it. They all looked like fetid zombies with smudged corpse paint and great big spikes coming out of their arms. Hmmm, perhaps things are finally starting to look up.

Having seen Innvortis a few times, I can understand why people like them (especially those pogging in the crowd that they commanded), but their folk tinged punk doesn't do it for me.

Atrum are next up. Their sound is harsh, intense and probably the tightest of the local death/black metal bands this evening. And the lead singer with his lovely Adam Ant corpse paint and pouty lips looked rather cute and handsome.

ALICE IN CHAINS TRIBUTE BAND?

Alice In Chains Tribute Band were up next. Admittedly these guys had been cast as the whipping boys of this year's festival ('Why?' was the word that often followed their name), and truth be told, I'm not a big AIC fan either, so I watched their rendition of 'Them Bones' and went straight to the bar. But imagine my surprise when I came back 30 minutes later to find not only were they still playing, they had a big crowd and everyone was singing along! Goddamn these metal fans are fickle. But I doff my cap to AICTB, they were going for it big guns and their sheer, bloody-minded presence won the crowd over.

After all the slightly downer moodiness, we need some proper fashioned bopping and who better for the pur-

THURSDAY

Who played: Dánarbeð, Manslaughter, Hamferð, Dimma, Carpe Noctem, Innvortis, Atrum, Alice in Chains Tribute Band, S.H. Draumur, Sólstafir, Secrets of the Moon

pose than S.H. Draumur? There he was, Dr. Gunní along with bandmates Steini and Birgir wringing every ounce of energy from their post-punk sound. And there we were jumping up and down at the front like total fools.

I grab a spot by the mixing desk to take in the set from Sólstafir. And my giddy aunt, they were absolutely mind-blowing awesome. After their so-so performance at last year's Eistnaflug, this year saw a completely different approach and attitude. I daresay those of us lucky enough to witness the night's show were seeing a bands chrysalis moment as they transcended from local metal legends to international rock gods. Playing a mix of new material and stuff from their 'Köld' album, each track felt pounding and supercharged, and they went back to their classic blood red light show after last year's white arc lights and dry ice debacle. It was truly music to lose yourself in. By far the best band of the night.

I, like many other people, ventured outside straight afterwards to drink and go "woah, dude" and "man, that was immense!" In fact so many people left after Sólstafir that Secrets Of The Moon ended up playing to a venue that was only two thirds full. And to be fair to SOTM, they gave it a really good go with their rumbling take on death metal. But alas everyone's thoughts were still on the previous act and getting totally wasted.

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The full-day tour begins at 7:40 from the BSÍ bus terminal where we meet a friendly driver and guide who welcome us aboard the bus. The guide begins to tell us about all of the amazing things we are going to see. We make a quick stop at Selfoss to pick up some lunch and then it’s not long before we leave civilisation behind us for the day.

DIDACTICISM AND AMUSEMENT

As the bus lurches along, the landscape looks like something from out of this world, only the wild horses prove that it isn’t. We first stop at a marvelous place to admire Hjalparfoss, also known as the ‘Helping Falls’ because the horses that inhabited the region in the past recovered there after arriving from the desolate Sprengisandur route.

In front of the waterfall, the guide teaches us about three different types of flowers used as spices in Iceland. One of them, the thyme wildflower—a really small purple one—“is delicious mixed with meat,” our guide tells us.

As we continue driving toward our destination, we make some stops to take pictures of the extremely impressive landscape that characterises the region of Landmannalaugar. The lava fields surround the dry mountains in a variety of colours and the hills appear like dunes in a desert of lava. While tourists

on our bus liken it to Mars on Earth, we can’t help but picture it on the big screen as a backdrop to a Hollywood blockbuster.

EXTRATERRESTRIAL LANDSCAPES

Then we start a 4,5 kilometre hike, which begins on a narrow path flanked by bizarre walls of gray and green that add to the alien-like landscape. Beautiful colourful stones and rocks surround us the whole way.

Our guide stops several times to show us sharp volcanic stones and explains that the inhabitants of the island used them as weapons in the past. As we continue our ramble we arrive at even more weird scenery: A scarlet hill with steam vents. Once again we have the feeling of being on an old movie studio set with fog machines expelling smoke, adding a touch of mystery to the scene.

We leave the hill to our side and go up a steeper slope. Though it is a little bit difficult, the effort is worth it because our reward is an overwhelming view over the valley. The mountains appear in front of us as enormous defiant giants of stones and rocks. We take a breath and relax while enjoying one of the most beautiful moments of the trip.

A HAPPY ENDING

With our stamina completely renewed, we face the last part of the hike where we find several stretches of the path covered by ice, adding some risk to our adventure. All the way back our guide giggles and talks about introducing us to a couple of his friends, but we find out sadly that those famous friends are in fact a rock formation that visibly resembles a couple of drunk guys after a crazy party.

When we complete the hike we don’t get on the bus immediately. A well-deserved bath in a natural pool of hot water awaits us. There are a bunch of children splashing around, but it is not an impediment for enjoying a moment of relaxation in the warm spring. It is such a happy ending to an amazing trip into the vast uninhabited heart of Iceland. 🇮🇸

Words

[Marta Bardón](#) and [José Ángel Hernández](#)

Photography

[Natsha Nandabhiwat](#)



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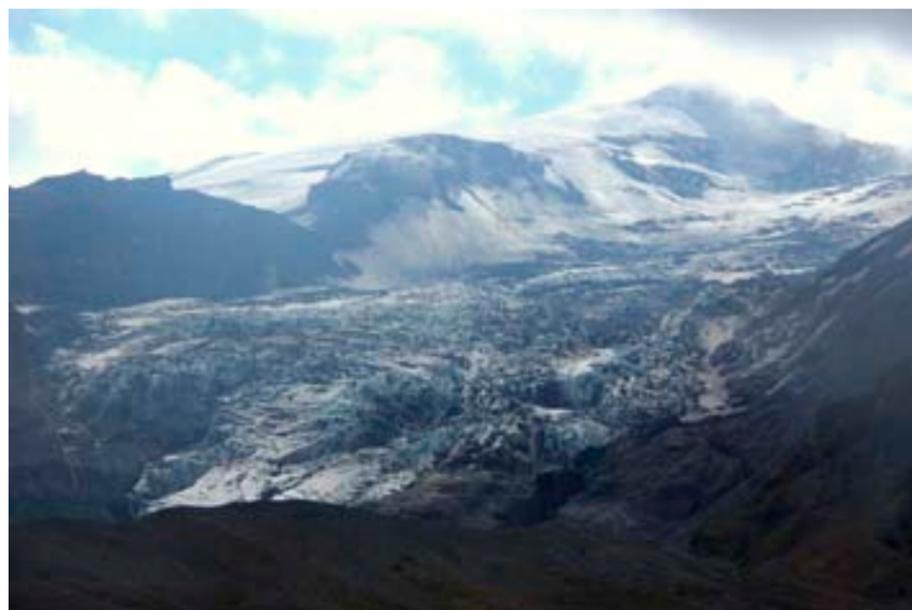
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In Nowhere Land



“ I could be there for hours, surrounded by nature and breathing the fresh air coming into my lungs.

Our day tour to Þórsmörk started bright and early in Reykjavík. The pickup time was 8 AM, but we arrived at the BSI bus terminal several minutes early, not quite sure where we would find our bus. Finally, it appeared with the sign we were waiting for: Þórsmörk, Natural Reserve.

As soon as we got onto the bus, my eyelids grew heavy and the landscapes around us became, little by little, a part of my dreams. About an hour and a half later we arrived to Hvolsvöllur, a small town where we changed buses and had the chance for a quick coffee break before continuing our route. For those who didn't pack lunch, it was a good opportunity to purchase food and provisions as well.

As we continued further east on the Ring Road, we saw the silhouette of Vestmannaeyjar to our right, and an omnipresent voice recording told us about the small cluster of islands and the eruption of Eldfell ('fire mountain') in 1973, which forced residents to leave the main island, Heimaey. The pre-recorded voice also spoke of Surtsey, which emerged from the seabed in 1963 due to a violent underwater volcanic eruption, which is also how Iceland emerged 20 million years ago.

THE REAL ADVENTURE BEGINS
Crossing over the vast lands where some of the Ice-

landic sagas took place, we came to the waterfall Seljalandsfoss where we could feel the roar of water falling from 60 metres high. At this point, a mighty 8x8 vehicle was waiting for us. After we got into our new vehicle, a new voice on a CD told us about the Eyjafjallajökull eruption in 2010. I was taken with fear and fascination, knowing that we would be close to the volcano that wreaked havoc last year. After that story, the voice shut up and music started to sound from the speakers. The musical medley lasted the daylong and spanned the gamut from 'Jailhouse Rock' to 'Don't Go Breaking My Heart.' They would be the songs that would accompany us on our journey over and over.

As we got closer, the road turned to gravel and our eyes filled with dust (despite being inside the vehicle) until we finally arrived the Þórsmörk nature reserve and, damn, it is amazing! It was postcard picture perfect with the glacial water streaming down from the mountains, and creating waterfalls.

We stopped at Gígjökull, an outlet glacier from Eyjafjallajökull. There used to be a spectacular glacial lagoon there, but it was swept away by the 2010 eruption. Standing in front of such a formidable work of nature, I felt as small as an ant. You really feel as though you have been transported into a different world.

From there, we went to Húsadalur, in the western part of Þórsmörk valley. We crossed a few rivers to reach a camping area, where we stopped for lunch. I could have been there for hours, surrounded by nature and breathing the fresh air coming into my lungs. But time is short and we had to get back in the 8x8 vehicle to continue on the route.

TRAVELLING THROUGH NOWHERE

We drove on through Goðaland, crossing numerous glacial rivers. Sometimes it even seemed that we were sailing through their waters. Suddenly, we stopped in nowhere land. The driver invited us to get out and spend as long as we wanted there. The feeling of peace was stunning. Only the sound of water running and camera shutters could be heard.

After our stop, we hopped back in the car and drove for another 45 minutes. As we trudged on at 10 km/hour, the landscapes looked like photographs in motion. Finally, we reached Stakkholtsgjá canyon, where we did a short one-hour hike. There, we found melting water from Eyjafjallajökull glacier falling down in a cave. That was the end of our road. After spending some time between the canyon walls, we returned to our 8x8 vehicle and one bumpy ride out of Þórsmörk later, we returned to our everyday lives. ☺

Words

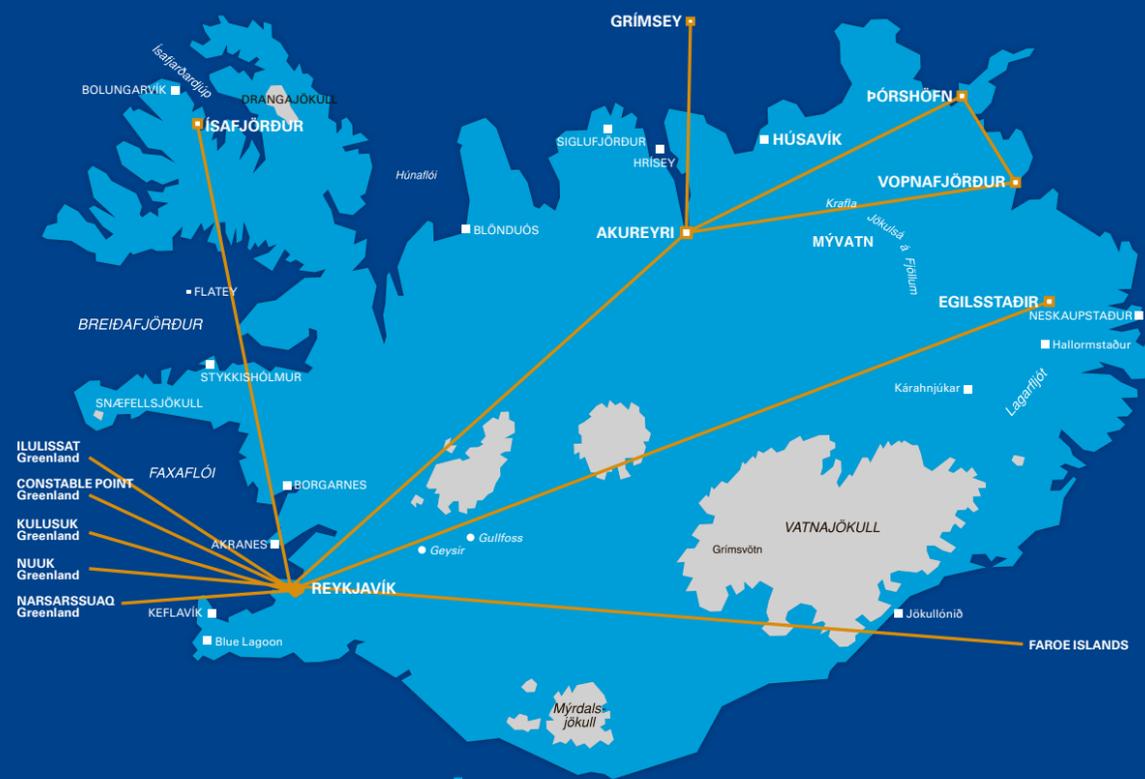
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ALASKAN "WOLF" INVADES ICELAND

The battle for land in Iceland

Invasive species or non-native plants present a problem all over the world. For instance, the ragweed in Europe can cause serious allergy problems and the zebra mussel in the North America colonises rapidly, clogging water intakes that support drinking water supplies and powers hydroelectric plants. In Iceland, that invasive species is the Alaskan lupine, which was brought into the country in 1885.

Then in 1960, the Icelandic Forestry Service began actively spreading the plant, and by 1986, the Soil Conservation Service was using it for land reclamation and to stop soil erosion. Soil erosion has been a problem in Iceland since the early settlers cut down most of the country's trees for building homes and firewood. "The forest cover was significantly reduced from 25 percent since settlement to 1.1 percent in recent decades," according to Björn H. Barkarson and Magnús H. Jóhannsson, who co-authored "Arctic Land Care."

THE CONTROVERSY

The Alaskan Lupine seemed the ideal plant to correct the soil erosion. Head of the Environmental Studies Program at Franklin College Switzerland, Dr. Brack Hale, explains that while other plants take nitrogen from the soil, the lupine species actually put nitrogen back into the soil, which makes them well suited for restoring the soil in the barren landscapes, such as those of Iceland. But along with this nitrogen fixing quality, there is the fact that the Alaskan lupine spreads like a wild fire, outcompeting Iceland's established plants.

Thus, members of the political and scientific community believe the Lupine must be controlled. Among them is Iceland's Minister for the Environment Svandís Svavarsdóttir. She sees the rapid expansion of the lupine being problematic. "The Alaskan lupine can become invasive, expanding beyond the eroded areas, and competing with natural vegetation," she says.

Continued from page 8

were washed. You would also see sailors from foreign ships going there with their garments. The remains of the washing springs can still be seen at Laugardalur, not far from the national football stadium, and of course Laugavegur itself also takes its name from these springs.

NORWEGIAN HOUSES

In recent years, many of the old timber houses have been rebuilt, some of them quite beautifully, but it should be mentioned that these houses are not especially Icelandic. The oldest style of buildings (see Bernhöftstorfá) is Scandinavian and some of the larger ones, built in the early twentieth century, are in fact catalogue houses in the so called 'Sveitser'

Continued from page 12

As usual, 68-year-old, Kristján Loftsson (owner of Iceland's largest whaling company, Hvalur) rears his head in the Independent piece, agreeing that demand for whale meat has diminished since the disaster in Japan. "Demand has shrunk [but] it will pick up." According to Kristján, there are up to 60,000 minke and fin whales in Icelandic waters. "So if we take 150 a year, that's nothing," he says.

We'll have to see just how headstrong the Icelandic Ministry of Fisheries turns out to be. Somehow I have a feeling that with pressure from the White House and the Hollywood lobby, even they will have

Continued from page 14

The culture is different, they don't all share the same religion and I don't think that many Italians understand the Finnish language without studying it very carefully; you get the point. Even though the European Union member countries are richly diverse they share the same ideas and are united in their commitment to keep peace, democracy and the rule of law in the continent just as well as over the borders of Europe. They share the respect for human rights, equality, freedom, the values of cooperation, welfare, better environment and the rights of not only their citizens but the whole world, which can be seen in the fact that the European Union is a major donor of humanitarian assistance and development aid.



One of the plants in danger is the bilberry (which people often confuse with the blueberry). "People hate it because it spreads everywhere ruining favourite spots for berry picking," says Specialist at the Soil Conservation Service of Iceland Magnús H. Jóhannsson.

Borgþór Magnússon of the Icelandic Institute of Natural History, who authored "Nobanis - Invasive Alien Species Fact Sheet" on the Alaskan Lupine, points out that the spreading of the Alaskan lupine can be difficult to handle. "Early action is necessary if plants are to be eradicated from an area," Borgþór writes. "It has proven very difficult to manage the species after it has started to spread in an area and formed a seed bank."

At the same time, there are those who think the Alaskan lupine is a welcome addition to Iceland. In 1988, Evar Jóhannsson started producing a drink that contains Alaskan lupine, which was used to help patients through their cancer treatments. The drink strengthens the immune system, which chemotherapy weakens. In the early years, Evar distributed this drink to anyone who asked, absolutely free.

Now, the drink is available commercially. "The drink has proved beneficial for people suffering from asthma, arthritis, as well as other inflammatory symptoms, such as aching joints and

even healthy individuals, as an overall immune booster," Friða Brá Pálsdóttir says, an employee at Heilsuhúsið in Smáratorg.

A SOLUTION?

Despite its positive traits, the Alaskan lupine's quickly expanding nature calls for a change in dealing with the soil erosion problem. "There is a constant work to develop new and improved methods to tackle this important environmental issue," Svandís Svavarsdóttir said.

Though grasses and fertilizer are not necessarily nitrogen fixers, they can still be implemented to reclaim land. Magnús H. Jóhannsson, for instance, lists alternatives such as grasses (lyme grass, Kentucky blue grass, red fescue, and Italian ryegrass), legumes (clover, vetch, and sea pea), and fertilizer with no seed.

In the meantime, the Alaskan lupine continues to threaten areas where no soil conservation is needed, outcompeting natural Icelandic vegetation, such as moss and the bilberry. Without the bilberry, the "blueberry" soup, loved by Icelanders and foreigners alike, may cease to exist: a favourite Icelandic cuisine reduced to memory and recipe books.

S. ALESSIO TUMMOLILLO
NATSHA NANDABHIWAT

A View From The Curch Tower

style from Switzerland, which were imported from Norway where it was popular at the time.

The only buildings that can be called truly Icelandic are the old turf houses, which the nation lived in for centuries. Few of these turf houses are left today as most people wanted to erase the memories of these dwellings.

Icelanders have never had enough wood to build houses from, and one still wonders how the beams for the huge cathedral that stood at the bishop's seat at Skálholt in the twelfth century were transported. Also Icelanders never mastered the art of building houses from hewn stone—knowledge imported from Denmark in the late eighteenth century.

Revoked: License To Kill

to bow down.

Isn't Iceland trying to promote itself as an ideal filming location? Wasn't the James Bond movie Die Another Day, starring Pierce Brosnan, filmed at Jökulsárlón in Iceland?

Just in case the whale issue weren't enough, the mackerel policy is resurfacing. European Fisheries Commissioner Maria Damanaki very recently met with delegates from Norway and the EU to get Iceland back to the mackerel-negotiating-table. FISHupdate.com reported that "Brussels...called for immediate inspections in Iceland...with regard to illegal and

REBUILDING IN THE OLD TIMBER STYLE

Today, people seem to favour the timber houses, rather than for example, the Reykjavík classic style. There have been three projects in the last few years wherein houses were rebuilt in the old timber style or adapted freely from the buildings that were once there. One is at Laugavegur 4-6, another is on the corner of Austurstræti and Lækjargata, and a third one is on Adalstræti.

Generally this has been considered a success. People seem to like these buildings, even if some of them are not especially practical. But this mixture of old and modern is a delicate balance, and some might consider it a bit kitsch. 🐾

unregulated fishing." And furthermore, "the EU has been asked to 'freeze' Iceland's membership talks until the [mackerel] issue is settled."

Pressure from the EU may not move mountains, but if the unfettered voice of Hollywood has its say, things are surely about to change. In Pierce Brosnan's words: "You can be sure that Iceland will not end the abhorrent practice of whaling until it is forced to do so. Let's fight 'em. Again and again."

It strikes me that Kristján may have finally met his match. Besides, the IWC hasn't given him the license to kill. 🐾

The New Idea Of Europe: United In Diversity

Is Iceland European?

So why do I believe that Iceland should be the next member state of the European Union? Iceland is a European country, not only geographically but also historically and politically. The history of Iceland is a part of the European history. Iceland has close relations with Europeans and Iceland is very connected to Europe through the European Economic Area, which gives Iceland a place at the inner market of the European Union and a great amount of European Union law, but without the ability to have anything to say about them of course, since we are only "visitors" of the area, but the voice we need within the Europe would come with a membership.

More importantly perhaps, like I mentioned before, for me the European Union is not only a business machine with its own market and currency (which by the way Iceland really needs), not only a bureau-

cracy that would lower the price of food in Iceland, lower the taxes and make it easier (and cheaper) for people to study and live in other European countries, it is also a very strong ideological power, and it is the ideology behind the foundation of the Union that makes me believe that Iceland belongs among the other 27 countries. The European Union is a unique thing that has only been growing stronger since its foundation. How can someone not want to be a part of such a success story like the European Union, which is good for the member states, good for the citizens of the Union and good for the rest of the world?

I think that the words of the great Jean Monnet, the founding father, back in the year 1952 says it all: "We are not bringing together states, we are uniting people." 🐾



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Iceland's Underground Sex Scene:

Between Consenting Adults

A long-standing stereotype about Icelanders is that they do not date. The notion of asking for someone's number, inviting them out for dinner or movies, taking a potential relationship through a step-by-step process from friends to lovers has been, as many contend, a phenomenon largely absent from Icelandic society. Relationships are rather founded within circles of friends, often catalysed by alcohol; you're friends one moment and lovers the next, with levels of commitment increasing with how many times you sleep with each other.

This stereotype, like most, is not without a kernel of truth. In a society as close-knit as Iceland, the whole "getting to know you" aspect of dating can seem largely unnecessary. But it is this very close-knit quality that also pushes more "fringe" aspects of the romantic world into the shadows—specifically with regard to Iceland's BDSM and swing scene.

"Many couples probably engage in BDSM, or have a D/s [Dominant/submissive] relationship, without even knowing what it is," says Tinna, who has been active in the BDSM community, both here in Iceland and in the UK, for several years now. "Maybe a girl will like it when her boyfriend ties her up, or a guy enjoys being spanked, but neither would ever say they're into BDSM. That term carries associations with something they'd see as freakish and perverted. Not something 'normal' people would do. But they do it all the time."

It is difficult to assess just how large, or small, Iceland's underground sex scene is. There are a handful of Icelandic web forums catering specifically to those into BDSM and swinging, though none that are especially active. People with these interests prefer instead to use general dating sites, such as Einkamal.is, to find like-minded partners.

Tinna has been less than pleased with Iceland's BDSM scene, which she compares to "sandbox games"—children playing irresponsibly.

"There's almost no self-policing," she says. "If some young sub ends up in the hands of a Dom ['sub' and 'Dom' are shorthand for 'submissive' and 'Dominant']—the use of lowercase for the

former and uppercase for the latter underlining the power dynamic] who turns out to be abusive, doesn't respect limits or doesn't listen to safe words, normally, word would spread like wildfire to avoid this guy. Here, though, people are so afraid of being exposed as being a part of this world that they keep things quiet."

HOW THE SCENE GREW

Freyja, who has also been a part of Iceland's BDSM scene, contends that the size of Iceland is only a part of why people with these interests stay underground.

"In the last few years laws regarding sex have gotten stricter," she says. "In 2000, the hours that clubs could stay open until were changed. Then they began shutting down the strip clubs, and then they made it illegal to pay for the services of a prostitute."

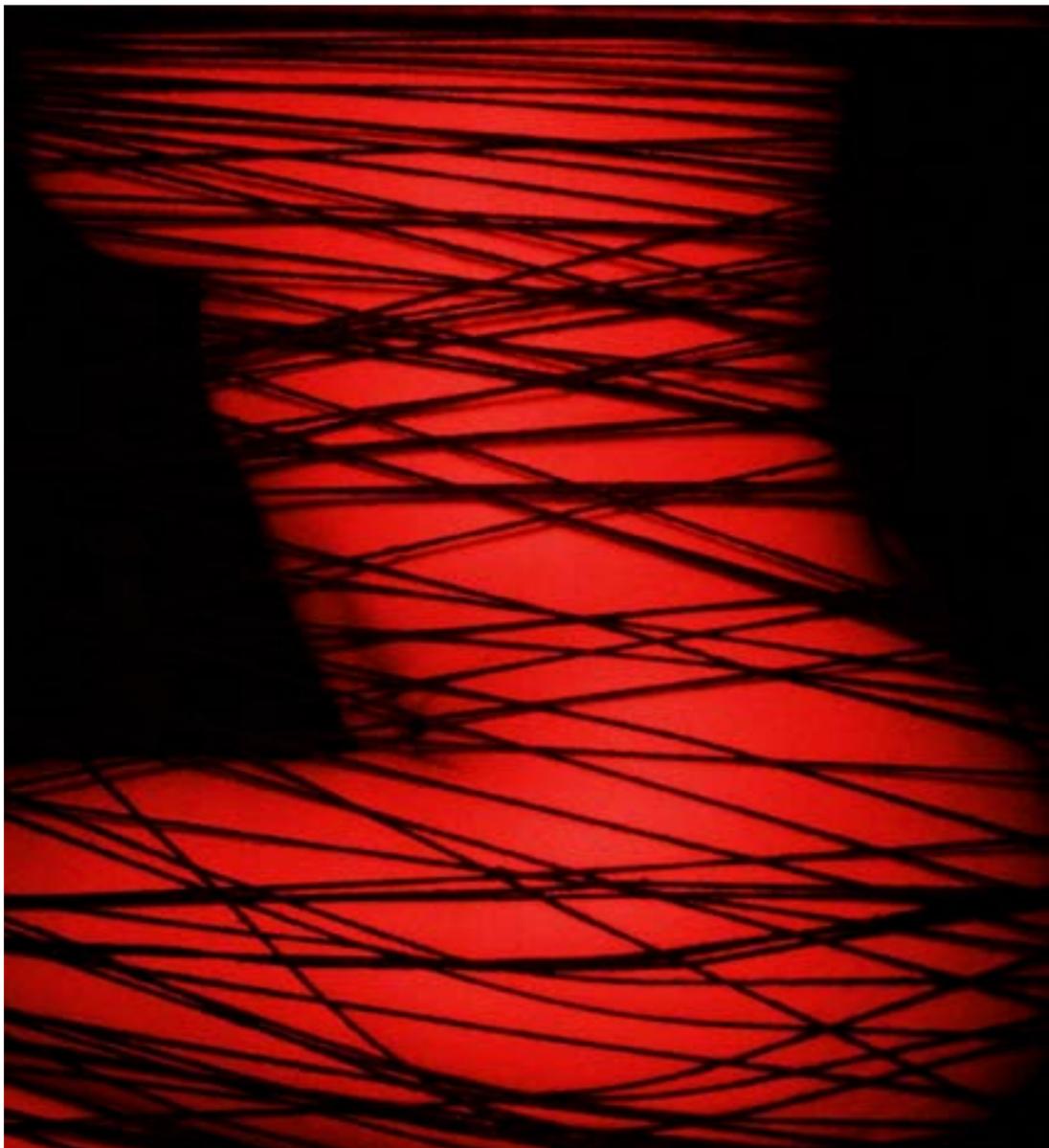
Freyja says that while these issues, taken separately, might have fine justifications, they reflect a general growing prudishness about sex.

"In the last five years or so, the price for a regular service [from a prostitute] has gone from 30,000 ISK to 15,000 ISK," she adds. "In times of crazy inflation, I'd say that this is a pretty good indicator that the underground sex scene is growing. Who's fault is that? Brushing things under the carpet might just make the mould grow under the carpet. So we have more hookers and cheap ones, too."

Things being driven underground has done little to affect the vibrancy of the community, though, she says. "I think this is how things came to be in the underground sex scene in Iceland. People were told not to, so they found a way, and also found out that they weren't the only pervs out there. Now you can find little parties of a 50-year-old bisexual crossdresser being spanked in a pink dress just after the evening news by an ordinary couple in the suburbs. If you don't like that, I'm sure you can find what you crave."

Freyja explained the process of how these people find each other. It starts, more often than not, on Einkamál. A person sets up a profile (usually without a face photo) outlining their interests. They find others with similar interests, and begin communicating through private messages on this site. If this goes well, they might carry the conversations over to MSN or Skype chat. If this goes well, they might then agree to meet in public, such as at a café, to see if there's any physical chemistry. And if that goes well, they take it from there.

But not everything going on underground is strictly one-on-one. Gunnar and Bryndís, a couple in their late 40s, regularly host swing parties at their summer house in the countryside. Having



taken part in swing parties in Iceland and the US for a number of years, they have learned a few things along the way.

Gunnar and Bryndís have had swing parties that involved young people from all over Iceland, but for the most part, they say those involved in this world are between the ages 30 and 55 and usually come from the capital area.

"Young people, especially those with small children, might have a hard time keeping this a secret or simply finding the time and energy to take part," Gunnar says. "People in small towns have to be even more careful. But when these couples get older, and the kids are moved out of the house, they start looking for adventure."

PLAYING BY THE RULES

Bryndís and Gunnar have established ground rules with regard to who can participate, and how. "We ask for total honesty," Bryndís says. "We're not going to have some guy over who wants to cheat on his wife, or wants to deceive their partner in some way." By one bizarre example, she mentions a time when they were contacted by a young man looking for a foursome. Insisting that his girlfriend could not know he had found the couple on Einkamál, he suggested instead that he take her for a walk, and that Gunnar could pretend to "just happen by" and offer the couple to take part in a foursome.

They also don't tolerate possessiveness and jealousy. Most important, however, is that "everyone has a good time." If

someone is nervous or shy in a group setting, they say, they prefer to make them feel relaxed, with assurances that "no one should do anything they don't want to do."

This, then, is the core of Iceland's underground sex scene (or really, underground sex communities the world over): a form of fun between consenting, informed adults.

"The ones that never liked having the sex scene shoved in their face are happy thinking that it all just went away," Freyja says. "At the same time, the underground scene is growing fast in all directions. That bubble is about to burst, and then we'll see what is accepted and what isn't." 🍷

Words

Paul Fontaine

Photo

Alanna Ralph



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PAGE 10

"If you've taken even the most cursory glance at recent Icelandic history, chances are you're familiar with the Cod Wars: big, bad Britain sends warships up against plucky little Iceland's fishing boats, and the underdog wins. But the incident was hardly a fluke."

Norwegian author Jacob Børresen says small nations have more influence than you might think

PAGE 16

"It's about connecting with people and getting the local perspective when you travel. The free accommodation part is just a nice added bonus"

Did you know that the Couchsurfing project was born from a trip to Iceland?

PAGE 62

"Now you can find little parties of a 50-year-old bisexual cross dresser being spanked in a pink dress just after the evening news by an ordinary couple in the suburbs."

We investigate Iceland's underground sex scene

PAGE 08

"In the same way that the doorways of Dublin with their many forms and colours are a symbol of that city, the colourful roofs could be a symbol of Reykjavík."

Egill Helgason examines Reykjavík from the top of the Hallgrímskirkja church tower

PAGE 30

"He pulled out a surprise at the end when he started to sing over a track that sounded like a deranged kid's TV show theme tune (Muppet Babies go mental?), as if he was DJ Flúgvél og Geimskip's big brother."

Enkíú, Arnljótur, lbbagoggur, Sóley, and Nóló reviewed!

PAGE 32

"En Islandia el hiphop impera y las tablas de skate son parte del decorado diario de Reikiavik. En la capital islandesa existen tres lugares donde los grafiteros transforman pintura en arte y expresión de ideas."

We go Spanish one more time

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Reykjavík Jazz Festival



20
Aug

3
Sep

Jazz lovers of Reykjavík unite! From August 20 to September 3 Reykjavík will be a hotbed of lively jazz music to ignite the soul. This year, the festival will host bands from all over the world, including the US, France, Austria, and of course other Nordic countries. You can catch some Golden Era Swing with Ragnheiður Gröndal on August 21, Danilo Perez on August 27 will be playing jazz inspired by his Latin American roots, and up and coming Swedish-Finnish pop-improv trio Elifantree will be bringing out their lively, peculiar grooves, peppering the act with entertaining improvisation, on September 2. The Reykjavík Jazz Festival has 23 days of eclectic jazz styles, sure to meet the needs of even the pickiest jazz lovers!

OUT AND ABOUT WITH KIMI RECORDS

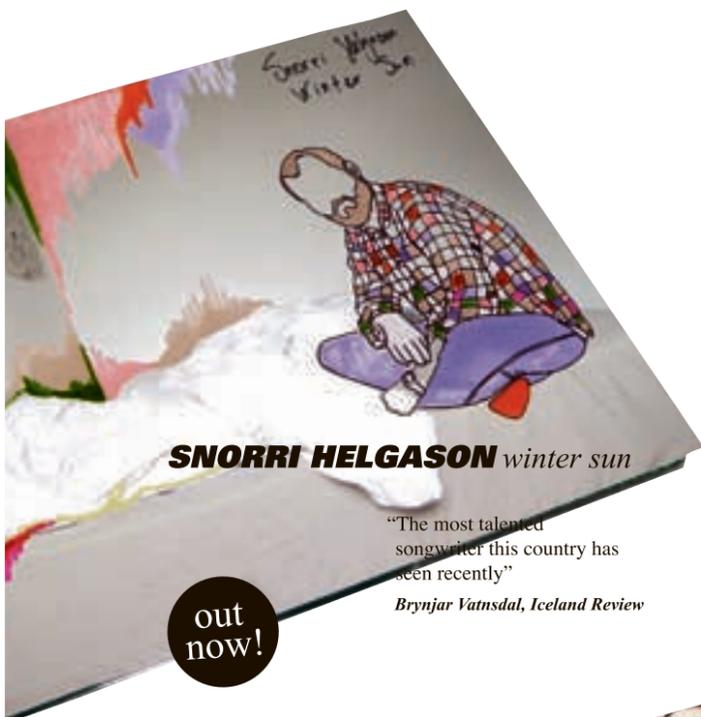


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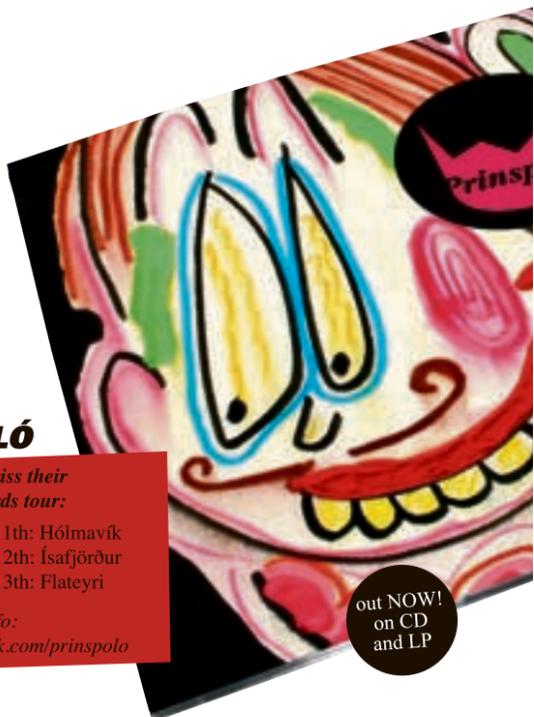


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Brynjar Vatnsdal, Iceland Review

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August 13th: Flateyri

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MUSIC

CONCERTS & NIGHTLIFE IN JULY & AUGUST

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

12 FRI

- Austur**
22:00 DJ Danni Deluxe
- B5**
00:00 Local DJ
- Bakkus**
23:00 DJ Houskel
- Bar 11**
22:00 Agent Fresco
- Café Oliver**
22:00 Local DJ
23:00 Girls Just Wanna Have Fun, 3 for 1
cocktails for ladies
- Celtic Cross**
01:00 Live Music
- Den Danske Kro**
22:00 Live Music

- Dubliner**
00:30 Live Music
- English Pub**
21:30 Live Music
- Esja**
22:00 Lounge DJ
00:00 DJ Hlynur Mastermix
- Faktorj**
22:00 Hjalmar, 1500 ISK
00:00 DJ Atli Kanilsnúður
- Gallery Bar 46**
18:00 Pub Quiz
- Hressó**
22:00 Cocktail Quartette Jackobs
Smára followed by DJ Fúsi
- Hvita Perlan**
00:00 Live Music
- Kaffibarinn**
00:00 Alfons X
- Kaffi Zimsen**
00:00 Local DJ
- Kaldalón, Harpa**
17:00 Örn Arnarson & Sólveig
Samúelsdóttir, 3000 ISK
- Prikið**
22:00 Steini & Húsbandið, Benni B
Ruff.
- Thorvaldsen**
00:00 Local DJ
- Vegamót**
22:00 DJ Símon

13 SAT

- Austur**
22:00 Local DJ
- B5**
00:00 Local DJ
- Bakkus**
23:00 DJ Kári
- Café Haiti**
21:00 Jussanam - Brazilian Jazz
Sessions
- Café Oliver**
22:00 Local DJ
23:00 Girls Just Wanna Have Fun, 3 for 1
cocktails for ladies
- Celtic Cross**
22:00 Live Music
- Den Danske Kro**
22:00 Live Music
- Dubliner**
00:30 Live Music
- Esja**
22:00 Lounge DJ
00:00 DJ Hlynur Mastermix
- Faktorj**
22:00 Hjalmar, 1500 ISK
00:00 DJ KGB
- Gallery Bar 46**
22:00 Live Music
- Hallgrímskirkja**
12:00 David Titterington, 1500 ISK



26
Aug

27
Aug

GusGus is playing at NASA!

August 26 @ 23:00, August 27 @ 21:00 followed by club 2:35:1

NASA

How Much: 2900 ISK (This is good for both the show and 2:35:1 club on Saturday night)

Depending on when you read this issue, you're either thinking "This show doesn't happen for a couple weeks yet, what idiots for putting it in this paper" or "Oh my! Thank goodness they put this in this issue; if I was reading this the day AFTER the next issue came out, I would have missed the show!" So first reaction, have a conversation with second reaction. Second reaction, you're welcome.

Excuses aside, it seemed appropriate to hype up this show at least two weeks in advance, as these tickets are gonna fly off the shelves. Especially the Saturday night ones, because if you purchase tickets to that show, your ticket works for the after-party, when NASA brings to life "Swedish super club 2:35:1" and turns the place into a den of hedonism and debauchery (more so than usual). So get those Saturday tickets as fast as you can. And if they're sold out, you can at the very least see GusGus Friday night. What a shame, huh?

Grapevine Top 7 Most Played Tracks During The Making Of This Issue

- 1 Whirring - The Joy Formidable
- 2 20 minutes/40 years - Isis
- 3 All In My Mind - Black Francis
- 4 Rotterdam - Chuck Ragan
- 5 Grey Ship - EMA
- 6 Queen Of Hearts - Fucked Up
- 7 The Last Beat Of My Heart - Siouxsie And The Banshees

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MAY - SEPTEMBER / DAILY



18 Aug

Join Lay Low And Of Monsters And Men For A Good Cause

August 18, 21:00

Faktorý

Possible Entrance Fee

Two of Iceland's foremost artists will be joining forces for the annual charity show at Faktorý to raise money for Neil, a movement against sexual violence, on August 18. Lay Low, the winner of two Icelandic Music Awards including Best Female Singer, will be there, along with Of Monsters and Men, who have been getting a lot of ink since they made their splash on Reykjavík's music scene's a few years ago. If you've never heard of these guys, you will probably fall madly in love, and even if you don't, you'll be supporting charity. Spending a chill evening at Faktorý, drinking beers, playing foosball, listening to good music, and donating to charity—is there a better way to spend a Thursday evening? Get your butt down to Faktorý and combine the dual pleasures of listening to good music and supporting a good cause.

Hressó

22:00 Penta followed by DJ Fúsi

Hvíta Perlan

00:00 Live Music

Kaffibarinn

00:00 DJ Margeir

Kaffi Zimsen

00:00 Local DJ

Kaldalón, Harpa

17:00 Women in Icelandic music, 3000 ISK

Prikið

22:00 DJ Danni Deluxe

Thorvaldsen

00:00 Local DJ

Vegamót

22:00 DJ Benni

14 SUN

Bakkus

Ping-Pong Beer Whiskey

Café Oliver

22:00 Salsa Night

Den Danske Kro

22:00 Live Music

Dubliner

21:00 Live Music

Faktorý

21:00 Live Jazz

Gallery Bar 46

22:00 Live Music

Hallgrímskirkja

17:00 David Titterington, 2500 ISK

Kaldalón, Harpa

17:00 Halldór Laxness - The music in his life and in his works. 3000 ISK

Prikið

22:00 Hangover Movie: The Twilight Samurai

15 MON

Bakkus

21:00 Monday Night Movies: You're Gonna Miss Me

Café Oliver

22:00 Margarita Night

Den Danske Kro

22:00 Live Music

Dubliner

21:00 Live Music

English Pub

21:30 Live Music

Prikið

22:00 Beggi Mood

16 TUE

Café Oliver

22:00 Live Karaoke

Den Danske Kro

22:00 Live Music

Dubliner

21:00 Live Music

English Pub

21:30 Live Music

Kaffibarinn

22:00 The Adventures + DJ HalliValli

Kaldalón, Harpa

17:00 Voces Masculorum, Icelandic a capella 3000 ISK

Prikið

22:00 DJ Addi Intro

Sigurjón Ólafsson Museum

20:30 Kathleen Kajioka & Olivier Fortin, 2000 ISK

17 WED

Bakkus

20:30 Pub Quiz!, 500 ISK

22:00 DJ Cool in the Pool

Café Oliver

22:00 Live Music

Celtic Cross

22:00 Open Mic

Den Danske Kro

22:00 Live Music

Dubliner

21:00 Live Music

English Pub

21:30 Live Music

Kaffibarinn

22:00 Alfons X

Prikið

22:00 DJ Óli Hjörtur

18 THU

Bakkus

22:00 Einar Sonic

Café Oliver

22:00 Ingó Verðurguð

Celtic Cross

22:00 Live Music

Den Danske Kro

22:00 Live Music

Dubliner

21:00 Live Music

English Pub

21:30 Live Music

Esja

21:00 Play Mo'Funk

Faktorý

21:00 Neil charity concert with Lay Low, Of Monsters and Men and more, entrance fee unconfirmed

22:00 DJ Dans

Hressó

22:00 Troubadours Böddi and Davíð

Kaffibarinn

22:00 HúsDJús with DJ Una Barnes from CPH

Ob-La-Di, Ob-La-Da

22:00 Live Music

Prikið

22:00 DJ Danni Deluxe

Thorvaldsen

22:00 Salsa Night, mojito offer

Vegamót

22:00 DJ Símon

19 FRI

Austur

22:00 DJ Símon

B5

00:00 Local DJ

Bakkus

23:00 Árni Sveins

Café Loki in front of Hallgrímskirkja

open 10-21



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MUSIC

CONCERTS & NIGHTLIFE IN AUGUST



CLAUS IS IN DJÚPAVÍK

Go enjoy his pictures and their sounds

Runs through August 31

Old herring factory in Djúpvík

Free

www.claus-in-iceland.com

Everyone has a spirit animal, right? And that means the herring is fair game. Artist Claus Sterneck from Frankfurt, Germany feels a spiritual connection to the old herring factory in Djúpvík, saying: "It may sound a bit strange, but I feel that maybe I was a herring which was processed in this old herring factory." Strange indeed, but Claus isn't the first to take an interest in the herring factory. For instance, Jónsi from Sigur Rós has also taken an artistic interest, and it features in the Sigur Rós documentary Heima.

Claus has chosen to have his concurrent exhibitions - "Pictures and their sounds" and "200+ pictures" - in the old factory itself. His unique showing includes a picture book accompanied by sounds, creating a multi-sensory experience for viewers. Clause believes "that a picture is not only a picture; it's a moment, and the surrounding sounds belong to that moment." The latter exhibit includes 200 photos that he took throughout his experiences in Djúpvík (about 6 summers), which are also for sale.

**25
Aug**



Go Cheer On Iceland's Premier Football Teams!

August 25, 18:00

KR-völlur in Vesturbær

1500 ISK

Are you a football fan interested in checking out how Iceland does "the world's sport"? The KR versus ÍBV game is your chance to do so! KR, one of Reykjavík's five teams—and historically the best team in Icelandic football—is playing against ÍBV, a team from the Westman Islands. These teams currently sit in first and second seat and though this is subject to change by the time the match comes up, as the standings are quite close, it should be a fun match to watch!

The added bonus is that it's a home game for KR, so you don't have to take the trip to the Westman Island to watch it. You can walk to Vesturbær and listen for the cheering fans, or just hop on bus #13 and get out at the KR stop, right in front of the stadium. So go out to a football match, enjoy the evening, head to the pub afterwards and get sloshed!

Kaldalón, Harpa
17:00 Örn Arnarson & Sólveig Samúelsdóttir, 3000 ISK

Prikið
22:00 DJ Gay Latino Man

Thorvaldsen
00:00 Local DJ

Vegamót
22:00 DJ Danni Delux

20 SAT

Austur
22:00 DJ Jónas

B5
00:00 Local DJ

Bakkus
23:00 DJ KGB

Café Oliver
22:00 Local DJ
23:00 Girls Just Wanna Have Fun, 3 for 1 cocktails for ladies

Celtic Cross
22:00 Live Music

Den Danske Kro
22:00 Live Music

Dubliner
00:30 Live Music

English Pub
21:30 Live Music

Esja
22:00 Lounge DJ
00:00 DJ Hlynur Mastermix

Faktorý
22:00 ReykVeek - House party!
00:00 DJ DJúr

Gallery Bar 46
22:00 Live Music

Hressó
22:00 Silfur followed by DJ Elli

Hvita Perlan
00:00 Live Music

Kaffibarinn
00:00 Dad's Weekend - Gísli Galdur & B Ruff

Kaffi Zimsen
00:00 Local DJ

NASA
00:00 Sálin Hans Jóns Mins, 2900 ISK

Nordic House
13:00 Orri Huginn

Prikið
22:00 DJ Kalli Breakbeat

Thorvaldsen
22:00 Local DJ

Vegamót
22:00 DJ Símon

21 SUN

Bakkus
Ping-Pong Beer Whiskey

Café Oliver
22:00 Salsa Night

The Culture House
17:00 Golden Era Swing with Ragnheiður Gröndal & the Wolferines, 2000 ISK

Den Danske Kro
22:00 Live Music

Dubliner
21:00 Live Music

English Pub
21:30 Live Music

Faktorý
21:00 Live Jazz

Gallery Bar 46
22:00 Live Music

Icelandair Hotel Reykjavik Natura
12:30 Live Jazz

The Nordic House
20:00 Tenúramir tveir!, 2000 ISK

Prikið
22:00 Hangover Movie: Rumble Fish

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To the Blue Lagoon

MUSIC

CONCERTS & NIGHTLIFE IN AUGUST

22 MON

Bakkus
21:00 Monday Night Movies
Café Oliver
22:00 Margarita Night
Den Danske Kro
22:00 Live Music
Dubliner
21:00 Live Music
English Pub
21:30 Live Music
The Nordic House
20:00 Hans Olding with an all star local line up, 2000 ISK
Kaldalón, Harpa
17:00 Voces Mascarorum - Icelandic a capella, 3000 ISK
The Nordic House
20:00 Hans Olding & band, 2000 ISK
Prikið
22:00 Beggi Mood

23 TUE

Bakkus
20:00 Foosball Tournament
Café Oliver
22:00 Live Karaoke
Den Danske Kro
22:00 Live Music
Dubliner
21:00 Live Music
English Pub
21:30 Live Music
Kaffibarinn
22:00 DJ HalliValli
Kaldalón, Harpa
21:00 ADHD, 2500 ISK
The Nordic House
19:00 Elou Elan & Eyjafjalla Quintet
Prikið
22:00 Dj Óli Hjörtur
Sigurjón Ólafsson Museum
20:30 Auður Gunnarsdóttir & Jónas Ingimundarson, 2000 ISK

24 WED

Bakkus
22:00 DJ Make Dance
Café Oliver
22:00 Live Music
Den Danske Kro
22:00 Live Music
Dubliner
21:00 Live Music
English Pub
21:30 Live Music
Faktorý
20:00 Classic Pub Quiz
Kaffibarinn
22:00 Extreme Chill
Kaldalón, Harpa
17:00 Women in Icelandic music, 3000 ISK
Norðurljós, Harpa
20:00 Maður hefur nú, 3500 ISK
Prikið
22:00 DJ Arni Kocoon

25 THU

Bakkus
22:00 DJ Dóri
Café Oliver
22:00 Ingó Verðurguð
Celtic Cross
22:00 Live Music



Icelandic Checkmate?

August 19

Skálholt

Free

In 1831, an ancient set of chess pieces was found in the Isle of Lewis, in Scotland. The most amazing fact about these chessmen—made of walrus ivory and whale teeth—is that they were the oldest figures showing a clear resemblance to modern pieces. Since then, it had been believed that the most important chess set of all time was handcrafted in Norway in the 12th century. But recently things have changed with the discovery of a little chess piece found in an excavation at Siglunes, Iceland. And guess what? Surprisingly, this Icelandic piece, handcrafted from fishbone, bears similarities to those Lewis Chessmen, but might be older. The plot thickens!

Einar S. Einarsson and Guðmundur G. Þórarinnsson are the main advocates of the "Iceland theory" of the Lewis Chessmen. These chess aficionados believe that Iceland is the origin of the famous set of medieval pieces. The strongest evidence for this seems to be the 'bishop'. Icelandic is the first language where the word 'bishop' was used to describe this chess piece and—funnily—in the Lewis Chessmen, a figure carved in the image of a bishop appears for the first time. Einar, a close friend of the late Bobby Fischer, says "the most important reason is perhaps the bishop, apart from the berserkers [a medieval Norse warrior that also appears in the Lewis set as a rook]. The linguistic factors play a big role when figures of art are created, which suits Iceland perfectly in the olden days." Or as Mr. Neil MacGregor, director of the British Museum, states: "In every place the chess pieces will change to reflect the society that played it."

This is just the tip of the iceberg of a fascinating story full of mystery and controversy. In the meantime, we can learn more about the Lewis Chessmen and their link to Icelandic culture in a symposium held in Skálholt next August 19. In addition to Mr. Þórarinnsson, speakers will include scholars from the British Museum (the current location of the Lewis Chessmen), the National Museum of Scotland and the University of Iceland.

Is the original source of the Lewis Chessmen in Iceland? That remains to be seen. But as Einar concludes: "It has already been discussed with the British Museum to lend some of them to have on display in Skálholt, or perhaps our National Museum, some time in the near future."

The Culture House
20:00 Óskar Guðjónsson & Skúli Sverrisson, 2000 ISK
Den Danske Kro
22:00 Live Music
Dubliner
21:00 Live Music
English Pub
21:30 Live Music
Esja
21:00 Play Mo'Funk
Faktorý
22:00 DJ Atli Kanilsnúður
Hressó
22:00 Troubadours Böddi & Davíð
Iðnó
21:00 Quinteto Tangarte
22:00 DJ Birger Haugdal, 1500 ISK
Kaffibarinn
22:00 HúsDJús with DJ Kára

Kaldalón, Harpa
20:00 The Soul Patrol, 2500 ISK
Ob-La-Di, Ob-La-Da
22:00 Live Music
Prikið
22:00 Surprise night!
Vegamót
22:00 DJ Jónas

ONGOING

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

Den Danske Kro

• Mondays •

Shot's night - all shots ISK 400.-

• Tuesdays •

Live music and Beer Bingo night

• Wednesdays •

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

• Thursdays •

Live Music / Scandinavian nights

• Fridays •

Live music / Sing-along nights

• Saturdays •

Live music / Sing-along nights

• Sundays •

Hangover & Live music night Really good prices on drinks



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www.danskis.is

Step into
the Viking Age

Reykjavík
871±2

Landnámssýningin
The Settlement
Exhibition

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

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

The exhibition and museum shop are open daily 10-17

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

Reykjavík
City Museum

OUTSIDE RVK

IN AUGUST

OUTSIDE MUSIC

12 FRI

Sauðárkrókur
20:00 Gæran Festival 2011, 5000 ISK
Græni Hatturinn, Akureyri
22:00 Odinn Vald Tribute Concert
Tjörúhúsið, Ísafjörður
22:00 Prinspóló, 1000 ISK

13 SAT

1862 Nordic Bistro, Akureyri
13:00 Live Music
Græni Hatturinn, Akureyri
22:00 GRM - Gylfi Ægis, Rúnar Þór & Megas
Sauðárkrókur
20:00 Gæran Festival 2011, 5000 ISK
Skaffell, Seyðisfjörður
15:00 Auxpan, Helgi Örn, Konrad Korabiewski & Litten
Vagninn, Flateyri
00:00 Prinspóló, 1000 ISK

16 TUE

Snorrastofa, Reykholt
Choir Concert

17 WED

Blue Church, Seyðisfjörður
20:30 The Blue Church summer-concerts. Jussanam Da Silva, Agnar Már Magnússon & Birgir Bragason.

19 FRI

Græni Hatturinn, Akureyri
22:00 Steve Vai Tribute

24 WED

Blue Church, Seyðisfjörður
20:30 The Blue Church summer-concerts. Classical arias by Þórunnar Sigþórsdóttir & Margrétar Grímsdóttur

OUTSIDE ART OPENINGS

Skaffell, Seyðisfjörður
Shorties for humans
August 13
Exhibition of works by Barbara Amelia Skovmand Thomsen
August 13

OUTSIDE ART - ONGOING

Akureyri
Summer Festival of the Arts
Akureyri and north Iceland, Mid-June until end of August. Concerts, visual arts etc.
Runs until August 28

Akureyri Art Museum, Akureyri
Call Home
The exhibition includes paintings, sculptures, embroidery, drawings, models, souvenirs, puppets, toys and tools, as well as interesting library.
Runs until August 21

Borgarfjörður Museum, Borganes
Iceland in the 20th century
A beautiful exhibit, showing life and surroundings of the people in Iceland, especially children, in the 20th century. Open every day from 13:00 to 18:00.
Runs until September 1

Búrfell Plant, Þjórsárdalur
Geothermal Energy Exhibit
An interactive exhibit about geothermal energy

Flóra, Akureyri
Local fact 4
Video-installation by artist Arna Valsdóttir.
Runs until August 4

Gallerí Lækjarkotí, Borgarbyggð
Collection of watercolors, acrylics, photographs and video works by women artists Asa Olafsdóttir, Bryndis Jonsdóttir, Kristín Geirsdóttir & Magdalena Margrét Kjartansdóttir
Opened all summer Thursday to Sunday

Gamli Baukur, Húsavík
15:30 Comedy show about Iceland
Everyday

Gljúfrasteinn - Laxness Museum, Mosfellsbær
The home of Halldór Laxness, Iceland's beloved writer who won the Nobel Prize in Literature in 1955. Open 09:00-17:00 daily
On permanent view

The Ghost Centre, Stokkseyri
Night at the Ghost Museum
Feel like a scary night in the Fisherman's hut inside the Ghost Centre? Only for brave people!

Ghosts and spirits of the South
Guided tour for groups of ten people or more through the lowlands south of Selfoss where many ghosts, spirits and other spiritual beings live

Hafnarborg, Hafnarfjörður
Ingenuity
Einar Thorsteinn Asgeirsson's ideas of design stem from his conviction that ingenuity, can build a better world.
Runs until August 14

Collection exhibition
The collection includes works by contemporary artists from early 20th century which explores Icelandic art history, ranging from important works by the considered pioneers of Icelandic art to the more experimental art of today.
Runs until August 14

Hveragerði
Images of Thingvellir
The exhibition deals with the various manifestations of Thingvellir in various art, design, cartography, photography, travel books and media of the day.
Runs until August 21

The Icelandic Settlement Centre, Borgarnes

The Settlement Exhibition
Tells the story of Iceland's settlement by Viking sailors who left Norway and settled in Iceland
On permanent view

The Egils Saga Exhibition
The exhibition concentrates one of Iceland's famous most famous Vikings and poets, Egill Skallagrímsson
On permanent view

LÁ Art, Hveragerði
Images of Þingvellir from various artists.
Runs until August 21

Old herring factory, DJúpvík
Pictures - And their sounds
Combination of photographs and sounds by Claus Sterneck
Runs until August 31

200+ pictures
Collection of 200 pictures taken in Iceland by Claus Sterneck
Runs until August 31

Pompei of the North, Westman Islands
Excavations project at the site of 1973 volcanic eruption on the island of Heimaey
On permanent view

Reykjanes Art Museum, Reykjanesbær
On permanent view
Safnasafnið, Akureyri
Exhibition by artists Guðrún Hrönn Ragnarsdóttir, Sólveig Aðalsteinsdóttir & Þóra Sigurðardóttir
Runs until September 4

Safnahús Museum, Westman Islands
This museum has mounted birds & fish, an aquarium, as well as a variety of rocks and minerals on display
On permanent view

Skaffell, Seyðisfjörður
The Narrative Collection
A collection of narratives from inhabitants of Seyðisfjörður
Runs until August 13

Sláturhúsið, Egilsstaðir
Seasons (Vertíð)
Music, art and stage art.
Runs until August 13
If you can't get it in Kaupfélag then you don't need it
A look at Sláturhús history
Runs until August 21

VÍKING
Best little concert venue in Akureyri
CONCERTS:
Fri. 29. júl. Hjalmar
Sat. 30. júl. Hjalmar
Sun. 31. júl. Bravó
Fri. 5. aug. Odinn Vald Tribute Concert
Sat. 6. aug. Odinn Vald Tribute Concert
Thu. 11. aug. Valdimar
Fri. 12. aug. Dúndurfréttir
Sat. 13. aug. Gylfi, Rúnar & Megas
Thu. 1. sep. Mezzoforte
THE GREEN HAT AKUREYRI
For further informations on upcoming events and concerts go to: www.facebook.com/grauenhatturinn

Outside Reykjavík | Venue finder

Keflavík
Suðsuðvestur
www.sudsudvestur.is
Hafnargata 22
230 Reykjanesbær
421-2225

Borgarnes
The Icelandic Settlement Centre
www.landnam.is
Brákarbraut 13-15
310 Borgarnes
437-1600

Mývatn
Mývatnstofa
Hraunvegi 8
660 Mývatn
464-4390
www.visitmyvatn.is

Stykkishólmur
Vatnasafnið / Library of Water
www.libraryofwater.is

Akureyri
Akureyri Art Museum
www listasafn.akureyri.is
Kaupvangsstræti 12
600 Akureyri
461 2610

Græni Hatturinn
Hafnarstræti 96
600 Akureyri
461-4646

Kunstraum Wohnraum
Ásabyggð 2
600 Akureyri

Egilsstaðir
Sláturhúsið
www.slaturhusid.is
Kaupvangi 7
700 Egilsstaðir
470-0692

Seyðisfjörður
Skaffell
www.skaffell.is
Austurvegur 42
710 Seyðisfjörður
472-1632

Hveragerði
LÁ Art
www listasafnamesinga.is
Austurmörk 21
210 Hveragerði
483-1727

THE NARRATIVE MUSEUM 2011-2012
VERTÍÐ · time based art · Summer program
Skaffell CENTER FOR VISUAL ART
SEYÐISFJÖRÐUR · EAST ICELAND
www.skaffell.is

KUNG FU
STICKS + SUSHI

Kung Fu · Brekkugata 3 · Akureyri · Sími: 462-1400

Laxdalshús
Restaurant in the oldest house in Akureyri
Hafnarstræti 11,
telephone: 461-2900
laxdalshus@laxdalshus.is


HANDLE WITH CARE

The Icelandic landscape was handpainted on this cup in Japan in 1933 for a posh family in Iceland who served coffee in porcelain on Sundays. The whole handpainted collection travelled through Corea on a mule-train, with the Siberian express to Moscow, to northern Europe through Nazi-Germany, onboard a ship set for Iceland. But now you can see this cup in Húsið museum in Eyrbakká.
HÚSIÐ Á EYRARBAKKA
The Southcoast Museum
Open May 15th - Sept. 15th: 11 - 18. Other times by arrangement. | www.husid.com


www.goya.is
A piece of Spain in Akureyri, capital of the north.
Goya Tapas bar Kaupvangsstræti 23 Akureyri 519 7650


Cleanliness is next to godliness

John Wesley 1778



www.thelaundromatcafe.com

HORNIÐ

Restaurant - Pizzeria



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

Lunch offers every day.
Open every day from 11.00 to 23.30
For reservations call 551-3340

Now offering catering service!

sushibarinn

Laugavegur 2 101 Reykjavik tel: 552 4444

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

MAP

Places We Like

1 Sægreifinn

Geirsgötu 8

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

2 Á Næstu Grösom

Laugavegur 20B

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

3 Kryddlegin Hjörtu

Skúlagata 17

The restaurant Kryddlegin Hjörtu, "Spicy hearts", specializes in healthy and rich gourmet soups, homemade spelt bread and an exclusive salad bar. They are located by the seaside with a spectacular view of the mountains to the north. They are located in a newly built house at Skúlagata 17. Closed on Sundays.

4 Hamborgarabúllan

Geirsgata 1

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

5 Barbara

Laugavegur 22

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

6 Boston

Laugavegur 28

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

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,



7 Bakkus

Tryggvagata 22

Bakkus serves up reasonably priced beer, a really impressive selection of international vodkas and an atmosphere unlike any other in town. An eclectic mix of patrons, regular live music and movie nights keep this place interesting and always inviting. Expect dancing on tables and to-the-death foosball battles.

Hafnarstræti 20, tel: 540 1313

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 Lágmúla 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

8 Kaffibarinn

Bergstaðastræti 1

Weekends are somewhat overrated at Kaffibarinn if you ask me. Don't get me wrong, they can be brilliant if you're completely pissed, the DJ is fresh and the crowd is full-blooded, still the weekdays are better. You should always expect get caught in some shenanigan, whether it's a crazy Monday bender or a wacko Tuesday...well... bender.

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 05:30 on weekends.

Shops: Mon.-Fri. 10:00-18:00, Sat.

9 Kisan

Laugavegur 7

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

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.

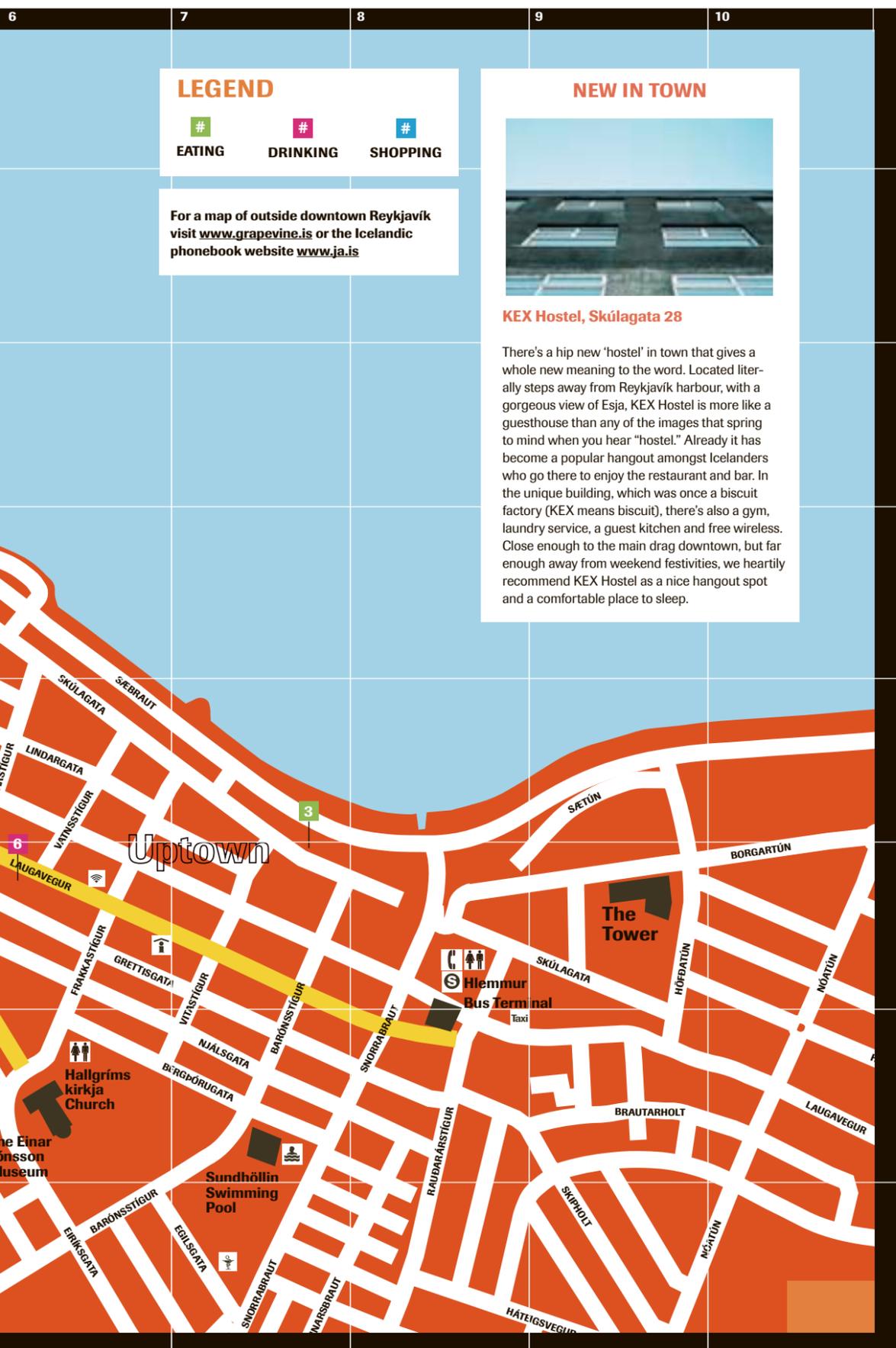


BJARNI FEL sportbar

We have combined some of the latest in audio & visual technology with a genuine personal service in food, drink & entertainment. Operating in one of the oldest houses downtown - new & fresh on the block but with plenty of soul & character

Austurstræti 20
101 Reykjavik
561-2240





LEGEND

EATING # DRINKING # SHOPPING

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

NEW IN TOWN



KEX Hostel, Skúlagata 28

There's a hip new 'hostel' in town that gives a whole new meaning to the word. Located literally steps away from Reykjavik harbour, with a gorgeous view of Esja, KEX Hostel is more like a guesthouse than any of the images that spring to mind when you hear "hostel." Already it has become a popular hangout amongst Icelanders who go there to enjoy the restaurant and bar. In the unique building, which was once a biscuit factory (KEX means biscuit), there's also a gym, laundry service, a guest kitchen and free wireless. Close enough to the main drag downtown, but far enough away from weekend festivities, we heartily recommend KEX Hostel as a nice hangout spot and a comfortable place to sleep.



A DAY IN THE LIFE

Alex MacNeill

What's up, Alex?
I am the CEO of gogoyoko, a music service with an artist-friendly business model. I am the singer / guitarist in kimono, a band with a guitarist-friendly drumming model. I am also a father and gardening enthusiast.

EARLY MORNING >

My kids wake up between 5:30 and 7:30 so I spend a few hours trying every trick I can think of to get them to sleep longer and as the days get shorter I hope that will get easier. I drink a cup of very strong coffee and take my oldest to her kindergarten. If I swam in the morning it would be at Vesturbæjarlaug because I would be more likely to run into celebrities there. Not really though. I drink a soy latté from Kaffitár almost every day. It's like crack cocaine to me.

LUNCH >

I work on Hverfisgata at the gogoyoko office, so I alternate between The Deli, Bullan@B5, Prikid, Hressó and Te & Kaffi. Although, I often work through lunch (I'm kind of stupid like that).

MID-DAY >

I water my tomato plants. I have a lot of tomato plants, so this takes quite a long time. Then I might go shopping for groceries at Melabúðin for their excellent meat and fish counter, but never at Bónus, because those guys really suck. Actually, I'm more likely to swim after work. I think I'll do that today.

AFTERNOON >

My family eats a nice dinner made either by me or my girlfriend. Our oldest tries to trick us into giving her ice cream. I'm certain she's going to be a lawyer.

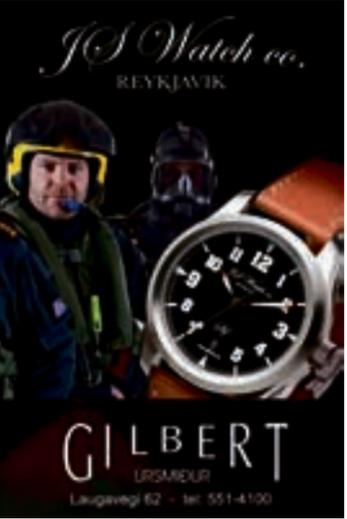
INTO THE NIGHT >

If I go out, I go where my friends are, which either means the home of my good friend Dawn Goat or else Bakkus, where they have Kaldi (a really good Icelandic brewery) on tap. Actually, I was on my way to Bakkus with Curver the other day and we ended up stopping at the Vikingakráin, which is right next door. We dressed up as Vikings and drank Jökull beer on tap, which is a really cool Icelandic brewery that just came on the market a few years back. We ate a sheep's head together and laughed like berserkers. It was awesome. But I think you need to be in a very specific state of mind to be able to effect that foreign-national-tourist-in-your-own-country-but-not-really-your-own-country thing. Or maybe you just need to go with Curver.

Usually I'm not out on the town though. I'm usually at home with my family trying to get the baby to sleep. That is the cycle of my day: rinse and repeat.

TAX FREE
WORLDWIDE

Ask for a Tax free form and save up to 15%



10 Kolaportið
Tryggvagata 19

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

Public phones
There aren't many public payphones in the city centre. The tourist information centre at Aðalstræti 2, City Hall, Kolaportið, 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 Reykjavik City Library, Tryggvagata 15

11 Blue Lagoon Store
Laugavegur 15

Geothermal seawater spa The Blue Lagoon is a world famous healing spot as the water is rich with silica and sulphur that are extremely good for the skin. The natural skin care products produced from the healing minerals are sold at the downtown Blue Lagoon shop.

The National and University Library, Arngrímsgata 3
Tourist Information Centre, Aðalstræti 2
Icelandic Travel Market, Bankastræti 2
Reykjavik Backpackers, Laugavegur 28

Swimming Pools
There are several swimming pools in Reykjavik. The one in 101 Reykjavik, Sundhöll Reykjavíkur, is an indoor one, located at Barónsstígur. That pool features a nice sunbathing area and some outdoor hot tubs. Opening hours: Monday to Thursday from 06:30-22:00, Friday from 06:30-20:00, Saturday from 08:00-16:00, and Sunday from 10:00-18:00.

12 Handprjónasambandið
Skólavörðustígur 19

The Hand-knitting Association of Iceland's official store, Handprjónasambandið, sells wool products of uncompromising quality. The store features pullover sweaters, cardigans and other woollen accessories.

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

Raggi from the band Árstíðir is the unstoppable...
HUMAN JUKEBOX
Playing every wednesday night from ten o'clock

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

THE ENGLISH PUB
Austurvöllur



THE LOBSTER HOUSE

HUMARHÚSIÐ RESTAURANT

Lunch menu

- Cream of lobster soup** 1490.-
Garlic roasted lobster
- Lobster & escargot "ragout"** 1590.-
Mushrooms, garlic
- Whale "sashimi" dip sauce** 1290.-
Mushrooms, herbs, ginger, red beets
- Lobster "maki"** 1590.-
Avocado, mango, cucumber, chilli mayo
- Lobster salad** 1490.-
Rucola, pumpkin seeds, fruit chutney

VEGETARIAN

- Veggie steak** 1790.-
Red beets, potatoes, parsnip

FISH

- Catch of the day** 1990.-
Please ask your waiter

- Lobster grill** 4890.-
200 gr. lobster, horseradish, salad

DESSERTS

- Chocolate "2 ways"** 990.-
White and dark chocolate, fruits

- "Lazy-daisy"** 990.-
Coconut, yoghurt

Located in Central Reykjavik
Amtmannsstíg 1 · 101 Reykjavik · Tel: 561 3303
humarhusid@humarhusid.is



ART

GALLERIES & MUSEUMS IN AUGUST

COCKTAIL PLEASURES AND VISUAL STIMULATION

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

OPENINGS

Bió Paradís

The Weird Girls Project

August 14

Premiere screening of Episode 13 of The Weird Girls Project at 17:00

Gallerí Ágúst

Portraits of Women

August 20

The exhibition consists of paintings and drawings of women the artist has created in the past few years. Her honest approach and beautiful use of colors make this a magical collection.

Runs until September 25

Gerðuberg

Video Rental

August 17

An exhibition of paintings by girls from the Art Group of the Tian social centre, inspired by films of various types - horror movies, science fiction and Disney classics.

Runs until August 31

Kling & Bang

Ripples (Gáru)

August 20

Exhibition by visual artists Anna Hallin & Olga Bergmann

Runs until September 18

National Gallery of Iceland

Spidermom - Family

August 14 & 20

Teachers from the Reykjavik School of Visual Arts set up a Family workshop in relation to the exhibition *Femme - Louise Bourgeois*.

Guided tour

August 20, 20:00

A guided tour to the exhibition *Femme - Louise Bourgeois* with Halldór Björn Runólfsson, Director of the National Gallery of Iceland.

Runs until August 21

Skybox - Concert

August 20, 21:00

Skybox is a series of ambient compositions for guitar and drums by Hallvarður Ásgeirsson. A video work by Anne Herzog will be shown during the concert.

The Nordic House

Unseen & Unheard

August 20

New video art, performance and music.

Reykjavík Art Museum

Ásmundarsafn

Curator's talk

August 21

The ideas of 'From Sketch to Sculpture' will be discussed at 15:00 with Eiríkur Þorláksson

Hafnarhús

Symposium: Perspectives

August 13

Discussions focus on the relationship between visual arts and philosophy.

Runs until August 14

Educational Possibilities

August 18

Presentation about the topic

Lecture - Laurene Boym

August 25

Lecture with Laurene Boym, designer from Boym

ONGOING

ASÍ Art Museum

The ASÍ 50 Years Anniversary

Runs until September 11

The Culture House

Child of Hope - Youth and Jón Sigurðsson

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

On permanent view

Medieval Manuscripts - Eddas and Sagas

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

On permanent view

Millennium - phase one

Selection of pieces from the collection of the National Gallery displaying a variety of works by Icelandic artists in the last two centuries.

On permanent view

The Library Room

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

On permanent view

Gallerí Fold

Marta Rosolska Photography

Runs until November 14

Gallery Ófeigur

Journey into Landscapes

Iceland paintings by Liverpool artist Sylvia Hikins

Runs until August 24

Gerðuberg

Gagn og gaman

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

Runs until August 28

Hafnarborg

Ingenuity - Einar Thorsteinn

Exhibition of works by Icelandic architect and artist Einar Thorsteinn Ásgeirsson

Runs until August 14

From Hafnarborg collection

Display of works by the most important Icelandic artists from early 20th century

Runs until August 14

Hönnunarsafn - Museum of Design

Our Objects - from the Museum's Collection

Objects acquired by the Museum since its opening in 1998 will be put on display in the exhibition area. Objects include Icelandic and foreign furniture, graphic



Let's Tango!

August 25 to 28

Iðnó and Kramhúsið

Passes from 80 Euros, single events from 1000 ISK

www.tango.is

The soul of Argentina will be in Reykjavik for a festive four-day weekend! The Milonga, which features tango dance and music, will take place at Iðnó restaurant and the Kramhúsið multi-cultural dance studio. There will also be workshops with teachers from Argentina, Denmark, Austria and Iceland. Of course you will need a partner, but don't fret if you don't have any takers just yet—the instructors will assign you to an appropriate match. To finish off the fun in good taste, there will be a dinner and Milonga fest at the Blue Lagoon until midnight.

Thursday August 25

21:00 Quinteto Tangarte - Concert in Iðnó

22:00 DJ Birger Haugdal - Milonga in Iðnó

Friday August 26

16:00 Workshops in Kramhúsið and Iðnó

16:00 DJ Birger Haugdal - Afternoon Milonga in Iðnó

22:00 Quinteto Tangarte, followed by DJ Jörg Haubner - Milonga in Iðnó

Saturday August 27

13:00 Workshops in Kramhúsið and Iðnó

14:30 DJ Jörg Haubner - Afternoon milonga in Iðnó

22:00 DJ Birger Haugdal - Milonga in Iðnó

Sunday August 28

12:00 Workshops in Kramhúsið and Iðnó

13:30 DJ Birger Haugdal - Afternoon milonga in Iðnó

17:45 Closure night at the Blue Lagoon. Bus from Iðnó

ICELAND 360°

THE TOP TEN PLACES · ÞU FALLEGGIR STADIR



Top 10 in Iceland

In this new and fascinating book photographer Vilhelm Gunnarsson takes us on a unique journey.

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www.salka.is



Reykjavík Museum of Photography

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30
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REYKJAVÍKUR
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1981-2011

GRÓFARHÚS 6th floor
Tryggvagata 15, 101 Reykjavík

Opening hours:
12-19 mon-fri, 13-17 weekends

www.photomuseum.is



Welcome to the home of writer Halldór Laxness, winner of the Nobel Prize for Literature 1955

20 min from Reykjavík city centre - On the way to Thingvellir National Park

Be inspired by Laxness



Opening hours:
Every day 9.00 - 17.00
www.gjufrasteinn.is

ART

GALLERIES & MUSEUMS IN AUGUST

design, textiles, ceramics, and glass, to name a few

Runs until October 16

Knitting Iceland

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

On permanent view

L51 Artcenter

Impressions of Iceland

Paintings by Konstantinos Zaponidis inspired by the unique colors and original nature of this fascinating country.

Runs until August 31

National Gallery of Iceland

Femme - Louise Bourgeois

28 works by Louise Bourgeois, principally installations or "cells" and sculptures, but also paintings, drawings and textiles

Runs until September 11

Kjarval, from the collection of Jón Þorsteinnsson and Eyrún Guðmundsdóttir
Exhibition of cubist paintings by Jóhannes S. Kjarval

Runs until September 11

Strides

Changes in Icelandic painting from the late 1800s to the 2000s

Runs until December 31, 2012

The National Museum

The Making of a Nation - Heritage and History in Iceland

This exhibition is intended to provide insight into the history of the Icelandic nation from the Settlement to the present day.

On permanent view

BE YE WELCOME, MY GOOD FRIENDS!

Collection of carved Nordic drinking horns

Runs until December 31

Carved Coffers

From the collection of the National Museum

Runs until August 31

Make Do and Mend

Repaired objects from the collection of the National Museum

Runs until September 1



RUN! It's good for the soul!

August 20

The marathon starts and ends at Lækjargata

Registration is from 1650 ISK (3 km) to 10.732 ISK (marathon).

www.marathon.is

Each year, thousands of professional and amateur runners, from more than 30 countries around the world, come to Reykjavik to participate in the city's marathon, which coincides with the popular Cultural Night. But aspiring runners have a number of events to choose from: there's a marathon (42,2 km), a half marathon, a relay race, a 10 km run, and a 3 km Fun Run. It starts and finishes on Lækjargata, located in the centre of Reykjavik. In addition, kids can participate in the Lazy Town Run, which takes place in Hljómskálagarður, the park near Tjörnin pond.

Though the 100,000 ISK first prize award is definitely something to strive for, just placing in a marathon is a reward in itself. If the 60 year old writer Haruki Murakami is running marathons, are you going to tell us you're not up for it? Join in the fun, even if it's just for a couple kilometres—it's good for the soul.

Oh, and registration comes with a t-shirt, a rented chip for timing, a bib number, a medal for finishers, powerade drinks, AND free admittance to the geothermal baths and pools in Reykjavik.



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Aðalstræti 27 • Ísafjörður
Eden • Hveragerði

email: theviking@simnet.is



Art | Venue finder

ART67

Laugavegur 67 | **F7**
Mon - Fri 12 - 18 / Sat
12 - 16

Artótek

Tryggvagata 15 | **D4**
Mon 10-21, Tue-Thu 10-19, Fri
11-19, Sat and Sun 13-17
www.sim.is/Index/Islenka/Artotek

ASÍ Art Museum

Freygata 41 | **G6**
Tue-Sun 13-17

Árbæjarsafn

Kistuhylur 4

The Culture House

Hverfisgata 15 | **E5**
Open daily 11-17
www.thjodmenning.is

Dwarf Gallery

Grundarstígur 21 | **F4**
Opening Hours: Fri and Sat 18-20
www.this.is/birta/dwarfgallery

The Einar Jónsson

Eiríksgröta | **G5**
Tue-Sun 14-17
www.skulptur.is

Gallery Ágúst

Baldursgata 12 | **G4**
Wed-Sat 12-17
www.galleriagust.is

Gallery Fold

Rauðarástígur 14-16 | **G8**
Mon-Fri 10-18 / Sat 11-16 / Sun
14-16
www.myndlist.is

Gallery Kaolin

Ingólfsstræti 8 | **F4**

Gallery Kling & Bang

Hverfisgata 42 | **E5**
Thurs-Sun from 14-18
this.is/klingogbang/

Gerðuberg Cultural Centre

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

Hitt Húsið

- Gallery Tukt
Pósthússtræti 3-5 | **E4**
www.hittusid.is

i8 Gallery

Tryggvagata 16 | **D3**
Tue-Fri 11-17 / Sat 13-17 and by
appointment. www.i8.is

Living Art Museum

Skúlagata 28 | **D6**
Wed, Fri-Sun 13-17 / Thu 13-22.
www.nylo.is

Hafnarborg

Strandgötu 34,
Hafnarfjörður

Mokka Kaffi

Skólavörðustíg 3A | **E5**

The National Gallery of Iceland

Frikkirkjuvegur 7 | **F4**
Tue-Sun 11-17
www.listasafn.is

The National Museum

Suðurgata 41 | **G2**
Open daily 10-17
natmus.is

The Nordic House

Sturlugata 5
Tue-Sun 12-17
www.nordice.is/

Nútímalist Galleria

Skólavörðustígur 3a | **E5**
Restaurant Reykjavík
Vesturgata 2 | **D3**

Reykjavík 871+/-2

Aðalstræti 17 | **D3**
Open daily 10-17

Reykjavík Art Gallery

Skúlagata 28 | **D6**
Tuesday through Sunday 14-18

Reykjavík Art Museum

Open daily 10-16
www.listasafnreykjavikur.is

Ásmundur Sveinsson Sculpture Museum

Sigtún
Hafnarhús Tryggvagata 17 | **D3**
Kjarvalsstaðir Flókagata | **I7**

Reykjavík Maritime Museum

Grandagarður 8 | **B2**

Reykjavík Museum of Photography

Tryggvagata 16 | **D3**
Weekdays 12-19 / Sat-Sun 13-17 -
www.ljosmyndasafnreykjavikur.is

Sigurjón Ólafsson Museum

Laugamestangi 70

SÍM, The Association of Icelandic Artists

Mon-Fri 10-16
Hafnarstræti 16 | **D4**

Spark, Design Space

Klapparstíg 33 | **F5**
www.sparkdesignspace.com



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history featuring a
permanent exhibition on
Iceland's extraordinary
history from settlement
to present day.

National Museum of Iceland

OPENING HOURS:

Summer

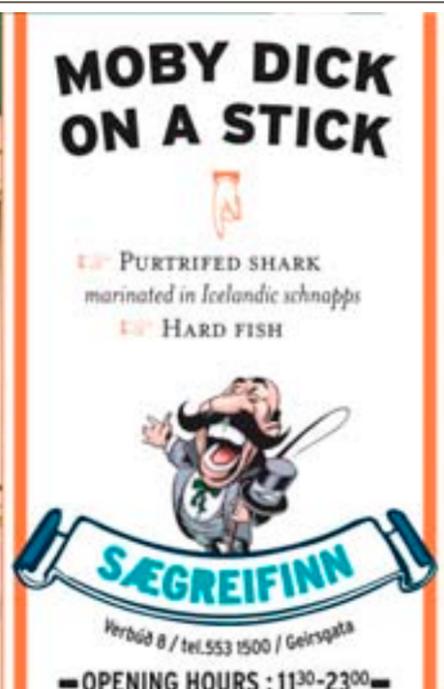
(May 1st - September 15th)
Daily 10-17

Winter

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



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ART

IN AUGUST

Ásfjall

Collection of Pétur Thomsen's photographs
Runs until October 2

Kurt Dejmo exhibition

Collection of Kurt Dejmo's photographs
Runs until October 2

The Nordic House

The Library

The collection centres on new Nordic literature, both fiction and non-fiction. The library lends out novels, academic publications, audio books and more
On permanent view

Relations

The title refers to the relations between different kinds of phenomena. The works are mixed media on canvas.
Runs until August 14

Paintings by Agneta Ekholm

The Swedish artist opens an exhibition of selected paintings in the main entrance of the gallery.
Runs until August 14

Reykjavík Art Museum

Ásmundarsafn

From Sketch to Sculpture - Drawings
by Ásmundur Sveinsson
Runs until April 22, 2012

Magnús Árnason - Homage

Runs until April 22, 2012

Hafnarhús

Erró - Assemblage

These works are composed of ready-made objects and waste from industrial and bourgeois society.
Runs until August 28

Erró - Collage

Runs until August 21

Perspectives - On the Borders of Art and Philosophy

Comprehensive exhibit that represents the breadth and diversity of styles and artistic media pursued in Iceland today
Runs until September 4

Kjarvalsstaðir

Jóhannes S. Kjarval - Key Works

Runs until January 15, 2012

Jór! Horses in Icelandic Art

Runs until August 21

Workshop

Open and informative workshop for children and families in connection with the exhibition Jór! Horses in Icelandic Art. Make a reservation in advance by email: fraedsludeild@reykjavik.is
Runs until August 21



Ásmundur Sveinsson's Sketches to Sculptures

Runs until April 22, 2012

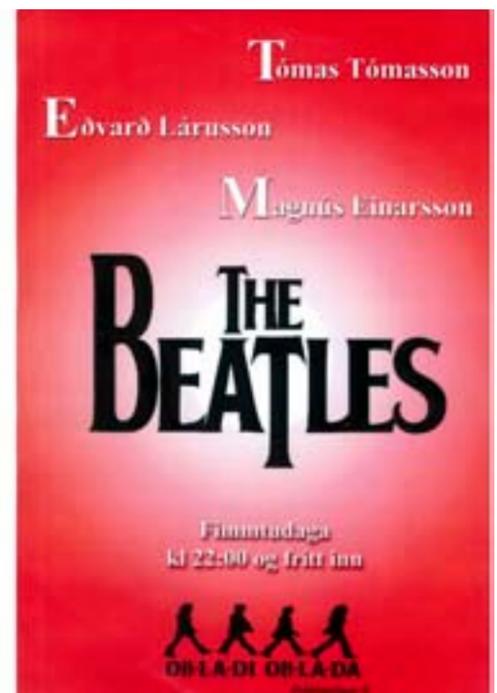
Reykjavík Art Museum

How Much: 1000 ISK for adults, 500 ISK for 25 and under.

"From Sketch to Sculpture-Drawings by Ásmundur Sveinsson," curated by Eiríkur Thorláksson, is an opportunity to discover more about the history of art in Iceland. A retrospective of his oeuvre at this exhibition spans some 2,000 drawings. Sveinsson's illustrations usually employed average working people as his subjects, but as time went on, his works became more abstract, while at the same time reaching further into the past for inspiration. His body of work has been so prolific, and his impact on Icelandic art so great, that a museum named after him was built right here in the city.

This exposition shows little-known aspects of Ásmundur Sveinsson's works, and all the drawings have been digitally re-mastered in the compilation of his works at the Reykjavík Art Museum. This exhibition won't last forever, so taking the time to check out one of Iceland's best kept secrets in the art world is an absolute must.

FREE CONCERT
Every Thursday



Happy Hour Every Day from 12 - 20

ART

IN AUGUST



Two Hours To See The Unseen

August 20, from 17:00 to 19:00

The Nordic House

Free

Coinciding with Cultural Night, The Nordic House hosts an amazing artistic experience. 'Unseen & Unheard' is an exhibition featuring a video installation by singer Rakel Mjöll and photographer Katrín Braga, previously unpublished fashion images by Charlie Strand and new creations by Sara Ross Bjarnadóttir.

Accompanying the event will be a set by Geir Helgi that will include Skweee mixes—a combination of simple synth leads and bass lines with funk, R&B or soul-like rhythms. Don't miss this chance to experience a variety of performances, video art and music. See you there!

Reykjavík City Library

Karolina Boguslawska

Exhibition of lomography photos

Runs until 31 August

Reykjavík City Museum

Reykjavík 871 +/- 2 (The Settlement Exhibition)

Archaeological findings from ruins of one of the first houses in Iceland and other excavations in the city centre

On permanent view

Reykjavík Maritime Museum

From Poverty to Abundance

Photos documenting Icelandic fishermen at the turn of the 20th century

On permanent view

The History of Sailing

Iceland's maritime history and the growth of the Reykjavík Harbour

On permanent view

The Coast Guard Vessel Óðinn

Display of vessel that took part in all three Cod Wars

On permanent view

Baiting Bright Fishhooks

Exhibition about the Little Fishing Book by Jón Sigurðsson, containing guidelines to fishing equipment and processing.

Runs until December 31

The Herring Adventure

This exhibition explores the adventurous herring era, using the photographs of Haukur Helgason from 1953-57, the short film of Sigurður Guðmundsson from 1941 and various objects related to the herring fishing.

Runs until September 18

The Call of Sagas

A exhibition from Finland about a adventurous voyage in an open boat from Finland to Iceland, honoring the old viking shipping routes.

The Watercolours of Ólafur Thorlacius

Ólafur Þór worked with the Icelandic Coast Guard for many years as a mapmaker. He is now retired and paints beautiful watercolors in his free time.

Runs until August 28

Reykjavík Museum of Photography

The Photographs of Leifur Þorsteinsson

Exhibition of the work of Icelandic photographer Leifur Þorsteinsson

Runs until August 28

Reykjavík Citizens - Photos from a working man

Karl Christian Nielsen's exhibition depicts photos of everyday life between 1916 and 1950

Runs until August 28

Sigurjón Ólafsson Museum

Sigurjón Ólafsson's Pillars & "Ice-lander"

The pillar in its various forms is one of the leitmotifs of the work of sculptor Sigurjón Ólafsson, from his first independent work in Copenhagen in the 1930s to his final works of 1982.

Runs until August 28

Spark Design Space

Thread

Spark presents two generations of jewelry makers

Runs until September 1

Tjarnarbíó

School of Transformation

This five-hour long entertainment leads the audience through a unique process of getting the essence of theatrical experience and education

Runs until September 1

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- all year round

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Jan-Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct-Dec
	9:00	9:00	9:00	9:00	9:00	9:00	
			10:00*	10:00	10:00*		
13:00	13:00	13:00	13:00	13:00	13:00	13:00	13:00
			14:00*	14:00	14:00*		
			17:00	17:00	17:00		
			20:30*	20:30	20:30*		

*From 15 June to 15 August.

Elding Sea Angling schedule
(3-3,5 hours)

EL-04 from 1 May to 30 September							
Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun	
11:00	11:00	11:00	11:00	11:00	11:00	11:00	
				17:00*	17:00*		

*From 1 June to 31 August

• EL-07 Ferry to Viðey all year round

Free entry to the Whale Watching Centre



EARTH CHECK SILVER CERTIFIED 2011



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Reykjavík Literally

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Every Thursday in July and August at 5 pm.



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Free of charge.

LiB Reykjavík City Library
www.literature.is
Tel. 411 6100



Reykjavík Art Museum

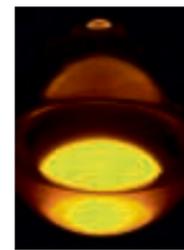


Perspectives - On the Borders of Art and Philosophy. Claudio Parmiggiani, Untitled, 2008.

Erró - Collage



Jór! Horses in Icelandic Art



Magnús Árnason - Homage



From Sketch to Sculpture - Drawings by Ásmundur Sveinsson

Guided tours in English at Kjarvalsstaðir all Thursdays at 11 a.m. in July and August.

18 Sept. 2010 - 21 August 2011

Erró - Collage

3 May 2010 - 15 January 2012

Kjarval - Key Works

21 May - 4 September

Perspectives - On the Borders of Art and Philosophy

7 May - 21 August

Jór! Horses in Icelandic Art

30 April 2011 - 15 April 2012

From Sketch to Sculpture - Drawings by Ásmundur Sveinsson

28 July - 28 August

Erró - Assemblage

7 May - 21 August

Colours of the Horse

30 April 2011 - 15 April 2012

Magnús Árnason - Homage

Hafnarhús

Tryggvagata 17
Open daily
10 a.m. - 5 p.m.
Thursdays 10 a.m. - 8 p.m.

www.artmuseum.is



Kjarvalsstaðir

Flókagata
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SORRY, NO MONK MEAT

Vikingakráin (The Viking Tavern)

Pósthússtræti 9, 101 Reykjavík



What We Think: Theme bars are fun! Kitchen needs a boot up the arse!

Flavour: Viking! (and sometimes missing)

Ambiance: Fun but less rowdy than you'd think

Service: Heroic

The idea of a Viking themed bar triggers the same knee-jerk reaction that natives get when they're confronted with the puffin plush toys and plastic helmets shops in downtown Reykjavík. It's understandable that we're seeing more of these shops given the summer traffic of visitors to Reykjavík, but it's always a little heart-breaking to see a charming old wooden house get press-ganged into tourist service. But I'm inclined to cut Vikingakráin (The Viking Tavern) some slack.

Vikingakráin is firmly in the spirit of those Medieval Times jousting places we all know and love/loathe. In my opinion, the place has real potential to offer a barrel of stupid fun to foreigners and locals alike and if you need to put on your ironic hat to enjoy it then be my guest.

For one thing, they've gone out of their way to maintain authenticity and are well ahead of the Viking Village in Hafnarfjörður which is too 'Disneyfied' and 'plastic'. Here there isn't a plastic horned helmet in sight and the costumes (every guest gets one!) are quite convincing.

For what's mostly a bar, Vikingakráin offers an ambitious menu. Local dishes and local ingredients make up most of the menu and of course the usual rotten shark, smoked lamb and wind-dried cod are well represented. But they also offer things like salted cod in orange sauce (3.100 ISK) and lamb filets in beer sauce (3.900 ISK) and some interesting group menus, which I didn't get a chance to try. So they seem to be aiming for bistro status.

My companion and I kicked off with what should be considered the basics: Icelandic lamb stew (1.600 ISK) and the creamy fish soup (1.450 ISK), and the recommended light lager Jökull to wash it down. The lamb stew I'm used to is served with either rice or oatmeal as a thickening agent and so the thin broth-like stew that they offered didn't feel quite right. They do get a big plus for skimming off most of the fat as the fat on the Icelandic lamb can have an almost unbearably gamey taste to it. They also used what looked like fresh herbs and vegetables, which is not a given.

The fish soup was somewhere between a Manhattan and a New England clam chowder and worked well—mixed seafood, heavy on the cream, but with fresh tomatoes and white wine (also sour whey?) to lift it up.

For the main course we picked the lamb shank with blueberry sauce (3.400 ISK) and the interesting-sounding Arctic char with a cumin-brennivín sauce (3.100 ISK). The Arctic char was of the typical mass-farmed variety and I missed the burned, crispy skin, which is where the char really shines. The sauce tasted more of burned butter than cumin and the overall impression was bland

and did not do justice to the Arctic char.

The Lamb shanks, I'll bet good money on, had been boiled prior to roasting. Overcooked, the flavour wasn't there and the salty blueberry-free bouillon sauce did little to liven up the protein.

I squeezed in a dessert of rice pudding with blueberry "kissel" (also known as "jam") and got what looked like a Rice Krispies yoghurt bar. It was day-old, cinnamon-less mulch and I heartily recommend the cream pancake or skyr in its place.

I would like to give kudos to the lady holding down the fort by herself for the better part of the evening and with a packed room of tourists too! It can be difficult to predict traffic in restaurants aimed at tourists and these things happen but she was professional and friendly despite the workload.

The menu may be over-ambitious for this range and the kitchen needs a kick up the ass, but I'd say it does the job for a theme bar/restaurant and could easily be raised up a notch with a few easy fixes (if you have to precook it, then leave it off the menu!).

Overall, Vikingakráin does a good job of letting you know what you're in for and if you take it for what it is then the meal should live up to expectations. However, it would be nice to see the theme of the place explored further, involve the guests more, add more events, involve the staff more, maybe some bar games, like an axe challenge with free shots for those who hit the bulls eye! 🍷

✍️ RAGNAR EGILSSON

📷 JULIA STAPLES

Food & Drink | Venue finder

3 Frakkur Baldursgata 14 G5	Íslenski Barinn Pósthússtræti 9 E4	Gata Laugavegur 3 E5	Indian Mango Frakkastígur 12 F6	O Sushi Lækjargata 2A E4	Sushibarinn Laugavegur 2 E5
Aktu Taktu Skúlugata 15 E7	Bar Ellefu Hverfisgata 18 E5	Glætan book café Laugavegur 19 E5	Jómfrúin Lækjargata 4 E4	Pisa Lækjargötu 6b E4	Sushimiðjan Geirsgötu 3 C3
Alibaba Veltusund 3b D3	Café d'Haiti Tryggvagata 12 D4	Grái Kötturinn Hverfisgata 16A E5	Fjalikonubakaríð Laugavegur 21 F5	Pizza King Hafnarstræti 18 D4	Svarta Kaffi Laugavegur 54 F7
American Style Tryggvagata 26 D4	Café Loki Lokastígur 28 G6	Grillhúsið Tryggvagata 20 D3	Kaffifélagið Skólavörðustígur 10 E5	Express Pizza Vallarstræti 4 E4	Sægreifinn Verbúð 8, Geirsgata C3
Argentína Steakhouse Barónstígur F7	Café Paris Austurstræti 14 E4	Habibi Hafnarstræti 20 D4	Kaffitár Bankastræti 8 E5	Gamla Smiðjan Lækjargötu 8 E4	Tapas Vesturgata 3B D3
Austurlanda-hraðlestin Hverfisgata 64A F7	Café Roma Rauðarárstígur 8 G8	Hamborgarabúlla Tómasar ("Bullán") Geirsgata 1 C3	Kaffivagninn Grandagarður 10 B2	Prikið Bankastræti 12 E5	Thorvaldsen Austurstræti 8 E4
Á Næstu Grösom Laugavegur 20B F5	Deli Bankastræti 14 E5	Hiðilla Batar Ingólfstorg D3	Kofi Tómasar Frenda Laugavegur 2 E5	Rjóðhúskaffi E3 Tjarnargata 11	Tíu Dropar Laugavegur 27 F5
B5 Bankastræti 5 E4	Domo Þinghóltsstræti 5 E4	Hornið Hafnarstræti 15 D4	Kornið Lækjargata 4 E4	Santa Maria Laugavegur 22A F6	UNO Hafnarstræti 1-3 D3
Bakkus Tryggvagata 22 D3	Einar Ben Veltusundi D3	Hótel Holt Bergstaðarstræti 37 G5	Krua Thai Tryggvagata 14 D3	Serrano Hringbraut 12 I5	Vegamót Vegamótastígur 4 F5
Ban Thai Laugavegur 130 G8	Eidsmiðjan Bragagata 38A G5	Humarhúsið Amtmannstígur 1 E4	La Primavera Austurstræti 9 E4	Shalimar Austurstræti 4 E3	Við Tjörnina Templaradund 3 E4
Babalú Skólavörðustígur 22A F5	Fiskmarkaðurinn Aðalstræti 12 E3	Hressó Austurstræti 20 E4	Mokka Skólavörðustígur 3A E5	Silfur Pósthússtræti 11 E4	Vitabar Bergþórugata 21 G7
Bæjarins Beztu Tryggvagata D4	Geysir Bar/Bistro Aðalstræti 2 D3	Icelandic Fish & Chips Tryggvagata 8 D3	Nonnabiti Hafnarstræti 9 D4	Sjávarkjallarinn Aðalstræti 2 D3	
	Garðurinn Klappastígur 37 F5			Sólón Bankastræti 7a E5	

REVIEWS



PATRIOT GRUB! (IT'S HARD TO EAT WITH ONE HAND OVER THE HEART)

Íslenski Barinn (The Icelandic Bar)

Hafnarstræti 1-3, 101 Reykjavík



What We Think: Quality ingredients, locally sourced and well handled. But wouldn't go there if it wasn't for the food.

Flavour: Nordic, balanced, moderately innovative

Ambiance: Patriotic, homely

Service: Not as good as the food
Website: Ugly. Unnavigable. PDF menus.

When you find a bar/restaurant named Íslenski barinn (The Icelandic Bar) in the capital of Iceland there are probably two thoughts that come to mind: One, it is a tacky tourist trap cynically attempting to second guess the demands of the tourist industry, or two, it's clunky patriotism wrapped in cloying nostalgia serving homogenized versions of my amma's waffles and serving it to someone else's amma at a healthy mark-up. Íslenski barinn fits comfortably in the second category (the obscure references to Icelandic history are a tell), but don't let that discourage you because Íslenski barinn is doing a heck of a job with the Icelandic classics.

Íslenski barinn rests somewhere between a trattoria and a restaurant. They've taken classic themes from New Nordic cuisine, simplified them and even dropped a few clichés (like Italian dessert varieties using Skyr) while falling headfirst into others (dusting with roasted rye bread crumbs). They are far down the food chain from a place like Noma or Texture, but are upholding the underlying principles of New Nordic cuisine, such as reviving local dishes,

sourcing for fresh ingredients straight from the producer, finding new uses for old ingredients and looking for potential new ones, being diverse, local, democratic, seasonal and exhibiting only the faintest whiff of ethnocentrism.

Wall to ceiling, the place is adorned with traditional handicrafts and an interesting array of photos that, surprisingly, showcases the full spectrum of Icelandic culture—from masticating horses in the midnight sun to teargas canisters in mid-flight during the 1949 NATO protest.

I am ecstatic about the rapid increase in microbreweries in Iceland and Íslenski barinn is the only place I'm aware of that offers the full selection. Something me and my dinner companion took full advantage of. I chose Norðankaldi, which is a medium bitter ale with a distinct caramel taste and was pleasantly surprised. Had too many of those to remember what she had.

The menu is a little on the large side. It's two pages short of being a dinner menu and that's not the vibe they want to be going for but the prices are very reasonable. After a long deliberation she decided on the Seafood Feast prix fixe (3,990 ISK for two courses and 4,450 ISK for three), which included a shellfish soup, roasted Arctic Char and a chocolate cake. I decided on 'Hvalur 6' (whale dish named after the controversial whaling boat—1,630 ISK) and 'Útlaginn' (a puffin, duck and char combo platter named after the great 1981 realist Viking film—3,990 ISK).

First course. Here is where we noticed the lack in table service despite five to six people manning the floor. We were relaxed and in no hurry, but the frequent reminders for drink orders and table clearing started to wear thin as the night went on.

Luckily, the fish soup more than made up for it. A well-stocked bowl of

liquid joy and a big, mouth filling flavour. I am not a big fan of whale meat but despite that (and my mixed feelings about the hunting of minke whale), I have to admit that the 'Hvalur 6' dish of smoked and cured whale was glorious. I can confidently say that the cured whale was the best whale I've had and the smoked whale ranks second.

For the main course, it would seem that they re-purposed the shellfish soup as a sauce for the arctic char. These kinds of shenanigans I would let slide if we had randomly chosen these dishes together ourselves, but as part of a prix fixe it's a ridiculous thing to do. The soup was great, the fish was great, but never the twain shall meet. Fix the prix fixe plz!

My portion of lightly-smoked puffin, roasted char and slow-grilled duck combo could have been a little more generous despite reasonable pricing. I am in the minority in Iceland that likes the flavour of seabirds and felt the lightly-smoked puffin did too good of a job of disguising that flavour. The grilled duck was actually a rillette served on a bent spoon without a discernible purpose (did they expect me to wolf down the whole thing in one bite?). The duck was fine, but I wouldn't pick this plate again.

We picked a dessert that never arrived and this was, I regret to say, symptomatic for the service that night. In a way I felt bad for the guy as he was obviously new on the job and it reminded me a bit of myself (full disclosure: I tried waiting for a couple of months before it turned out that I am the worst waiter in the known universe).

So while the service I got was not where it needed to be, I would definitely consider this place next time I'm showing foreign visitors around. 🍷

✍️ RAGNAR EGILSSON
📧 ALÍSA KALYANOVA



THE FISH COMPANY IS RANKED #1 OF 120 RESTAURANTS IN REYKJAVIK ON tripadvisor

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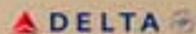
AUGUST 20
REYKJAVÍK
CULTURE NIGHT
2011 FULL SCHEDULE

IN YOUR
POCKET



Gakktu í bæinn
MENNINGAR
NÓTT 
20.08 · 2011

www.meningarnott.is



What is Reykjavík Culture Night?

An annual event in the city since 1996, Reykjavík Culture Night has become an essential part of cultural life in Iceland, with thousands of people strolling the streets of the city on this exciting and eventful night. Culture Night offers the chance to enjoy a variety of activities ranging from guided tours, traditional shows and exhibitions to more unusual happenings. A number of cultural institutes such as galleries, ateliers, shops, cafes, churches, restaurants and bars in downtown of Reykjavík stay open until late.

In short: if you find yourself in Reykjavík during Culture Night, soak yourself in it, you're guaranteed one of the best times to be had in Iceland, as it offers a great chance for experiencing arts, culture and other activities in a uniquely Icelandic way.

CULTURE NIGHT

20.08 · 2011

08:30 - 15:00



ISLANDSBANKI REYKJAVÍK MARATHON

The 29th annual Reykjavík Marathon.

LÆKJARGATA

10:00 - 15:30

STORIES OF EINAR CITIZEN AND BERNHÖFT BAKER

90-minute historic walk of the city centre. Starts at 10am, 12noon, 2pm. In Icelandic.

ARNARHÓLL

10:00 - 16:00

ERRO - THE PICTUREGAME

Erro the picture game is made from detachable cubes from Erro works.

REYKJAVÍK ART MUSEUM - HAFNARHÚS, TRYGGVAGATA 17

10:00 - 22:00

REPAIRED ITEMS

An exhibition of repaired items from the museum's catalog.

NATIONAL MUSEUM, SUÐURGÖTU 41

COME AND PLAY

Come and play in the playroom at the National Museum. Dress up, toys and other playful things.

NATIONAL MUSEUM, SUÐURGÖTU 41

MOUNTAIN VIEW

Exhibition of ceramic works by Guðlaug Geirsdóttir.

HANDVERK OG HÖNNUN, AÐALSTRÆTI 10

STITCH YOUR NAME

Put your name in the annals of history. Guests can stitch their name in a table cloth.

NATIONAL MUSEUM, SUÐURGÖTU 41



KJARVAL - KEY WORKS

The key works of painter Jóhannes S. Kjarval from the collection of the Reykjavík Art Museum.

REYKJAVÍK ART MUSEUM - KJARVALSSTAÐIR, FLÓKAGATA 5

JÓR!

Horses in Icelandic art.

REYKJAVÍK ART MUSEUM - KJARVALSSTAÐIR, FLÓKAGATA 5

PHOTOGRAPHY EXHIBITION - ÁSFJALL

Photographs by Pétur Thomsen, who has been documenting Mt. Ásfjall in Hafnarfjörður for three years.

NATIONAL MUSEUM, SUÐURGÖTU 41

WORKSHOP - COLORS OF THE ICELANDIC HORSE

Art workshop for the whole family.

REYKJAVÍK ART MUSEUM - KJARVALSSTAÐIR, FLÓKAGATA 5



ART EXHIBITION - MYSTIC, BY KOLBRÚN RÓBERTS

The exhibition Mystic by painter Kolbrún Róberts.

GALLERÍ AUGNAKONFEKT, LAUGAVEGI 95

WELCOME, FRIENDS

Exhibition of carved sheep horns.

NATIONAL MUSEUM, SUÐURGÖTU 41

10:00 - 23:00



ART EXHIBITION - PERSPECTIVES

Art exhibition, Perspectives - On the Borders of Art and Philosophy.

REYKJAVÍK ART MUSEUM - HAFNARHÚS, TRYGGVAGATA 17



ERRO - ASSEMBLAGE

Exhibition of assemblages by artist Erro

REYKJAVÍK ART MUSEUM - HAFNARHÚS, TRYGGVAGATA 17

REYKJAVÍK RUNWAY 2011

Display of clothes from the fashion design competition Reykjavík Runway 2011.

REYKJAVÍK ART MUSEUM - HAFNARHÚS, TRYGGVAGATA 17

A TASTE OF REYKJAVÍK

Photography exhibition „A taste of Reykjavík courtesy of SEEDS volunteers.“

Á NÆSTU GRÖSUM, LAUGAVEGUR 20B

11:00 - 11:30

THE REYKJAVÍK TREE

The Mayor of Reykjavík, Jón Gnarr, designates the 2011 Reykjavík Tree. The Reykjavík Forestry Service nominates the Reykjavík Tree annually, in cooperation with the City of Reykjavík.

OLD CEMETARY BY SUÐURGATA

11:00 - 12:00

GUIDED TOUR IN ENGLISH OF THE NATIONAL MUSEUM

Guided tour in English of the permanent exhibition of the National Museum of Iceland.

NATIONAL MUSEUM, SUÐURGÖTU 41

11:00 - 18:00



LOTTERY

The winning prize is porcelain item designed by Kogga and Magnús Kjartansson in 2004.

KOGGA KERAMIKGALLERÍ, VESTURGATA 5

11:00 - 21:30

CULTURE NIGHT AT GALLERY FOLD

Games for children and adults, prizes, performances and art exhibitions at Gallery Fold.

GALLERÍ FOLD, RAUÐARÁRSTÍGUR 14

11:00 - 22:00

THE COLLECTOR - ART CLUB

Introduction of the art club The Collector. Sign up for a chance to win a prize.

GALLERÍ FOLD, RAUÐARÁRSTÍGUR 14

TASTE REYKJAVÍK IN THE HIDDEN STORE

A Collective of Young Designers offers a Taste Reykjavík in the Hidden Store. Unique opportunity to enjoy art and design.

LEYNIBÚÐIN, COLLECTIVE OF YOUNG DESIGNERS, LAUGAVEGUR 21

12:00 - 13:00

GÍMALDIN, TRAUSTI LAUFDAL - LIVE

Gímaldin and Trausti Laufdal, live and unplugged at Cafe Roma.

CAFE ROMA, RAUÐARÁRSTÍGUR 8

12:00 - 19:00

CHRISTMAS BOOKS AT CRYMOGEA

Guests get an opportunity to preview this year's Christmas books.

CRYMOGEA, BARÓNSSTÍGUR 27

12:00 - 20:00

QUIZ

A light quiz game.

BERGSTAÐASTRÆTI 10

12:00 - 22:00

LITERACY

Exhibition combining artwork based on the interplay of text, forms and spaces. Guided tours at 4pm and 8pm.

LIVING ART MUSEUM, SKÚLAGATA 28

12:00 - 23:00

ART EXHIBITION - MUSES.IS

Living joint exhibition courtesy of Muses.is.

BAKKASKEMMA, GRANDAGARÐUR 16

13:00 - 13:30

CULTURE NIGHT OPENING CEREMONY

Mayor of Reykjavík, Jón Gnarr, formally opens the Culture Night program.

HARPA - ÚTISVIÐ, AUSTURBAKKI 2

13:00 - 15:00

LAUGAVEGUR HISTORY WALK

A guided walk from Laugavegur 23 with various stops along Laugavegur. In Icelandic.

FJALLKONUBAKARÍ, LAUGAVEGUR 23

CRAFTS WORKSHOP FOR CHILDREN

The title of the crafts workshop is *Welcome*. Children will work with the theme "dinner invitation"

NATIONAL MUSEUM, SUÐURGÖTU 41

13:00 - 16:00



S'IL TE PLAÎT, RACONTE MOI UNE HISTOIRE

Marionettes tell tales and sing French children songs for kids from 2-5 years.

ALLIANCE FRANCAISE, TRYGGVAGATA 8

13:00 - 17:00

FUN, GAMES AND CULTURE

Worldwide Friends offer facepaint, fun and games for children and adults as well as cultural events.

HÚS VERALDARVINA, HVERFISGATA 59

STUDYING EDUCATION

SÍF welcomes passers-by with old TVs, candy and magic markers.

HITT HÚSÍÐ, PÓSTHÚSSTRÆTI 3-5

PICNIC ON KLAMBRATÚN

Various outdoor activities for picnickers on Klambratún.

REYKJAVÍK ART MUSEUM - KJARVALSSTAÐIR, FLÓKAGATA 5

13:00 - 19:00

OPEN HOUSE - JCI

Junior Chambers International invites everyone to learn about its work and enjoy music, games and mini workshops.

JCI, HELLUSUND

CHILDREN'S CORNER

Playground and jump castle for children to play.

GALLERÍ FOLD, RAUÐARÁRSTÍGUR 14

13:00 - 21:00

COAST GUARD VESSEL ÓÐINN

Former Captains of the Coast Guard vessel Óðinn invite guests for a tour of the vessel.

REYKJAVÍK MARITIME MUSEUM, GRANDAGARÐUR 8

13:00 - 22:00

A DATE WITH THE PAST

Would you like a polaroid of you and your family in old costumes?

REYKJAVÍK MUSEUM OF PHOTOGRAPHY, TRYGGVAGATA 15

PHOTOGRAPHY EXHIBITION FOR A LITTLE BOY

Photographs by Karolina Boguslawska shot on her son's Lomography toy camera.

REYKJAVÍK CITY LIBRARY, TRYGGVAGATA 15

44 AMERICAN MOMENTS

A photography exhibition, documenting a young man's journey through the US.

REYKJAVÍK CITY LIBRARY, TRYGGVAGATA 15



14:00 - 23:00



Tomten

SEATTLE IN THE CITY HALL

In celebration of Reykjavik's and Seattle's 25 year Sister City Anniversary the American Culture night guests will be offered to experience a diverse cultural program from Seattle. Among the artists is the up and coming pop/rock band Tomten, native Americans from the Quileute tribe will perform native dances and their unique music, Bob Culbertson, one of the most influential Chapman Stick player of the world and the performers of Giraffe & Staff puppet company. Guests will also be offered a taste of Chateau Ste. Michelle wine and a warm cup of Seattle's Best Coffee. Delta provides transport for the American artists to Iceland.

CITY HALL



Bob Culbertson

13:20 - 13:30

CHINA NATIONAL ACROBAT TROUPE

China National Acrobat Troupe performs in relation to the grand opening of Harpa. Again at 3:40pm.

HARPA - ÚTISVIÐ, AUSTURBAKKI 2

13:30 - 16:00

25 YEARS BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION OF RADIO BYLGJAN

Radio Bylgjan celebrates its 25 years birthday with a fantastic show on Ingólfstorg. Among entertainers are Paul Oscar, Jón Jónsson & Friðrik Dór, Sveppi & Villi, Steindi Jr., Á móti Sól and Hvanndalsbræður.

INGÓLFSTORG

13:30 - 16:30

SUNGAZING AT AUSTURVÖLLUR

Seltjarnarnes Astronomy Club and the Astronomy Web invite people to look at the sun.

AUSTURVÖLLUR

13:30 - 17:30

GUIDED TOUR - THE ART OF HARPA

Guided tours of the art work in Harpa, Music and Conference Centre. Starts 13:30, 15:30 and 16:30.

HARPA, AUSTURBAKKI 2

14:00 - 14:30

KNOW YOUR PEARLS

Short introduction on how to recognize real pearls from fakes, and what decides the price.

LABOUTIQUE.IS, NJÁLSGATA 62

SOMETHING THE PLACE SUGGESTED

Can situations be manufactured and exhibited through a window and still feel inviting? Dance performed by Raven.

HEMMI OG VALDI, KLAPPARSTÍGUR

OPENING - THE NORDEN FESTIVAL

A Nordic entertainment and music program kicks off with Fanna Mannskor, a men's choir from Norway.

NORRÆNA FÉLAGIÐ, ÓÐINGSGATA

14:00 - 15:00

GUIDED TOUR - KJARVALSSTAÐIR

Guided tour of the exhibition Jór! and the Colours of the Icelandic Horse.

REYKJAVÍK ART MUSEUM - KJARVALSSTAÐIR, FLÓKAGATA 5

AMONGST THE LADIES AND TARTS

Birna Þórðardóttir leads a walk through history. Music by Magnús R. Einarsson. Translated into 5 languages.

SKÓLAVÖRÐUHOLT - BY THE STATUE

14:00 - 15:30

YOUR INNER CHILD

Sóla the storyteller arrives in the storymobile to tell stories for children of all ages. In Icelandic.

HALLARGARÐURINN, FRÍKIRKJUVEGUR 11

14:00 - 16:00

MUSIC, SCULPTURE AND WAFFLES

Waffles and coffee. Sculptures by Þorbjörg Pálsdóttir and live music.

INGÓLFSSTRÆTI 21 A

PHILOSOPHY CAFÉ - THE END OF CULTURE

Where does culture begin? Where does it end? Can we destroy it? Is there good and bad culture? In Icelandic.

IGNÓ, VONARSTRÆTI 3

HAÐARSTÍGUR - OPEN INVITATION

Residents of Haðarstígur invite people over for coffee, cake, song and joy.

HAÐARSTÍGUR

COFFEE AND WAFFLES

Residents of Þingholt and Skólavörðuholt invite people to their homes to enjoy waffles and coffee.

Adresses: Ingólfsstræti 21 a // Freyjugötu 28 // Þingholtsstræti 27,3h // Baldursgötu 1 // Grettisgata 34 // Óðinsgötu 8b // Bergþórugötu 20 // Grundarstíg 4, 2h // Spítalastígur 4, 3h // Mímisvegi 2 // Baldursgata 9 //

ÞINGHOLT AND SKÓLAVÖRÐUHOLT AREA



LET'S HUG

Free hugs for pedestrians on Laugavegur.

LAUGAVEGUR 25

14:00 - 16:30

VIKING KIDS IN REYKJAVÍK

How was life for kids during the Viking age? Guided tour. In Icelandic.

LANDNÁMSSÝNINGIN, AÐALSTRÆTI 16

14:00 - 17:00

GALLERY TUKT

Joint exhibition by artist Birna María Styff and Sigrún Erna Sigurðardóttir at Gallery Tukt.

HITT HÚSIÐ, PÓSTHÚSSTRÆTI 3-5

CHILDREN'S CRAFT WORKSHOP

A Nordic themed crafts workshop at the house of the Norden Association.

NORRÆNA FÉLAGIÐ, ÓÐINGSGATA

PERFORMANCE ART - HITT HÚSIÐ

Lively performance art programme, courtesy of Hitt Húsið Youth Centre.

HITT HÚSIÐ, PÓSTHÚSSTRÆTI 3-5

LIFE IN CLAY AND ART - GALLERY DUNGA

Art, music and fashion at Gallery Dunga.

GALLERÍ DUNGA OLD HARBOR, GEIRSGATA 5

ART WORKSHOP FOR KIDS

Workshops for kids, fish and boats.

REYKJAVÍK MARITIME MUSEUM, GRANDAGARÐUR 8

DRAWING COMPETITION FOR CHILDREN

Drawing Competition for Children. Silver jewelry for the winning entry.

HÚNOGHÚN, SKÓLAVÖRÐUSTÍGUR 17B

14:00 - 18:00

OPEN HOUSE AT THE FAROESE CONSULATE

Faroese art, food and drink, literature and music at the Faroese Consulate.

SENDISTOVA FÆREYJA, AUSTURSTRÆTI 12

JAPANESE CULTURE ON SCREEN

Short videos introducing various Japanese topics. Place: 5th floor screening room

REYKJAVÍK CITY LIBRARY, TRYGGVAGATA 15

UNNUR'S TEA HOUSE

Qigong, tea and sortiments. Astrology readings for guests.

NJÁLSGATA 33 A

JAPANESE TEA CORNER

Presenter: Ms Etsuko Satake. Place: 2nd floor

REYKJAVÍK CITY LIBRARY - TRYGGVAGATA 15

WHITE SIGNAL

The band White Signal plays on the pier by the Reykjavik Maritime Museum.

REYKJAVÍK MARITIME MUSEUM, GRANDAGARÐUR 8

14:00 - 20:00

THE BRIGHTER SIDE, WITH MÁLFRÍÐUR MARKAN

Málfríður Markan exhibits choice photos from her travels across the country.

BIÓ PARADÍS, HVERFISGATA 54

14:00 - 22:00

OPEN HOUSE - INTRODUCTION, S78

The Gay and Lesbian Association, S78 introduces its work. Live music and activities.

FÉLAGSMÍÐSTÖÐ SAMTAKANNA '78, LAUGAVEGI 3, 4.HÆÐ

14:00 - 23:00

FESTISVALL - DESIGN MARKET

Design market, ReykVeek and others at Faktory.

FAKTORÝ BAR, SMÍÐJUSTÍG 6

IGNÓ MUSIC FEAST

Tómas R. Tómasson's Latin Band, Varsjárbandalagið, Glóðir Tríó and more perform in lónó.

IGNÓ, VONARSTRÆTI 3

14:30 - 16:30

HOG CHAPTER ICELAND CHARITY RUN

HOG Chapter Iceland offers a ride around the pond. All proceeds donated to charity.

AUSTURVÖLLUR

14:30 - 17:00

CALLIGRAPHY - WORKSHOP

Only 6-10 participants each session. Workshops start at 2:30pm, 3:30pm, 4:30pm.

REYKJAVÍK CITY LIBRARY, TRYGGVAGATA 15

15:00 - 15:30

MISCHIEF AND MAYHEM

Storytime with children's radio show hosts Brynhildur and Kristín.

NATIONAL MUSEUM, SUÐURGÖTU 41

HONORARY SEA FOUNTAIN

Tourboat Magni creates a honorary sea fountain north of Harpa.

HARPA, AUSTURBAKKI 2

15:00 - 16:30

WORKSHOP - MOMMY SPIDER

A workshop for the whole family focused on themes from the works of Louise Bourgeois.

NATIONAL GALLERY OF ICELAND, FRÍKIRKJUVEGUR 7

15:00 - 16:00

ARCHITECTURE - HAFNARHÚS

Architect Huguín Þorsteinsdóttir offers a guided tour of Reykjavik Art Museum - Hafnarhús.

REYKJAVÍK ART MUSEUM - HAFNARHÚS, TRYGGVAGATA 17

15:00 - 17:00

MUSIC AND SEAFOOD

DILL restaurant offers grilled scallops while Eyland, jazz band entertains.

NORRÆNA HÚSIÐ, STURLUGATA 5

CHILDREN GAMES COURTESY OF SEEDS

The voluntary organization Seeds orchestrates games for the children.

EINAR JÓNSSON MUSEUM, FREYJUGATA

15:00 - 17:30

DO YOU WANT TO DANCE?

Open dance lessons: Bollywood, Afro, Belly dancing, Zumba, Salsa, Balkan and more.

KRAMHÚSIÐ - DANCE STUDIO, SKÓLAVÖRÐUSTÍG 12

15:00 - 21:00

A CELEBRATION OF PSALMS

Various performances, including Psalms 2011 and other works.

HALLGRÍMSKIRKJA, SKÓLAVÖRÐUHOLT

15:00 - 23:00

KIRSUBERJATRÉÐ WELCOMES GUESTS

Kirsuberjatréð invites guests to enjoy music, art and design.

KIRSUBERJATRÉÐ, VESTURGÖTU 4

ART OPENING - ELINBORG LÜTZEN

Art exhibition by Faroese artist Elinborg Lützen (1919-1995) in Harpa Concert Hall.

HARPA, AUSTURBAKKI 2

MUSIC, ART AND FRESH FISH FROM TJÖRUHÚSIÐ

Bands Reykjavík! and Sudden Weather Change open their rehearsal studio for a day of music, art and fine food. Fresh fish meals courtesy of Ísafjörður's Tjöruhúsið.

JÁRNBRAUTARSTÖÐIN (GRANDI), HÓLMASLÓÐ 2

15:30 - 16:30

LIVE MUSIC - TÓMAS R. EINARSSON LATIN QUARTET

Tómas R. Einarsson's Latin Quartet plays live.

HARPA, AUSTURBAKKI 2

15:30 - 17:00

ACCORDION DANCE

The Reykjavik Accordion Society invites you to a dance.

LÆKJARGATA



PIANO CONCERT

Pianist Jón Sigurðsson play works by Bach, Mozart and Liszt.

NATIONAL MUSEUM, SUÐURGÖTU 41

LIVE MUSIC - ROBERT THE ROOMMATE

The quartet Robert the Roommate plays folk inspired pop music.

NORRÆNA FÉLAGIÐ, ÓÐINGSGATA

16:00 - 17:00

GUIDED TOUR - LITERACY

Guided tour of the exhibition Literacy.

LIVING ART MUSEUM, SKÚLAGATA 28

16:00 - 18:00

SURFACE APPEARANCES

A well dressed couple panhandles and collects bottles to recycle.

KJÖRGARÐUR, LAUGAVEGI 59

16:00 - 20:00



ART EXHIBITION - PERSONA

Joint exhibition by artist Hulda Hlín Magnúsdóttir and puppeteer Katrín Þorvaldsdóttir.

TJARNARGATA 40

16:00 - 21:30

LIVE MUSIC

Various live music from post war years to Tango and much more.

KRAMHÚSIÐ - DANCE STUDIO, SKÓLAVÖRÐUSTÍG 12.

16:00 - 22:00



GESTUR GUNNARSSON - READING

Author Gestur Gunnarsson reads selections from his book. In Icelandic.

REYKJAVÍK MARITIME MUSEUM, GRANDAGARÐUR 8

LIVING PRINTS

Open studio at The Icelandic Printmakers Association.

REYKJAVÍK ART MUSEUM - HAFNARHÚS, TRYGGVAGATA 17

STRIKE THE IRON

Blacksmiths at work, using old techniques. It is time to strike the iron while it is hot.

CORNER OF VESTURGATA AND AÐALSTRÆTI

17:00 - 17:30

THE REYKJAVÍK BRASS BAND

The Reykjavík Brass Band plays songs by Helgi Helgason.

GRÖNDALSHÚS ELÐRA, ÞINGHOLTSTRÆTI 14

LIVE MUSIC - VIGRI

The band Vigri play by Óðinstorg

NORRÆNA FÉLAGIÐ, ÓÐINGSGATA

17:00 - 18:00

ARCHITECTURE - KJARVALSSTAÐIR

Architect Hugrún Þorsteinsdóttir offers a guided tour of Reykjavík Art Museum - Kjarvalsstaðir.

REYKJAVÍK ART MUSEUM - KJARVALSSTAÐIR, FLÓKAGATA 5

MEDIEVAL MANUSCRIPTS - EDDAS AND SAGAS

Guided tour in English.

ÞJÓÐMENNINGARHÚSIÐ, HVERFISGÖTU 15

17:30 - 18:00

PRESENTATION OF JAPANESE CULTURE

Presentation and discussion about Japanese culture and lifestyle.

REYKJAVÍK CITY LIBRARY, TRYGGVAGATA 15

LIVE MUSIC - GUÐRÍÐ HANSDÓTTIR

Faroese singer Guðríð Hansdóttir performs at Óðinstorg.

NORRÆNA FÉLAGIÐ, ÓÐINGSGATA

18:00 - 18:30

DANCE PIECE - WITHIN IT

A dance performance by Nicole von Arx, performed by Ólöf Helga Gunnarsdóttir

REYKJAVÍK ART MUSEUM - HAFNARHÚS, TRYGGVAGATA 17

LIVE MUSIC - LAME DUDES

The band Lame Dudes plays live music.

NORRÆNA FÉLAGIÐ, ÓÐINGSGATA

18:00 - 19:00



LIVE MUSIC - TEITUR

The Faroese musician Teitur Lassen performs.

HARPA - NORÐURLJÓS, AUSTURBAKKI 2

LIVE MUSIC - GÍMALDIN AND COMPANY, EGGERT

Alt-country band Gímalðin and Company and Eggert Feldsker play.

EGGERT FELDSKERI, SKÓLAVÖRÐUSTÍGUR 38

18:00 - 23:30

PASSIONATE TANGO IN THE GOLDEN ROOM

Passionate Tango in the Golden Room of Hotel Borg at 6pm and 8pm. Free tango lessons. Dancing until midnight.

HÓTEL BORG, PÓSTHÚSTRÆTI 11

18:30 - 23:30

SWARMING LOCUSTS IN BANKASTRÆTI ZERO

Poet Einar Már Guðmundsson and musician Bjartmar Guðlaugsson join forces at Sjávarbarinn.

SJÁVARBARINN, GRANDAGARÐI 9

19:00 - 22:00

THE DUET HEIMA

The duet Heima invites everyone to a concert from the balcony of their home.

GRETTISGATA 5

19:30 - 22:30

TÓNARFLÓÐ 2011 MUSICFEST - RÁS2 / VODAFONE

Tónaflóð 2011 will be held at Arnarhóll. Among artists are Jón Jónsson, Mugison, Bubbi & Sólskuggarnir and Whitesox All-star Band.

ARNARHÓLL

20:00 - 20:30

THE ARTIST TALKS

British artist Nikhil Nathan Kirsh talks to guests about his exhibition.

GALLERÍ FOLD, RAUÐARÁRSTÍGUR 14

20:00 - 21:00

GUIDED TOUR - KONA/FEMME

Guided tour of the exhibition Kona/Femme - Louise Bourgeois. In Icelandic.

NATIONAL GALLERY OF ICELAND, FRÍKIRKJUVEGUR 7

FRENCH ACCORDION MUSIC

Jóna Einarsdóttir plays French café music on her accordion.

REYKJAVÍK CITY LIBRARY, TRYGGVAGATA 15

INTERNATIONAL JAZZ DUET

Pianist Luke Howard (Australia) and bassplayer Janos Bruneel (Belgium) perform opuses from their CD *Open Road*.

NORRÆNA HÚSIÐ, STURLUGATA 5

20:00 - 22:00

JAZZ IN KJARVALSSTAÐIR

Classic jazz pearls for visitors.

REYKJAVÍK ART MUSEUM - KJARVALSSTAÐIR, FLÓKAGATA 5

OPENING - THE REYKJAVÍK JAZZ FESTIVAL

A two-week jazz fest kicks off on Culture Night. The inaugural concert offers performances by some of Iceland's best jazz musicians.

HARPA - NORÐURLJÓS, AUSTURBAKKI 2

READINGS AND PERFORMANCE ART

A program featuring performance art and readings in relation to the museum's current exhibition.

LIVING ART MUSEUM, SKÚLAGATA 28

20:00 - 22:30

25 YEARS OF BYLGJAN CONCERT

25 years of Icelandic music reviewed and explored. Iceland's most beloved musicians celebrate Bylgjan-Radio station's 25th anniversary.

INGÓLFSTORG, AÐALSTRÆTI

CONCERT

A program featuring some of Iceland's most popular bands, Nýdönsk, and Magnús and Jóhann.

HLJÓMSKÁLAGARÐURINN

20:00 - 23:30

COME ABOARD

Live music and entertainment program at the Whale Watching Center, Reykjavík Harbour.

HVALASETUR ELDINGAR, ÆGISGARÐUR

FESTISVALL - LIVE MUSIC

Live music program, courtesy of Gogoyoko and Hemmi og Valdi.

HEMMI OG VALDI, KLAPPARSTÍGUR

21:00 - 21:30

LIVE MUSIC - ICELANDIC CLASSICS

Singer Valgerður Guðnadóttir classic Icelandic songs.

NATIONAL MUSEUM, SUÐURGÖTU 41

21:00 - 22:00



MUSIC PIECE - SKYBOXX

Skybox is a music piece by Hallvarður Ásgeirsson, accompanied by a video work by Anne Herzog.

NATIONAL GALLERY OF ICELAND, FRÍKIRKJUVEGUR 7

MUSICAL PROGRAM - ARIAS AND DUETS

Four classically trained singers perform arias, duets and classical songs.

DÓMKIRKJAN Í REYKJAVÍK, VIÐ TEMPLARASUND

21:00 - 23:00

LIVE MUSIC

Live musical act. Fræbblamir, Halli Reynis and Ojba Rasta play by Við Tjörnina.

VIÐ TJÖRNINA, TEMPLARASUNDI 3

22:00 - 22:30

ROMANTIC SONGS FROM THE 20S AND 30S

Trio KremKex performs romantic songs from the pre-war era. Bella Notte, O my darling and other classics.

FRÍKIRKJAN Í REYKJAVÍK, FRÍKIRKJUVEGUR 5

22:30 - 23:00



THE INAUGURATION OF HARPA

The lights in the glass facade will be turned on for the first time. A magnificent work of art by Ólafur Elíasson.

HARPA, AUSTURBAKKI 2

23:00 - 23:30



FIREWORKS

Breathtaking fireworks display to finish off the evening. Sponsored by Vodafone.

THE HARBOUR



Program is subject to change. Check www.meningarnott.is or www.visitreykjavik.is for a final schedule

Culture Night at Landsbankinn

Art historian Aðalsteinn Ingólfsson gives a guided tour of Landsbankinn's works of art at:
12:00, 12:45 and 13:30.

14:00 Children's program with Tina the fairy, Sproti and Felix.

15:00 The Sagas in a modern language.

16:00 Iceland's most beloved stand-up comedians, Mið-Ísland.

17:00 Up and coming musician Jón Jónsson performs.

Program is subject to change



Landsbankinn is a proud sponsor of Culture Night.