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THE ESSENTIAL GUIDE TO LIFE, TRAVEL & ENTERTAINMENT IN ICELAND

GRAPEVINE  
ELECTION  
GUIDE



# VOTE FOR PEDRO

An unprecedented number of political parties plan on running in the upcoming parliamentary elections, from seasoned class leaders like The Independence Party and the Left-Greens to fresh-faced newcomers like "Dawn" and "The Rainbow Party" (!). But who should we trust to lead Icelanders into prosperity and create a fair, just society for all? In an attempt to figure it out, we went and made a massive election guide for y'all to pore over. **Check it out! Page 14.**

IN THE ISSUE Issue 4 • 2013 • April 5 - May 9

SEE BEHIND THE SCENES VIDEO FROM  
THE COVER SHOOT AT [WWW.GRAPEVINE.IS](http://WWW.GRAPEVINE.IS)



Editorial | Anna Andersen

# WELCOME TO OUR GARGANTUAN ELECTION GUIDE ISSUE!

## ANNA'S 23RD EDITORIAL



Little did we know what we were getting ourselves into when we set out to make an "Election Guide" this issue. For at least a decade now, the same four political parties have been running for parliament. Although there have always been some wildcard parties, and there was an influx of them in the 2009 post-crash election, never before have there been this many vying for seats in parliament.

We did our best to keep track as the parties popped up left and right, but we were often confused about how many there were and whether or not we should be taking them all seriously. It didn't help that one of them, Flokkur heimilanna ("The Household's Party"), announced itself on April Fools' Day.

At that point we had already sent a rather lengthy questionnaire to 20 parties and we wanted to believe that any new party was a joke. It turns out, however, that they are no less serious about running than the other 12 or 13 parties that had responded to our questionnaire, each of them with unique ideas on how Iceland should be run.

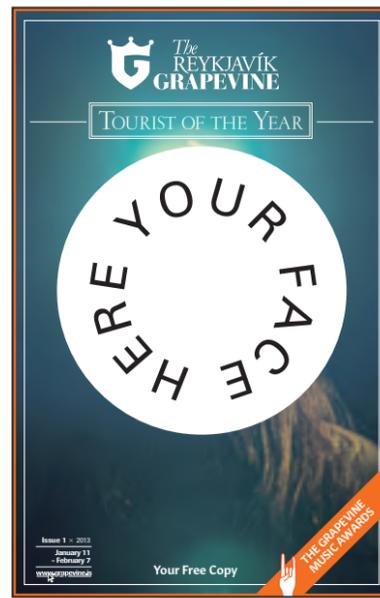
In the end, we can't be completely certain

that we've managed to include all of the parties running in the upcoming elections, but we can be fairly certain that the few missing ones won't collect enough signatures of support by April 12 to make it onto the ballot come April 27. Heck, at least one of the parties was trying to collect signatures from the makeup artists at our cover shoot.

It really wasn't until I stood there at that cover shoot, on the day before print, that I started to appreciate the fact that all of these parties were running and what that meant. A wonderful feeling came over me as I watched all of these would be leaders or representatives proudly posing for our cover photo.

If the polls are anything to go by, few will go on to get a seat at the table, but this seemingly obvious fact didn't prevent them from caring and feeling empowered enough to create a party and make their ideas heard. And even if they don't go on to gain any seats, their ideas are worth considering as the nation attempts to rebuild after the crash.

Now, dear voter, it's time for you to do your part. Turn to page 14 to see our Election Guide, which will hopefully help you make heads or tails of it all. If you're not a voter, you should still turn to page 14 and enjoy some insight into Iceland's political climate today.



## WILL YOU BE GRAPEVINE'S 'TOURIST OF THE YEAR 2013'?

We are now officially accepting nominations for "Tourist of the year 2013." Please submit your nominations to [editor@grapevine.is](mailto:editor@grapevine.is) to be considered. We will read them, post them to our website and print the best one come next January.

Note: To be eligible, the tourist (this can be you) must have visited Iceland in 2013.

See more soon on [www.touristoftheyear.is](http://www.touristoftheyear.is)

## FUN TRIVIA QUESTION!

Taken from the educational trivia game *Instant Iceland*

**Q:** Who was the only wartime leader to visit Iceland during World War II?

- A** Winston Churchill
- B** Franklin Roosevelt
- C** Adolf Hitler

Turn to page 31 for the answer!

## TRACK OF THE ISSUE



Nóra – Kólbítur

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As the old saying goes, families that play together stay together and Iceland is a pretty family-friendly place! Sibling-based bands sure are darling, too. We took one of our favourites out on a date for this issue (See On A Date With Retro Stefson on page 44) and now we're very privileged to be giving you a track by a band with a brother & sister at its core. The similarity ends there though! Nóra have been coming into their own for a while and rapidly maturing since their debut album in 2010. This track off their brand new album 'Himinbrim', released on March 24, creeps and crackles its way in and eventually builds to booming heights of broodiness. Take a listen and you know, maybe buy their album? Do it!



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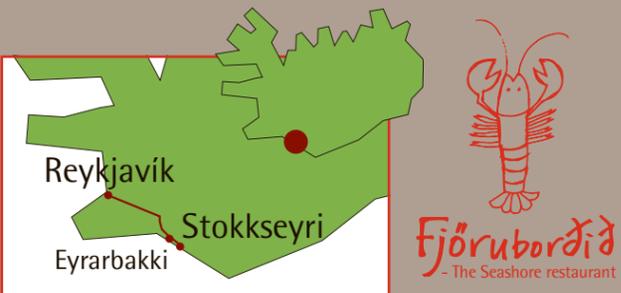


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## Sour grapes & stuff

### MOST AWESOME LETTER OF THE ISSUE

[Editor's note: this issue's most awesome letter and its response are a correspondence between a journalist and an historian from Australia. If you are interested in the story or have any pertinent information, please email [editor@grapevine.is](mailto:editor@grapevine.is).]

Dear Icelandic friends

We here in far away Australia are still trying to solve this 100 year old mystery. I wonder if any of your readers can help?

Copied most recent correspondence

Rod

HELP SOLVE THE MYSTERY: THE DIGGER AND THE ICELANDIC SPINSTER

AUSTRALIAN travel writer, Roderick Eime has stumbled on a conundrum in Iceland involving a mysterious young Australian World War I soldier, and a prominent Icelandic spinster who died 32 years ago at age 88.

It's in a tiny cottage in the historic Hafnarfjordur district of Reykjavik that the lady decreed before her death in 1980 be left untouched as a folk museum for generations to follow. Quaint old-time kitchen utensils still sit on the wood stove, vintage furniture is still in place and old family photos adorn a sideboard.

And, says Rod, amongst those photos is a studio portrait of a striking young soldier in uniform – an Australian First World War soldier complete with slouch hat and “rising sun” emblems on his collars.

But as Rod asks: what is he doing here, and just who is this handsome young man who was neither son, husband nor brother of the lady who was an only child and never married, yet felt him worthy of a studio photograph prominently displayed on her sideboard for life?

Main speculation rests on the possibility of an unfulfilled romantic interest, but having never left her native Iceland how, Rod muses, did they meet?

Rod says the lady's name was Sigríður Erlendsdóttir, daughter of Erlendur Marsteinsson and Sigurveig Einardóttir.

If you think you've an inkling as to the identity of the dashing young bloke on her sideboard, Rod would love to hear from you so he can pay tribute in a final chapter to the young man's life – and his relationship with Sigríður Erlendsdóttir who in later life was prominent in politics and worker's rights.

Rod

Dear Rod,

Thank you for your interesting query. There weren't any Australian troops in Iceland during the First World War;

however that's not to say that a man who served in the AIF did not have ties to Iceland. 2% of the Australian population at the 1911 census were born in Europe, which no doubt would have been replicated in the Australian forces.

Where in Iceland did you find the photograph? I've found two men with two connections with Iceland on their service records – one man was born there, the next of kin on the other man resided there. Perhaps the name of a town or village may widen the search?

The colour patch seen on the man's left arm is consistent with the 20th Battalion. One of the men mentioned above was Private George Reise of Parson, Iceland, who was part of the 8th Reinforcements of the 20th Battalion. He transferred to the 56th Battalion before arriving in France, was wounded in the arm at Fromelles on 20 July 1916, and returned to Australia owing to the nature of his wounds in February 1917. A copy of his service record can be viewed here: <http://recordsearch.naa.gov.au/scripts/Imagine.asp?B=8031009>

I hope this may be of some assistance.

Yours sincerely,

Aaron Pegram  
Historian, Military History Section

Hi!

My name is Stefano, I am contacting you from Italy and that's why: I'm living a gap year before starting my studies, and my dream would be to spend a month, August, in Iceland.

I would love to work to get the job done: I am a strong person with good manual ability and who loves to learn and does so quickly. I have managed my own house for five months, so I can offer my ability in cooking, cleaning and repairing or building small objects.

I am great at working with people: I've worked as a sales assistant and as a waiter, I speak Italian, English and Spanish fluently, I have worked with children for a year as a scout, dedicated myself to radio speaking and had great fun being the representative of my school, last year.

I have a wonderful passion for outdoor: after walking the GR 20 in Corsica, the

Camino de Santiago in Spain, the Trans-Lagorai here in Italy and the Laugavegur there in Iceland - which is the last one I've enjoyed organizing completely alone and which determined my fatal falling in love with Iceland - I can consider myself a good choice for trekking. I also love skiing.

I would need: a bed.

Would love: a place to cook and would enjoy the company of anyone.

Having the possibility to help someone in kitchen and then sharing the meal with them would be the best for me.

Can you help me?

Stefano

Dear Stefano,

We got your letter on April 1 and in all honesty, our first thoughts were “April Fools?” But you sure don't sound like no

fool! In fact, you sound like a charming and capable fellow with lots of practical skills to offer and a good disposition.

Since we are a newspaper, we don't have a bed or a place to cook to offer you, but maybe one of our lovely readers does! Maybe they are also a nice person with fine skills to spend quality time with. Maybe you'll find each other and fall in love and have a beautiful wedding! We assume we're invited since we are your matchmakers! Oy, we just turned into a dating agency...

But anyway. We recommend you check for available rooms and job openings on our spin-off site, [classifieds.grapevine.is](http://classifieds.grapevine.is). Good luck on your hunt and follow your dreams!

### MOST AWESOME LETTER FREE ICELANDIC GOURMET FEAST!

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# An End To The Neverending Nightmare?

## Iceland's most controversial criminal case once again revisited

by Snorri Páll Jónsson Úlfhildarson



“The nation has been unburdened of a nightmare,” Ólafur Jóhannesson, then Minister of Justice, proudly stated in parliament on February 3, 1977, at the end of a three-year investigation into the disappearance of two men. At a press conference in the Criminal Court of Reykjavík the day before, investigators announced that the mystery had been solved. German police officer Karl Schütz, who had been hired to solve the case<sup>1</sup>, outlined the official version of events, printed word by word in the daily newspaper Morgunblaðið the following day. Nothing stood in the way of handing out prison sentences—or so it seemed.

It was, however, not a nightmare for the nation, but for six people around 20-years-old, who at this point had been detained in the now demolished Síðumúli Prison for more than a year where they confessed to having murdered the two men. What followed was a Kafkaesque court case wherein no corpses, no evidence and no realistic motives for the alleged murders materialised.

Long before the main court procedures, four of the defendants had repeatedly withdrawn their confessions, which they said were the result of physical and mental torture. However, these statements, most of which were never properly confirmed by the investigators, were not taken into account by the Criminal Court judges who convicted all six people in December 1977. Two of them received life sentences and the other four were given sentences ranging from 15 months to 16 years in prison. Three years later, Iceland's Supreme Court confirmed the convictions, but reduced the sentences.

Once released from prison, one of the convicted, Sævar Marínó Ciesielski, started a life-long struggle to restore his and his co-defendants dignity. The results were mixed: while public opinion certainly shifted in favour of Sævar's fight, his attempts to have the case retried by the Supreme Court were unsuccessful. As time passed, he turned to life on the streets until he was finally “outlawed from Iceland,” as he said to an Icelandic passer-by in Copenhagen where he spent his last days before passing away in July 2011.

Following Sævar's demise and a public outcry, Minister of the Interior Ögmundur Jónasson commissioned a task force in 2011 to examine the case and how it was executed. Their conclusions were published at the end of last month bringing a possible end to one of Iceland's most controversial court cases.

### THE CASE OF GUÐMUNDUR AND GEIRFINNUR

In late January 1974, 18-year-old Guðmundur Einarsson disappeared after having gone to a dance in Hafnarfjörður. Almost ten months later, on the eve of November 19, 32-year-old Geirfinnur Einarsson left his home in Ke-

flavík and was never seen again. Despite extensive investigations, neither of their bodies nor any possible motives for murders were found.

A year after Geirfinnur's disappearance, Sævar and Erla Bolladóttir were arrested for embezzlement, a case completely unrelated to the two disappearances, but the police quickly turned the focus to Guðmundur's disappearance. After a week of interrogations, Erla was released and Kristján Viðar Viðarsson, Tryggvi Rúnar Leifsson and Albert Klahn Skaftason were arrested and detained. A week later, Morgunblaðið ran a front-page story about the custody of four men suspected of murdering Guðmundur. Soon, the police also linked them to the alleged murder of Geirfinnur, once again arresting Erla and Guðjón Skarphéðinsson.

In the beginning, the defendants denied having anything to do with the disappearances, but as interrogations continued, they made various confessions and withdrawals with different alleged crime scenes and motives. Halfway through the investigation, the above-mentioned Schütz was hired to take over the case. He brought new interrogation methods and sent regular updates to the media, which they printed without question. Charges were eventually issued, court hearings started and sentences were delivered.

### UNRELIABLE TESTIMONIES RESULTING FROM DURESS AND PREJUDICE

When Ögmundur Jónasson commissioned the task force in late 2011, the torturous treatment of the defendants had become widely known so nothing really surprising resulted from their work. It included a review of the case, its official, unofficial and recently discovered documents, as well as interviews with the living convicts. Only a psychological assessment of the convicts' statements, conducted by judicial psychologist Gísli Guðjónsson—one of the world's leading authorities on false confessions—brought more shameful facts to light.

The assessment's most outright conclusion is that the defendants' testimonies during interrogations and before the court were unreliable or false

and should never have been considered grounds for convictions. This is due in part to the unprecedented number of interrogations—close to 200 in some of the defendants' cases—which outnumbered the actual debriefings where the confessions are said to have taken place. During these interrogations, the defendants heard new versions of the alleged crime scenes—coming from either the investigators or other defendants—to which they were supposed to confess.

The report's authors highlighted the unusual length of the defendant's detention and isolation. At a March 25 press conference in which the task force announced its conclusions, Gísli stated that he knew of no parallel to this apart from the US-run isolation and torture camp at Guantanamo Bay. They also confirmed the mental and physical duress experienced by the defendants, to which the defendants themselves, former prison guards and then prison chaplain, reverend Jón Bjarman, have already testified. To name just one example, Erla was sexually molested by a policeman and a prison guard while in custody.

During the investigation, “the focus seems to have been on harmonising [the defendants'] accounts of something they probably knew nothing about,” the report states. The investigators and judges viewed the defendants through ‘tunnel-vision,’ putting all the weight on forcing confessions. By turning a blind eye to anything in favour of the defendants' case, the investigators violated their role of bringing to light all evidence that could lead to either a conviction or an acquittal. A key factor here seems to have been the defendants' marginal social status and petty-criminal background, which was enough for the establishment to view them as murderers.

Believing that “justice would prevail” in court, as Tryggvi's prison diary suggests, it seems they hoped confessions would release them from custody. Not long into their detention, however, they came to believe that nothing they said really counted, except for their confessions. This applied to their repeated confession withdrawals, which were systemically dismissed by the investigators and judges as attempts to muddle the investigation. Additionally, their right to assistance from a lawyer was limited, and some of their lawyers seemed to view them as guilty.

All of the above and more led them to confess, and, in some cases, believe that they were guilty which is in line with the results of Gísli's decades-long studies into the causes and nature of false confessions. It also shows how determined the investigators were to prove them guilty. In fact, due to the structure of Iceland's legal system at the time, they were partly the same people that later convicted them in court.

### THE DIRTIEST MARK ON ICELAND'S LEGAL SYSTEM

So what does this new report mean for the future of the case? The task force suggests three possibilities: First, the State Prosecutor could decide to reopen the case. Second, the convicted could request a retrial. Third, Parliament could propose a bill requesting a complete retrial. For now, it's still unclear which one of these will be chosen.

Sævar's son, law student Hafþór Sævarsson, who calls the case “the dirtiest mark on Iceland's legal system during the republic,” believes the third option to be the most convenient. As current law doesn't allow for the retrial of cases where the defendant is deceased, Hafþór sees this as the only viable way to get the case retried for his father and Tryggvi, neither of whom are still alive.

“My father lived to clear his name off this case, but justice didn't prevail while he still lived,” Hafþór says. “It's a reasonable demand that those who have passed away can have the opportunity for vindication.”

### TIMELINE

- January 27, 1974:** Guðmundur Einarsson disappears.
- November 19, 1974:** Geirfinnur Einarsson disappears.
- December 13, 1975:** Sævar Ciesielski and Erla Bolladóttir are arrested and detained.
- December 20, 1975:** Erla is released.
- December 23, 1975:** Kristján Viðar Viðarsson, Tryggvi Rúnar Leifsson and Albert Klahn Skaftason are arrested and detained.
- December 30, 1975:** Morgunblaðið reports the arrests of four men suspected of murdering Guðmundur and they are soon also implicated in the alleged murder of Geirfinnur.
- May 4, 1976:** Erla is arrested and detained.
- Summer of 1976:** German police officer Karl Schütz takes over the investigation.
- November 12, 1976:** Guðjón Skarphéðinsson is arrested and detained.
- February 2, 1977:** The investigation is called off at a press conference held at Reykjavík's Criminal Court. Interrogations continue until court procedure starts.
- December 19, 1977:** All six are convicted and sentenced in the Criminal Court.
- February 22, 1980:** All six are convicted and sentenced in Iceland's Supreme Court.
- July 15, 1997:** Iceland's Supreme Court rejects Sævar's request for a rehearing.
- October 8, 1998:** Then Prime Minister Davíð Oddsson describes the case as “judicial murder.”
- March 18, 1999:** Iceland's Supreme Court rejects Sævar's second request for a rehearing.
- June 22, 2000:** The Supreme Court rejects Erla's request for a rehearing.
- May 1, 2009:** Tryggvi passes away, 58-years-old.
- July 13, 2011:** Sævar passes away, 56-years-old.
- October 7, 2011:** The Ministry of the Interior commissions a work-group to examine the case.
- March 25, 2013:** The work-group turns in a 500-page report detailing its conclusions.

1 Before coming to Iceland, Schütz had, for instance, been involved in hunting down the first generation of the urban guerrillas of Rote Armee Fraktion (Red Army Faction or Baader-Meinhof).  
2 The conditions in Síðumúli underwent heavy criticism in a 1994 survey by the European Committee for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment. See: [www.cpt.coe.int/documents/isl/1994-08-inf-eng.pdf](http://www.cpt.coe.int/documents/isl/1994-08-inf-eng.pdf).

3 “The Case of Guðmundur and Geirfinnur” is far too long, multi-layered and complicated to be explained properly in a short article like this, especially if one wants to take into account the broadest historical perspective and all possible theories—conspiracy or not—of the real motives behind the treatment and conviction of the defendants.  
4 Just as the case itself, the task force's conclusions are way too

extensive to be explained in a short article. A full reading of the report is thus highly recommended to Icelandic readers: [http://www.innanrikisraduneyti.is/media/frettir-2013/GogG\\_heildarskjal--fyrir-vef-IRR.pdf](http://www.innanrikisraduneyti.is/media/frettir-2013/GogG_heildarskjal--fyrir-vef-IRR.pdf).  
5 This view was again voiced in 1997, following the Supreme Court's decision not to rehear the case, when Ragnar Hall, acting State Prosecutor, stated that the convicted were “no choirboys,” as if

that was enough to sentence innocent people. This (non)argument is still occasionally seen in media outlet's comment sections.  
6 One of the entries in the Síðumúli Prison journal states that Sævar's lawyer, Jón Oddsson, called the prison, announcing that he wanted to come and “grind Sævar.” When the Supreme Court rejected Sævar's request for rehearing in 1997, Örn Clausen, Albert's lawyer, embraced the verdict when interviewed by newspaper DV.



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Iceland | FAQ

# So What's This Dying River I Keep Hearing About?

A river in the east of Iceland called Lagarfljót has had its ecosystem collapse. The river originates in the Vatnajökull glacier and runs east through a long valley called Fljótsdalur where it forms a lake called Lögurinn. Then it runs past the town Egilsstaðir before entering the bay Héraðsflói. It is also known as the supposed dwelling place of a Loch Ness Monster-like snake dragon thing.

## HOW HORRIBLE THAT AN ECOLOGICAL... WAIT, SNAKE DRAGON THING?

According to folklore the river is the home of Lagarfljótsormurinn, whose name means "The Lagarfljót Worm" (or Wurm, if you prefer bad fantasy novels to reality). It is an old legend, first written down in the 14th Century. A woman put a small worm in a small casket containing some gold, which was supposed to increase the amount stored within.

## I CAN FEEL AN ALLEGORY COMING.

When she next checked inside, however, the gold had not grown, but the worm had. In a panic she threw the creature into the nearby river where it kept growing, causing havoc by attacking people and livestock and spewing venom on the land.

## BUT WHAT HAPPENED TO THE RIVER RECENTLY?

As opposed to the myth of the Lagarfljót Wurm, the story of the ecological destruction of Lagarfljót is thoroughly modern. In the year 2000 it was suggested that a dam could be built near a mountain called Kárahnjúkar to supply power to a wizard school.

## WOW! AWESOME! A REAL WIZ... OH, YOU'RE JOKING.

Sorry, this is such a depressing story that I keep trying to escape into fantasy. It was actually to supply electricity to an aluminium smelting plant in Reyðarfjörður, one of the eastern fjords of Iceland. Construction on the Kárahnjúkar dam was fully complete in 2009 and now four years later the ecology of Lagarfljót has collapsed.

## OH NO! IF ONLY THEY COULD'VE KNOWN, THEN THIS WOULD'VE BEEN AVERTED.

The thing is, and this is where things start getting really depressing, it was known all

along that this would happen. In 2001, a year after the dam-building was proposed, the Icelandic National Planning Agency, the government institution tasked with making environmental impact assessments for major construction projects, ruled that the damage done to the environment would be too great to allow the project. One of the reasons cited was the deleterious effects of diverting water from another river, Jökulsá á dal, into Lagarfljót.

## WAIT, SO THIS IS A RIVER POLLUTED BY ANOTHER RIVER?

Pollution is perhaps not the right word, but yes, that is what happened. This increased the amount sediment in Lagarfljót, reducing visibility and thus the amount of sunlight that reaches plants living in the water, which causes fewer plants to grow, leading to a collapse in the population of fish species which subsist on said plants, and therefore also in bird species which eat the fish. Also, I might add, this increase in sediment has turned the once beautifully blue-green water the colour of diluted diarrhoea.

## BUT IF THE PLANNING AGENCY RULED AGAINST THE DAM, WHY DID IT HAPPEN

Because the political parties in power at the time, the right wing Independence Party and the centre-right Progressive Party, were in favour of building the dam. The aim was to ensure the building of the aluminium smelting plant in Reyðarfjörður, as there was a worry that the economy in the Eastern Fjords was in danger of entering a death spiral and the hope was that a big, new workplace could halt the trend. Then Minister for the Environment Siv Friðleifsdóttir from The Progressive Party overturned the decision of the National Planning Agency.

## OH WOW, SHE MUST FEEL REALLY TERRIBLE ABOUT THAT NOW.

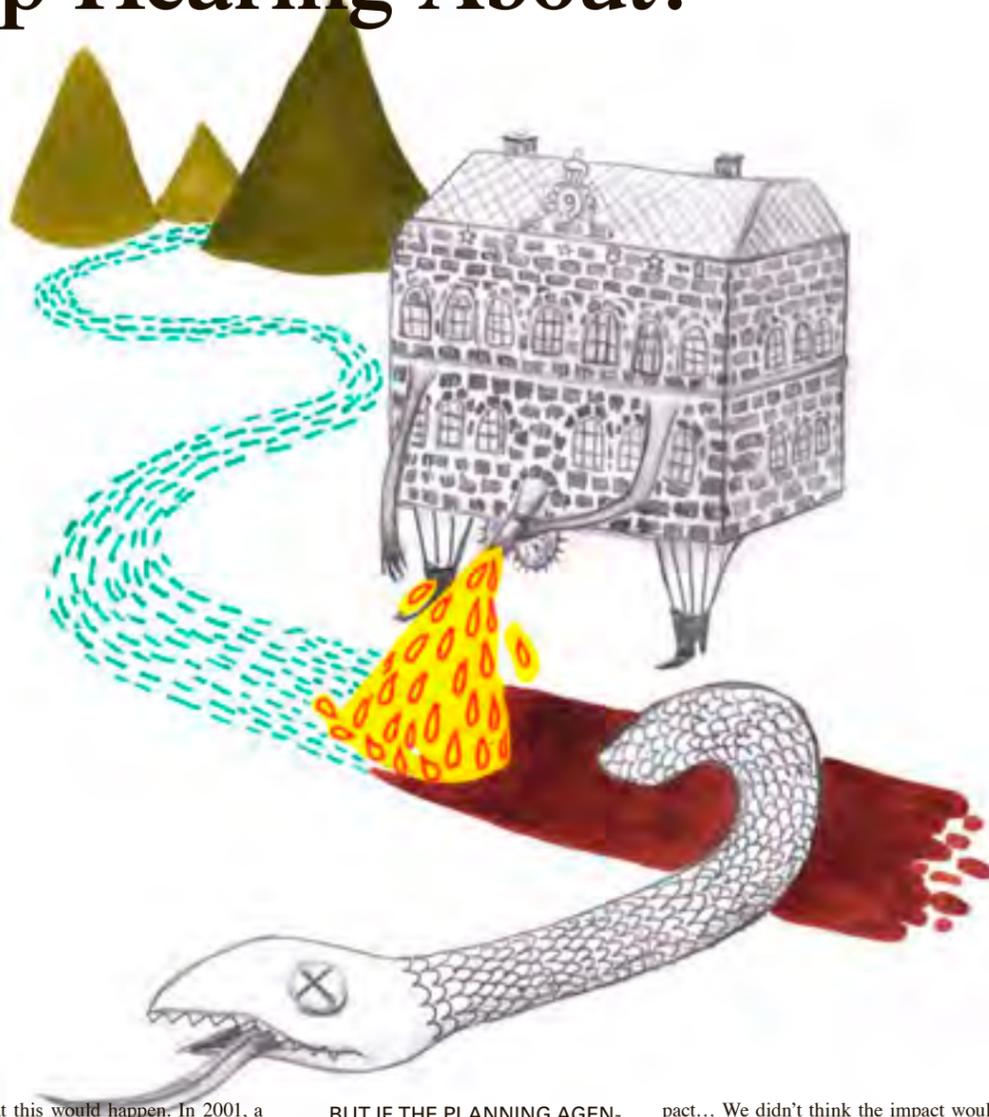
No, not really. Here is what she has to say: "We looked at the report and realised the impact very clearly at the time. We decided to allow the project to proceed on the basis of conditions that would mitigate the im-

pact... We didn't think the impact would be so great that it would overshadow the benefits of the project." When asked about whether she still thinks today, given what has happened, that it was the correct thing to do, she says: "I believe this was the right decision."

## WELL, AT LEAST WE'VE STILL GOT THE LEGEND OF THE LAGARFLJÓT WYRM TO ENTERTAIN US.

Maybe not. The prevailing scientific explanation for Lagarfljót Wurm sightings is that rotting plant matter produces methane gas which gets released, making the water roil and giving the appearance of a thrashing beast. It seems logical that if there is a lot less plant matter, less methane will be produced, reducing sightings. We don't know how Siv Friðleifsdóttir feels about slaying the Lagarfljót Wurm.

Words by Kári Tulinius  
Illustration by Lóa Hjálmtýsdóttir



## MARCH NEWS IN BRIEF

March sure came in like a lion and went out like a lamb, eh? In fact, it's almost difficult to remember just how much the weather was making the news just a few short weeks ago considering how absolutely gorgeous it's been of late. But March wasn't all about snowstorms and ash dust, a few other things happened, too.



The month got started with Beer Day, marking the proud date in Icelandic history when beer was once again legal for the masses to consume. Judging by the abundance of broken bottles, smashed billboards, and puddles of vomit around Reykjavík on March 2, the masses sure did enjoy it. Prohibition of beer officially ended on March 1, 1989.

Asylum seekers deserved a beer on March 1, as word got out that Reykjanæsbær Mayor Árni Sigfússon was severing the municipality's agreement to house newcomers awaiting their cases to be processed. The municipality originally said that they would stop accepting asylum seekers as of April 1, but announced at the end of the month that they'd be pushing that date back to July 1 to give the government more time to find alternative housing. So time will tell where the asylum seekers who once called Fit Hostel home will be housed this summer.

Speaking of people being held against their will, Davíð Örn Bjarnason, a 28-year-old Icelander who resides in



Sweden, was arrested on March 8 when departing Antalya, Turkey, where he was vacationing with his partner. The pair had bought a stone from the market and packed it away to shuttle back to Sweden and show off to all their friends while boasting about what an awesome time they had in Turkey. Only the happy times were halted when Turkish police decided that the stone was an antique and Davíð was, therefore, a smuggler. Ouch. The ordeal progressed until the 14th when Davíð was finally freed from prison, though he was held in the country under a travel ban until the 26th. He'll stand trial in a few weeks and could face some prison time or a fine.

Not-even-horse-meat-gate raged on as the Icelandic Food and Veterinary Authority (MAST) continued to test foods available in Icelandic shops. Gæðakokkar, the same company that somehow failed to include any meat in its meat pies in February, also failed to include any beef in its meatballs which are la-

— Continues over —

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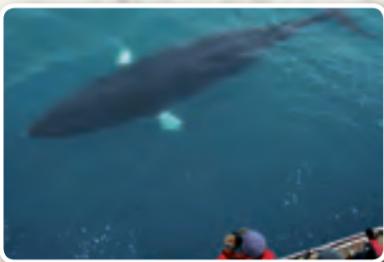
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# The €ucharist?

by Atli Bollason

Your shirt is starched and ironed crisp, just like that five thousand króna bill in your pocket, ready for your nephew's upcoming confirmation party. You can't sleep because you know your grandmother's half-sister's second husband will squeeze your hand with force and loudly speak your name with his booming voice. He will look you in the eye and you will sweat—who is this person anyway? You will have to perform genealogical gymnastics without blinking. Time to pull out that family tree...



Photo: Ragnheiður Pálsdóttir

At the age of thirteen, Icelandic youth are given the choice to confirm their baptism in a holy ceremony. As Easter approaches, you choose either to become an adult Christian and be showered with gifts from relatives: laptops, smart phones, furniture, jewellery, camping gear, airplane tickets, books and hundreds of thousands of krónur in cash—or you choose not to.

If you say yes, your parents will most likely invite your relatives and the family's closest friends to an afternoon gathering with a smorgasbord of cakes, coffee and this thing called 'brauðréttur' ("bread-dish")—shredded bread baked with a bunch of cheese and ham and maybe asparagus or bell peppers or (god forbid!) pineapples. Aunties will pinch your cheeks and your dad's friends will tell you that the grand old days of youth are behind you while you nod and smile. You have never kissed a girl, never had a sip of wine.

## WILL YOU ACCEPT J.C. AS YOUR LEADER?

This is how it works: Eighth graders can attend classes where they are schooled somewhat in Christianity but more so in 'adult life,' questions of ethics and love are raised and answers proposed within a theological framework. As I remember it, it wasn't that overbearing—I was personally of the opinion that Jesus had been a mentally disturbed person who had nevertheless presented a wholesome and desirable view of society (my parents were not exactly thrilled when I went on record

about this in a local newspaper a few weeks prior to my confirmation)—but a welcome break from math and Danish. After a while, you can decide whether you'd

“  
...I was personally of the opinion that Jesus had been a mentally disturbed person who had nevertheless presented a wholesome and desirable view of society...  
”

like to “accept Jesus Christ as your leader” or not. I said sure. That's just what you did unless you were an exceptionally moral and/or religious teenager.

But all of this may be changing. The Church of Iceland is taking a lot of heat these days and resignations

from the church are a common occurrence. In the nineties, nearly 90% of new-borns were baptised. Between 2002 and 2006, the percentage of new-borns baptised dropped to 78%, and between 2007 and 2011, the percentage dropped again to 69%. A decade from now, when those born in 2009 are ready for confirmation, the numbers will probably be considerably lower if the trend continues. These kids are missing out on some serious dough—and isn't adulthood all about cash?

## IT'S THE MONEY—OR IS IT?

If you're not a believer and don't want to falsely claim to be one, but you'd still like to mark your entry into adulthood in a more elegant manner than with a broken voice, low self esteem, overly elongated limbs and acne, Siðmennt is here to help. The Ethical Humanist Association of Iceland, Siðmennt, has been organising secular confirmation programmes since 1988. They are expecting 232 teenagers this year.

Views on 'civil confirmation,' as Siðmennt calls it, are divided. “Why be confirmed if you're not a Christian? Some people may do it for money or for the presents. A lot of kids that I know from school are. I think that's very strange. I think they're being sort of selfish,” my thirteen-year-old nephew Hlynur Einarsson (confirmed on March 23) tells me. “I believe in Christ. I'm a Christian and I believe in God. I want to be confirmed. Going through all of this is a lot of fun.”

Did Hlynur always believe in God? “I think I've always been a believer. But since I went to Vatnaskógur [a popular Christian summer camp an hour outside of Reykjavík] my faith grew stronger and I was more interested. So I decided to sign up.”

## NOT SO RELIGIOUS

Although most of Hlynur's friends are going to be confirmed, the kids don't talk much about the content or message of Christianity among themselves; they are preoccupied with gifts, he says. “Confirmation presents are naturally much more expensive than, say, Christmas gifts.” Hlynur's own Bible verse (each confirmer recites a verse) from the Proverbs, echoes his sentiments: “A good name is to be chosen rather than great riches, and favour is better than silver or gold.”

Hlynur is looking sharp on his confirmation day: Bow-tie, cardigan, white dress shirt, jeans and a pair of Chuck Taylors. I definitely did not look this cool. “The ceremony was much more relaxed than when you were confirmed,” my mother tells me, “not so overly religious.”

At the end of the day it's clear that Hlynur is more of an adult than ever before. Not only may he receive the Eucharist for the first time in his life, but he also has money.

— Continued —

belled as containing both lamb and beef, which is pretty embarrassing. More on the quasi-disturbing side of the equation, however, is that testing of ground beef coming from Sláturfélagi Suðurlands (SS), Iceland's largest slaughterhouse, found more than just the typically eaten type of bovine in the mix. The chuck included a wide array of cows, including bull, adolescent cows, young cows, etc. Beef that is consumed as food is meant to be the meat of adult cows. SS looks to just be throwing anything it can in the grinder.

Those party animals in the Independence Party voted at their annual congress to lower the drinking age in the country from 20 to 18. Polls taken early in March showed that this wasn't particularly popular amongst the general public, however, as 56% claimed to be “very or fairly opposed” to the idea, maybe because of all the destruction and vomit that one little Beer Day causes.

That lousy Smarch weather was causing a stir on the 6th, when Reykjavík was pounded by a snowstorm that raged on through the day, bringing buses to a halt and prompting the police to issue warnings for people to just stay at home and read a book. As the day went on a secondary warning was issued to SUV drivers that they should also stay at home because big wheels do not a superhero make. “[Your vehicle] doesn't change anything. You still cannot run over the other cars,” said Víðir Reynisson, head of Civil Protection Iceland.



All around fun guy and MP for The Movement Pór Saari called for another vote of no confidence against the coalition government. It failed.

On to the truly enraging news that came out in March, it was revealed that in 2008 the governor of the Central Bank of Iceland, Davíð Oddsson, and then Prime Minister, Geir Haarde, were aware of the dire situation that Kaupbingi bank was in but they still lent the bank 500 million Euro without sufficient collateral on October 6, 2008. The bank failed on October 9, 2008.

But hey, Sigur Rós released a video for the truly amazing new song “Brennisteinn” this month. You should look that up on the inter-

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# How The Academy Award Underwent A Sex Change

By Sigurður Kjartan Kristinsson



It's a beautiful night in February and the multi-coloured freak-of-a-concert hall that is Harpa blinks its fancy lights enthusiastically. Tonight it plays host to yet another extravagant gala. It's the time of year when the Icelandic Film & TV Academy hands out these small shiny statues to those it believes delivered the best work on the silver screen the preceding year. In this most flamboyant of flamboyant businesses, people dress up, as you can imagine, but the crowd that's just filled the lobby is far from the norm. It appears to be a group of '20s prohibitionist-era hoodlums, but it's actually a gathering of women wearing suits and phony moustaches. And those women are making a point.

## EDDAN WENT EDDINN

In Icelandic, The Academy Award bears the name 'Edda,' a common female's name, which means 'grandmother.' It is the name that one of Iceland's dearest poets, Snorri Sturluson, chose for his depiction of the creation of the world in his literary magnum opus 'Snorra-Edda.' However motherly and female that shiny statue's moniker is, it won't end up in the hands of many women later that night. Never before has a single year in the film history of Iceland resulted in as few nominations of female artists, but The Academy isn't being misogynistic; there simply aren't many women to nominate. Our moustached ladies are protesting this patriarchal system error by demonstrating that the old and beautiful name Edda isn't suitable anymore, that the androcentric celebration should really be called the boyish nickname, 'Eddi.'

## SO WHERE DID IT ALL GO WRONG?

Iceland's film industry has been booming in the last few years. Following the establishment of a 20% rebate in 1999 on all production costs for films shot on location in Iceland, the annual number of foreign motion pictures produced on Icelandic soil has slowly exceeded the Icelandic ones. More and more, local production is becoming Robin of the Gotham-scene, the goofy sidekick.

“

It seems, however, that the entire payoff has ended up in a few hairy and rugged male paws

”

This evolution has been mostly positive. Although it's becoming more difficult for local producers to lure talent with their micro budgets compared to Hollywood cash, local film crews are getting more steady work, which is also making the business a more feasible option to break into. The increased interest in film also presumably led the government, for

example, to increase its contribution to the Icelandic Film Centre this year.

It seems, however, that the entire payoff has ended up in a few hairy and rugged male paws. In 2012, three feature films were produced, all three directed and written by a man about issues like crime, seaman-ship and sci-fi. And Icelandic films score no better than Hollywood films on the Bechdel test (does the film have two female characters with names, do they talk, do they talk about something other than men). So why aren't any stories being told by women or from a woman's point of view?

## A SYSTEMIC PROBLEM

"It's beneficial for everybody to have diversity. We have to hear women's stories as well as men's stories, which are written and directed by women," says Hrönn Kristinsdóttir, a leading feature film producer in Iceland and the co-owner of the prestigious production company Ljósband Filmworks. "There's not a lack of women in the industry really, but many of them have chosen a more womanly direction, i.e. in the hair and makeup departments rather than directing or writing."

Hrönn is convinced that it's not for lack of want, but recognises that the problem is deeply ingrained in society and it starts early in childhood. "The number one problem is that there is this hiatus, a certain discontinuity that girls go through in their adolescence, and it is growing," Hrönn explains. "Girls tend to stop writing and creating and focus more on their appearance, which isn't healthy when you're maturing as a person." Nowadays this period takes up a whole decade, she says. "They disappear at age 11 and come back when

they're 20." This leads them to fall far behind boys who she says too go through a similar phase, but it's much shorter and less apparent.

"Ideally we wouldn't need to enforce measures like gender quotas," Hrönn says, but realises that making the problem right can take some time. "We need to incorporate more creative programmes into our school system with motivating workshops for young girls. Give them cameras to experiment with and be inspired. She also believes that it should be mandatory for students to take a course in film analysis with gender motives in mind. It is a common misunderstanding that women only make movies about women, she notes. "Let's take Lone Scherfig, one of Denmark's most successful directors, for example. She writes mostly about young men, but from a woman's perspective."

## THE MOUSTACHE-PACK

One of the 17 women who showed up wearing moustaches, actress and a film-editor Steffi Thors, explains that the group came up with the idea when this year's nominations were announced. "We saw the absurdly small proportion of the nominations going to women and wanted to show people that we were just as prominent members of the film family, although our work is often behind the scenes."

It's often women who play the biggest roles in movies: they usually produce the films, let the boys shoot it and then take over in the post-production and edit the final product. "One of the reasons women tend to lurk in the shadows is the fear of making mistakes," Steffi says, noting that she sees parallels in the jazz world too. "Interestingly, there's only a handful of girls in the jazz scene in Iceland where you have to improvise and be a little spontaneous, so I think it's the same fear of making mistakes." And Steffi thinks that the solution lies exactly there: "I think we need to let go, just write a script and dare to make mistakes—we just have to jazz it up!"

This fierce group of vigilantes undoubtedly 'jazzed' up the Edda that night, and hopefully more than that. "People saw that we were having fun," Steffi says, "and it'll hopefully inspire more girls to join our ranks in the film industry."

## FACTS

- 17 out of 133 Icelandic feature films directed by women
- 16 Women vs. 43 Men nominated for an Edda in 2013
- 6 Women vs. 11 Men awarded an Edda in 2013 (best actress, best supporting actress, best wardrobe, best editing, best make up, honorary award)

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			10:00	10:00	10:00			
13:00	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	17:00	17:00	17:00*	
			20:30**	20:30				

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





# Grapevine Election Guide



# 2013



## We Sent The Parties An Email That Looked More Or Less Like This:

Dear political party running in the Alþingi elections this April,

The Reykjavík Grapevine is making an "Election Guide" for the benefit of all of our English readers. We plan to profile each and every party and to that end we would like to ask a representative of your party to answer the following questions. We would also like to give you the opportunity to submit a 500-600 word opinion piece.

Please submit answers to these questions (and an op if you choose to do so) one week from today:

- Briefly describe your party's general agenda in one sentence.
- Tell us about your party. What's it all about? Does it have a history? Are you proud of that history?
- Is there a foreign sister party that you identify with?
- What do you consider the most important issue facing Iceland today? How about the most important issue to consider in this election?
- What do you admire about the current coalition government and what it accomplished in the last four years? What do you dislike? What will you do better?
- Was the financial crisis in 2008 and the problems Iceland now faces in some way caused by government policy and action or the lack thereof? Is your party in some way responsible for this? Why or why not?
- Specifically, how do you plan to bring Iceland back to economic prosperity?
- Do you want to weaken, strengthen or keep unchanged the regulation of the financial industry and other business activity in Iceland?
- Do you plan to increase or decrease the total tax burden in Iceland?
- Do you believe in the Icelandic króna? Or will you work to adopt an alternative currency? If so, which one?
- Do you support the newly passed law removing an expiration date from Iceland's capital controls? Will your party work to lift these controls? Does it have a timeframe in mind?
- Do you believe that the collapse was more than an economic one? If so, what else failed in 2008 and does it still need fixing?
- How can the government best serve Icelandic homes?
- What is your stance on Iceland's application to the European Union? Do you ultimately think Icelanders' interests would be best served by being part of this coalition?
- What is your stance on the new constitution that was called for in the wake of Iceland's financial crisis? Are you for or against pushing the current draft through parliament? Why or why not?
- Will your party do something to protect the land and its resources? Is a more stringent regulative framework needed to ensure conservation of the environment?
- Is gender inequality an issue in Iceland? If so, what does your plan to do to ensure equality?
- Where do you stand on immigration issues?
- Does your party harbour any ideas about the role of religion in governance?
- Are there any parties that your party will not work with in a coalition government? Why?

Their answers amounted to 20,000 plus words! There was no way that we could squeeze them all into this issue. Go to [www.grapevine.is](http://www.grapevine.is) to read their answers in full.



## Polite-ics Reinventing the art of the possible



**Róbert Marshall** is an MP running with Bright Future in the Reykjavík South district.

The Battle of Wits scene in the classic film 'The Princess Bride' ends with the arrogant Vizzini dying from iodine poisoning in the midst of a laughing fit. It is a must Google.\* Vizzini is so sure of his mental superiority that he regards Plato, Aristotle and Socrates as morons and in the end, after a series of extremely bad arguments, this illusion is the death of him. Regrettably, many in the profession of politics share this general outlook. The certainty of being absolutely on the right side of the truth can be found within the old parties of Iceland established at the beginning of the last century. In fact it can be found in all parties everywhere and is not a specific Icelandic political problem. It is in plain view in American politics and we are witnessing the same in many European countries. This outlook is at the root of most of the problems the political system is facing today. Why? Because it leads to the dangerous

conclusion that anything is justifiable because you are right. It leads to zero tolerance for opposing views, to no respect for different approaches. It leads to the loss of civility and it has led to genocide. Civility, and the lack thereof, also results in the general public's disillusionment with politics, distrust of political parties and of the political system. In a crisis, the lack of civility becomes even more visible and more costly and can spell the economic death of countries. This needs to be solved. But how? Some argue that all politicians need to be replaced. We have to vote for new people. The last four years in Iceland have all but killed that argument. We had 27 new parliamentarians and nothing changed. New politicians and new parties change nothing if they behave like the old ones. Even Hreyfingin ("The Movement") became a classic political party within a few months, with the spirit of

the before-mentioned Vizzini very much alive. Enter Bright Future, the party I'm running for! We have defined this problem to be at the core of Icelandic politics today and put together a declaration on how this should be solved. To put it simply, we want to create a relaxed venue for political participation. It should be fun and non-threatening and the objective is service. We do not look at politics as a battlefield. We do not like to use the fight-lingo associated with political speak: things are beginning to heat up; this is going to be a hard battle, etc. Politics is not the art of war. It is the art of the possible. We are merely exchanging ideas on our society. Thus, we do not answer with a sneer and we do not assume motives for other parties. Instead we listen and try to find the best solution. What Besti flokkurinn ("The Best Party") did in Reykjavík we want to do in Alþingi. It is a nonsense approach based on creating a friendly atmosphere where the best decisions can be reached together. The Best Party has shown this to be possible. We can change

the way politics are done and Bright Future is the next step. So does that mean that Bright Future has no vision or ideology? No. We have differences with other parties and very strong views i.e. on the protection of the environment, economic stability and European cooperation; being polite does not mean that we have no opinion and will not disagree. And it does not mean there will not be room for a gentle joke or humorous comments. The fundamental difference is that we believe that we can disagree and still respect each other's views. A smiley face in your Facebook comments changes the way others perceive them and the same goes with political dialogue. Answer an accusation with a smiley face and it can change the way we make political decisions. Respect is key. Remember the lesson of Vizzini and his famous last words: "Never go in against a Sicilian when death is on the line! Ahahahaha, ahahahaha, ahahaha"—thud. \*All characters appearing in this piece are fictitious. Any resemblance to real persons, living or dead, is purely coincidental!

## Facts



- 1 COUNTRY. Djók.
- 6 Constituencies
- 63 Parliamentary Seats
- 15 possible electoral parties (We think!)
- Number of professed supporters in Reykjavík if all parties get sufficient support: **9,900**, **8.4%** of the population
- Population in Reykjavík: **118,326**
- Number of professed supporters in Iceland if all parties get sufficient support in all constituencies: **28,350**, **8.9 %** of the population
- Population in Iceland: **320,160**

## Parties In Parliament, 1999–Present

<b>1999</b>
Independence Party – 26
The Liberal Party – 2
The Social Democratic Alliance – 17
The Left-Green Movement – 6
The Progressive Party – 12
<b>2003</b>
Independence Party – 22
The Liberal Party – 4
The Social Democratic Alliance – 20
The Left-Green Movement – 5
The Progressive Party – 12
<b>2007</b>
Independence Party – 25
The Liberal Party – 4
The Social Democratic Alliance – 18
The Left-Green Movement – 9
The Progressive Party – 7
<b>2009</b>
Independence Party – 16
The Social Democratic Alliance – 19
The Left-Green Movement – 11
The Progressive Party – 9

## I live In Iceland. Can I vote?

Aside from some outlying exceptions, the requirements to vote are pretty straightforward. If you meet ALL of the following few requirements you are eligible to have a voice in the upcoming parliamentary election on April 27.

- You are an Icelandic citizen, or a Danish national who lived in Iceland between March 6, 1936 and '46 (Why? Because it says so in law nr. 85/1946).
- You are 18-years-old by Election Day.
- You are a legally registered resident listed in the National Registry at least three weeks prior to Election Day. If you're not registered, you can take care of that through the National Registry's website.

OKAY, BINGO. NOW WHAT?

- Go to [www.island.is/um-island-is/kjorskra/](http://www.island.is/um-island-is/kjorskra/).
- Type in your kennitala (ID number) and note your voting location, which is determined by your legal address.
- Show up and do it.

## ARE YOU AN ABSENTEE VOTER?

You can still vote, you know. If you are absentee voting from outside of Iceland, you will need to hunt down the nearest Icelandic embassy or consulate to cast your vote. If you are an absentee voting in Iceland however (say, if you plan on undergoing surgery or being at sea or something during elections proper), you need to pay a visit to your closest Sýslumaður office. Detailed instructions on this and any other aspect of the voting process may be found at [www.kosning.is](http://www.kosning.is).

## How To Get Elected, A Five-Step Guide

### STEP 1

If you're not an Icelandic citizen, become one. If you are an Icelandic citizen, stay one. Also, make sure you're "in possession of full civil rights"—or in plain language: you haven't been convicted of a felony. If you meet these requirements, you're eligible to take part in the parliamentary election and thus ready for the next step. Oh wait, if you're a Supreme Court judge your game is over.

### STEP 2

If you are a member of a political party, skip to step number three. Now let's assume you're not interested in any of the existing political parties. You're going to have to make one. Create a nice and catchy name, draft a nifty manifesto and apply with the Ministry of Interior for a party-letter. Hopefully you won't get a sucky letter like M.

### STEP 3

Now that you have a party, you need to round up some candidates. There are six constituencies in Iceland and for each constituency you plan on campaigning in, you need to turn in a list with twice as many candidates as there are parliament seats. No more, no less. The parliamentary seats range from 8–13, and every candidate has to have a legal residency in the relevant constituency. So it can be tricky. Hopefully you have a lot of friends.

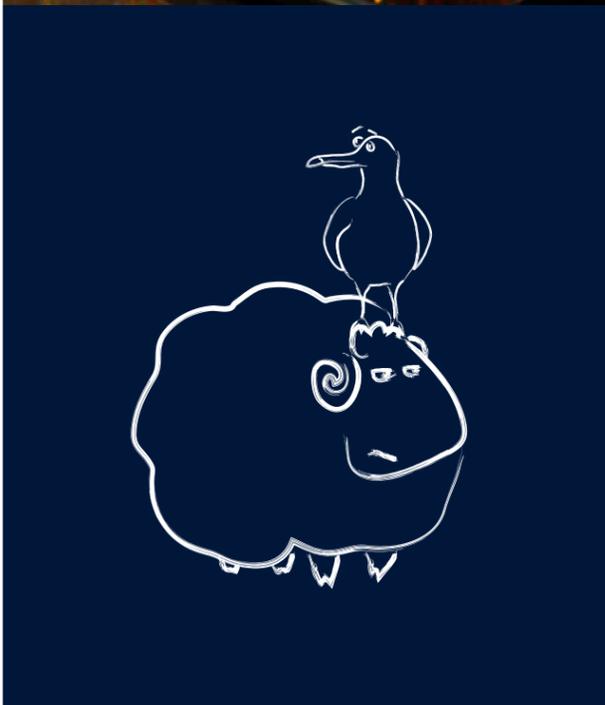
### STEP 4

You thought that was hard? It's time to get supporters. You need supporters in every constituency that you're campaigning in, and their number has to be at least equal to 30 times the number of parliamentary seats and at most 40 times that number. So, to get enough supporters for the two constituencies in Reykjavík alone, you need 660 supporters. As soon as you have enough support, turn in your list to the Ministry of the Interior at least 15 days before the election. If you're planning to create a party this time, you've got until April 12.

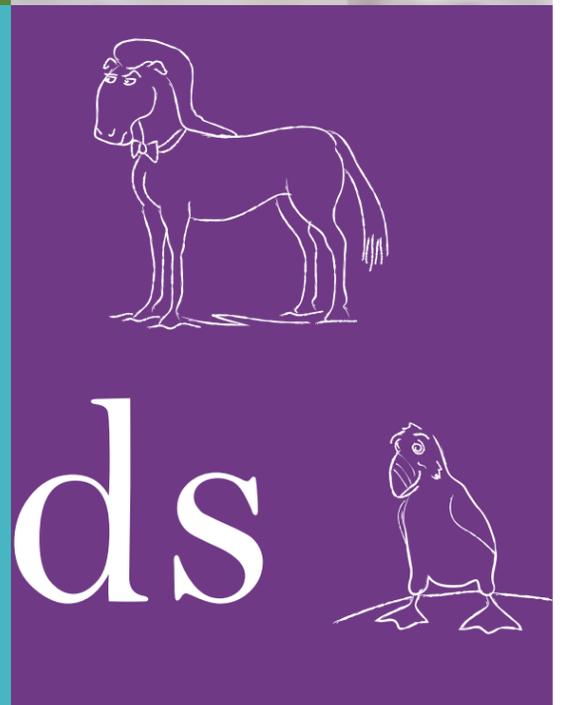
### STEP 5

This is the last step, and some would say the most important one: exploit the media, make ridiculous campaign pledges, and lobby as hard as you can. If you win the hearts of the masses, meaning you get at least 5% of the vote, you can finally sit your ass down in that parliamentary seat come fall.

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Vinstri Hreyfingin - Grænt Framboð (xV) ("The Left Green Movement")

Party Chair: Katrín Jakobsdóttir
EU: Anti
Currency: Pro-Króna, but open to other ideas
Website: www.vg.is

Who they say they are in one sentence:

Our movement is to the left and green—we emphasize equality and social justice, the environment, pacifism and women's liberation. So the scale from left to right is not sufficient.
2. Our movement was founded in 1999 and was the first political force in Iceland to put environmental issues at the core of its agenda.
12. Yes, it was also a collapse of the ideology that life should revolve around making money.
15. We support the draft. It is based on an extensive and open dialogue and the basis of it has already been approved by the people in an advisory referendum.
17. Gender equality will be a problem until it has been eliminated, and therefore remains at the top of our agenda.



Dögun (xT) ("Dawn")

Party Chair: None
EU: Pro negotiations, but the people should decide
Currency: The people should decide
Website: www.xdogun.is

Who they say they are in one sentence: Dögun fights for justice, fairness and democracy, as mandated in our core policy statement.

3. Not per se, we harbour no formal connections. Participants in "the Pots and Pans Revolution" identify with many movements, such as the global 99% movement.
7. We must take complex measures that increase national production and secure that prosperity benefits all, not a chosen few.
14. The nation should be the decider. Dögun does not directly answer the question with a yes or a no.
15. Dögun is strongly behind the constitutional draft of the Constitutional Assembly and demands that Alþingi enact it.
20. Before the coming elections, Dögun will state officially with whom it is ready to work.



Flokkur heimilanna (xI) ("The Household's Party")

Party Chair: Pétur Gunnlaugsson
EU: Up to the people when the time comes
Currency: Anti-Króna
Website: www.flokkurheimilanna.is

Who they say they are in one sentence:

The Household's Party, X-I, will tackle the most pressing economic issue at hand: the mutated consumer- and home loans that the general public in Iceland was left with as a result of the financial crash of 2008.
3. We believe that this party is unique in the sense that nowhere in the world are debtors forced to accept mutated mortgages and consumer loans due to the inflation index.
8. We need to revoke the banks' license to print money out of thin air.
9. Taxes must be lowered across the board on businesses and individuals.
16. While protecting nature and land is very important it is also important to utilise one's resources.
20. The Household's Party will work with any party that shares our goal to free the citizens of this country from the debt slavery in which they have been placed.



Was the financial crisis in 2008 and the problems Iceland now faces in some way caused by government policy and action or the lack thereof? Is your party in some way responsible for this? Why or why not?



I must admit that I, personally, am somewhat responsible for the crisis. Long before it hit us, I knew as a socialist that capitalism was unsustainable and that it has a crisis built into it.

Vice Chair Vésteinn Valgarðsson, The People's Front of Iceland

There were many reasons for the crisis, one of them being government policy, no doubt. Our party did not exist at the time. It would have been better had we existed then!

Bright Future

Our party and affiliated parties were founded after the crisis and in response to it, so we are not responsible aside from our part in the Icelandic nation's general apathy prior to the crisis. The blame for the crisis has been, in various reports, deemed to be mostly that of the bank moguls and the governments that led the country in the years prior.

Dawn

"The Fourparty" is responsible for the crash and its aftermath. Lack of banking regulations and the lack of action when it came to helping out the general public while select corporations and individuals in society were bailed out, these parties' debts being written off while the general public is left with mutated loans.

The Household's Party

As the current Prime Minister Jóhanna Sigurðardóttir said after Icesave verdict was delivered, now is not the time to look for someone to blame. However, deregulation in the years preceding the crash went a step too far and it would have been sensible to enact laws and regulation prohibiting the banks from overextending their lending.

The Progressive Party

First, the Right Green People's Party was certainly not responsible and was not even established at the time. Secondly, the crash of 2008 can mostly be blamed on the banks and their reckless and questionable practices. Thirdly, the government was also to blame for not having been active in their regulatory, oversight and supervisory duties.

The Right Green People's Party

The financial crisis was created by the neo liberal financial system that controls the world here and in all other countries on this planet. It is the reason for the big crash here in Iceland. The Humanist Party has nothing to do with this and we have warned about this process and its inevitable consequences for nearly 30 years.

The Humanist Party

Yes, the government was in large part to blame. Specifically, the root source of the crash was the incestuous relationship between the established political parties and bankers, culminating first in the corrupt, Russian-style privatisation of the banks in 1998–2003 and then in the banks' collapse like a house of cards in 2008.

The Iceland Democratic Party

We have no reason to refute the results of the financial meltdown research committee. Their report gave a detailed story about a severe lack of transparency and democratic oversight, and collusion between banks and the government. The Icelandic Pirate Party did not exist then, and none of our members were in power during the crash.

The Pirate Party

The Report of the Special Investigation Commission states that decisions taken by Icelandic governments at the beginning of the 21st Century, not least in the years 2003–2006, set the stage for the collapse of the Icelandic banking system in 2008. The SDA bears full political responsibility for decisions and mistakes made since 2007, the year we took seat at the government table.

The Social Democratic Alliance

The financial crisis of 2008 was an international meltdown of the banking sector. There isn't any government policy that could have averted the meltdown. It's easy to look back and try to point to things that could have been done differently. Almost all of the party's leaders in power at the time have left politics and our focus is now to rebuild for the future.

The Independence Party

The financial crisis was a direct result of government policy, the same neoliberal policy as Reagan and Thatcher implemented in the US and UK in the '80s. The Left-Green Movement is the only political party that always warned and fought against this policy, a policy which eventually led to the crash in 2008.

The Left Green Movement



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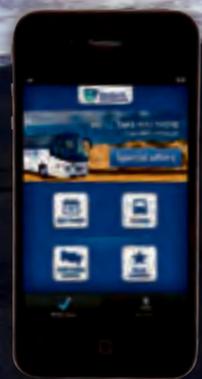


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Sjálfstæðisflokkurinn (xD) ("The Independence Party" (IP))

Party Chair: Bjarni Benediktsson
EU: Anti
Currency: Pro-Króna
Website: www.xd.is



Píratarpartyið (xP) ("The Pirate Party")

Party Chair: None
EU: No stance
Currency: Any
Website: www.piratar.is



Lýðræðisvaktin (xL) ("The Iceland Democratic Party" (IDP))

Party Chair: Þorvaldur Gylfason
EU: Pro-finishing the negotiations
Currency: Let the people decide
Website: www.xlvaktin.is

Who they say they are in one sentence:

The Independence Party (IP) believes in the freedom of the individual and equal opportunity for all in the pursuit of liberty and progress in society.

2. The IP has a long history of which its members are very proud. The party was founded on May 25, 1929 through the merger of the Conservative Party and the Liberal Party. It is the largest political movement in Iceland. The party was a strong force in the fight for independence, which Iceland gained in 1944, and a strong force in transforming the country from being one of the poorest in Europe to one of most prosperous.

12. The collapse was first and foremost an international banking collapse. Hundreds of banks all over the world collapsed from 2008 and into 2010. The unique situation of Iceland was the fact that all of our banks were overexposed and fragile. We must ensure that private risk will never again be covered by public funds.

15. The Constitution is a living document and there are parts that can be improved, but the IP does not support a revolution of the constitution.

17. Gender equality is not a big problem in Iceland, relative to most countries in the world. Iceland is in fact one of the best countries in the world to be a woman, according to international surveys.

19. Religion plays no role in governance. The Independence Party emphasizes the importance of freedom of religion.

Who they say they are in one sentence:

The Pirate Party is the political movement of the Internet. We are where the Internet and society comes together. We bring about new methods of solving problems, methods designed to solve problems in a fast paced and changing world. Our primary concerns are freedom of speech, civil rights, direct democracy and open access to data.

2. The Pirate Party is an international movement originating in Sweden in 2006. Currently it has over 250 elected representatives in Europe, including the European Parliament members Amelia Andersdotter and Christian Engström. There are active parties in roughly 60 countries. The movement was created to deal with issues affecting the Internet, such as censorship, surveillance, and copyright reform, but because the Internet is affecting everyone's lives, the Pirate Party has since expanded to cover more general issues as well.

10. The Pirate Party is against monopolies, even on the production and circulation of currencies. The state can choose which currencies it accepts taxes in—legal tender—but should not limit which currencies are in circulation. There is a lot of research that suggests that we can strengthen the króna by allowing it to exist in an ecosystem of specialised alternative currencies. Joining the Euro is not a magical solution: it can solve certain problems and should be considered, but it has its own problems too.

13. Bringing back affordable housing for Icelanders may be best way to serve households. Part of the solution may lie with a return to the "union housing blocks" (félagsíbúðir) that existed before privatisation of the loan markets.

Iceland being a cold place, everyone should have a roof over their head and not have to worry about lacking one. Everybody needs to have good options for having a home to live.

15. The Icelandic Pirate Party would like to see the new constitution adopted. It comes directly from the people and is a shining example of direct democracy in action. The draft as it stands today is ready for adoption and should be passed.

Who they say they are in one sentence:

We, the people of Iceland, want to create a just society where everyone has a seat at the same table.

10. The IDP does not take a position, religious or otherwise, on the króna, or on EU membership for that matter. The IDP wants to finish the on-going accession negotiations with the EU and then put the agreement to a binding national referendum as required by the new constitution if and when it comes into force. Walking away from the negotiations mid-stream, as advocated by the Independence Party, is inadvisable, and would be unfair because it would violate the government's promise to hold a referendum on the agreement with the EU. In the referendum, the people will decide whether to stick to the króna, dependent as it is on strict currency controls that are incompatible with Iceland's obligations as a member of the European Economic Area (EES) except as a temporary emergency measure, or adopt the euro instead as part of Iceland's joining the EU. Both options entail significant costs and risks. The people will decide. If the promised referendum is held, as it must be, IDP members will be seen and heard on both sides of the debate. A third currency option appears far-fetched, but, should such a proposal be put on the table, it would have to be voted on in a referendum according to the new constitution. Direct democracy through more frequent use of national referenda relieves political parties of the need to take a stand on such issues, freeing them to concentrate on other matters.

15. The IDP was formed primarily to promote the new constitution and to rise against those Independent Party forces that have declared that, if they fail to do so in the current parliament, they will try to thwart the popular will in next parliament by voting down the constitutional bill that 67% of the electorate said they want in the national referendum held in 2012. The constitutional bill is better than the provisional constitution from 1944 which harks back to 1849, and offers many important provisions intended to move Iceland forward, including provisions securing one person, one vote; public ownership of natural resources; freedom of information, including protection of whistle-blowers; environmental protection; appointment of competent persons to public office; and direct democracy, to name but a few. The constitutional bill is, in essence, the long written version of the IDP platform.



What do you admire about the current coalition government and what it accomplished in the last four years? What do you dislike? What will you do better?

For a bourgeois government, I guess it has done many things alright, especially things that hardly cost the elite a penny. However, it is still a bourgeois government and has defended basic interests of the bourgeoisie without any consideration to the greater interest of society. The mixture of Blairite social democracy and opportunistic pseudo-left-green coalition has not only practiced capitalistic economics, it has done so under a leftist veil. Its submission to the International Monetary Fund speaks volumes thereof, as does the bailing-out of financial institutions, the cuts in health and welfare, the application to join the EU and the continued policy of heavy industry. I admit, they've held the conservatives at bay—but what for? To run capitalism better themselves? We would make it our first priority to end negotiations with the EU, tell "advisors" from the IMF to beat it and to start socializing the financial institutions.

The People's Front of Iceland
This government has managed to get us on track again after the crash. That is admirable.

Bright Future
The current left-wing government is no doubt what voters ordered in 2009, and it would only have benefited from bringing on board the MPs of the Citizens' Movement. This government started off well enough with a monumental task before it, but things have turned sour in the latter half of its term. The government's emphasis on ensuring that crude measures after the economic crash would not fall hardest on the poor, the sick and families is admirable, but it has failed miserably in securing the new constitution, reshuffling the fishing quota system and enforcing measures to lower household debts. Dögun will do better, stressing that all solutions be based on interests of common people, rather than those of banks and wealthy individuals.

Dawn
The current coalition government formed by the Social Democratic Alliance and Left Green Movement have passed measures encouraging the unemployed to go to school. The next step is to motivate the creation of new private sector jobs. The Progressive Party intends to take the much-needed next step to encourage that as well as removing the laws about indexation.

The Progressive Party
There is basically nothing to admire, although the government gloats over some imagined success. We, in short, intend to do very much better on all fronts.

The Right Green People's Party
We are not very happy with the work done by the current coalition government. We dislike that they worked with the IMF to more or less re-establish the same order of things that brought us the big crash in the first place. We would do better if we come to power by creating a new money system in the service of all. And we would, given general support of the people, stop the slavery of interest that robs us of our time and the quality of life that we could potentially have if we no longer had to pay those gigantic donations to the rich. Also, we would slow economic growth to the extent that we could live on one Earth, not needing five earths, and that we can deliver the Earth to our future generations in at least the same condition as we received it.

The Humanist Party
Well, we admire the fact that anyone is actually considering voting for these people again according to the opinion polls. What do we dislike? Their total and complete incompetence tackling

the economy. What will we do better? We will raise the economy, we will actually do what we say we will do. There will be no discount on our policies to put out the financial fires burning in people's homes.

The current coalition government formed by the Social Democratic Alliance and Left Green Movement have passed measures encouraging the unemployed to go to school. The next step is to motivate the creation of new private sector jobs. The Progressive Party intends to take the much-needed next step to encourage that as well as removing the laws about indexation.

The Household's Party
I admire the government's ability to keep the country's worst political offenders out of office for four years in a row as well as, in part, its general handling of the economic recovery after the crash, in close cooperation with the IMF.

I dislike the government's lack of ambition and expediency. Two examples will suffice. The temporary foreign currency controls that the government declared in 2008 have recently been declared permanent, meaning that they will, with unchanged policies, be in force indefinitely. Further, the government, having just survived a vote of no confidence in parliament, still has proved unable to pass the constitutional bill after spending twenty months debating the bill that it gave the Constitutional Council four months to draft, a bill that the council passed unanimously with 25 votes against zero, no abstentions. Incompetence and corruption impede the parliament. Presumably, this is why the parliament adopted in September 2010 a unanimous resolution promising yet again a new constitution and denouncing Iceland's political culture (no joke!).

The Iceland Democratic Party

The current government has prevailed in the Icesave dispute and attempts to grow and diversify the economy after the crash. The government attempted to keep many in their homes with loan extensions and dismissal of predatory loans. They've done well all things considered, but have often demonstrated strange priorities.

The Pirate Party
Under the leadership of the SDA, we have managed to put a stop to the mounting deficit in the State Treasury so that it is now run with a surplus. At the same time, we have been able to distribute the heavy burdens resulting from a drastic reduction in national income to spare those who are least well off as much as possible. The SDA course out of the recession is one of value creation and development. We are proud of our achievements, but we also recognise that there is still much work to be done.

The Social Democratic Alliance
There is nothing to admire about the current coalition government. The last four years have been years of lost opportunities and unnecessary conflict. The IP's goal is to bring stability and get the wheels of industry moving again. The welfare of the people is based on a sound and stable economy.

The Independence Party
Our greatest achievement has been to regain Iceland's economic sovereignty without sacrificing our welfare system and our natural resources. Even though we have succeeded in this it wasn't easy and the people of Iceland have shown great resilience over the past few years.

The Left Green Movement

# For A New Education System



Arnaldur Sigurðarson is a member of The Pirate Party.



Education as we know it is pretty similar in westernized countries. You have pre-school or kindergarten for the youngest children, primary school, high school/college and finally university. All these stages of education follow a similar structure with a similar hierarchy of subjects with mother tongue, math and science at the top, the humanities in the middle and the arts at the very bottom. This model of education dates back to the industrial revolution because there was an increasing demand for labourers with the basic skills that the education institutions of the time provided.

This model is however severely out-dated in the world of the internet. The world is changing faster and new technology is being developed faster. Technological change will soon make jobs obsolete faster than they are created if that devel-

opment hasn't started already. It sure seems to be here already considering the fact that a lot of young people today who have completed a university education are having trouble finding a job in their field. Modern education strip mines our minds for particular commodities because of preconceived out-dated notions of what intelligence is. There is a lack on emphasis on the arts, creative thinking and truly utilizing the potential flexibility that the internet has to offer in the area of education.

The dropout rate in Icelandic schools is a lot higher than in the other Nordic countries. An issue that has not been discussed enough is the fact that the dropout rate for boys is significantly higher than for girls according to an OECD report published in 2011. This is especially true of students who have learning disabilities such as

dyslexia or ADD/ADHD who often feel frustrated with the lack of options and do not feel engaged in what they are doing.

I along with several of my fellow Pirate nominees for the upcoming parliamentary elections are planning to introduce an education platform that will hopefully end up as a parliamentary resolution that will introduce a set of policies that would greatly reduce the dropout rate and increase students' interest in their own education. We are looking at several other policies that have already been applied with great success in other European countries.

Putting a greater emphasis on creativity in schools both in the arts and in more formal subjects will greatly increase students' ability to empower the multitude of different skills they possess. Teaching computer programming and code starting in primary school will prepare students for a future that is highly dependent on the internet and requires a lot more programmers. Half of the world's

population will be connected to the internet within the next four years and the internet economy is expected to double in that time.

Philosophy and gender studies should also be taught in primary school in order to improve critical thinking and give children a greater understanding of equality.

Introducing a more personalised form of education that suits each individual student will give students a greater ability to pursue their various talents. Online forms of education such as Coursera and Khan Academy have already been used as part of the curriculum in schools in other countries. It is only a matter of time before online forms of education start competing with the traditional forms. We need to speed up that process, because right now, we're wasting a lot of valuable talent to an education system designed for the industrial revolution and we need an education that is designed for the future.



## Hægri grænir, flokkur fólksins (xG) ("The Right Green People's Party")

**Party Chair:** Guðmundur Franklín Jónsson  
**EU:** Anti  
**Currency:** Pro- Ríkisdalur  
**Website:** www.afram-island.is

### Who they say they are in one sentence:

XG is a conservative, green, people's party. We are libertarians that like to see smaller government, lower taxes, free trade and peaceful international relations. One of our main goals is to adopt similar measures to the American TARP to reduce index-linked housing loans to that which they were on November 1, 2007, when the EU MiFID directive became Icelandic law and refinanced them through a Quantitative-easing programme. We also wish to establish a new Icelandic currency, the Ríkisdalur, and peg it to the US Dollar to achieve currency stability, among many other benefits. We want to generally reduce government and government spending and make all government more open and accountable. We will instate a flat 20% tax rate to create conditions for increased investment and get the economy moving again.

3. Not really, but we are close to Ron Paul's ideological agenda. It is very difficult to compare politics in the different countries. But progressive conservative parties might make for apt comparisons.

13. The short answer is: by staying away from them. A longer answer is: by creating the general conditions that have already been briefly described. The party supports the welfare state, although it wants to make it more effective, remove unjust income related reduction of benefits to the elderly and the handicapped and to fix many of its expensive and bureaucratic practices. Equality of opportunity and benefits for all are the keys.

10. By unilaterally adopting a foreign currency the country will have to buy that currency with other foreign currency we do not possess, thus losing monetary independence and control over to the country owning that currency in the process. The party opposes membership to the EU and the adoption of the Euro, and among other things the loss thereby of independence and the control of money and monetary policy. The country needs more fiscal stability. That needs to be addressed, the problem of destabilization of large amounts of offshore Icelandic króna in the economy and the huge problem of vulture funds' strangling ownership of the banks as well. The solution to all of this is, as briefly described in answer no. 1 above, to establish a new currency, named after the old Icelandic currency "Ríkisdalur." By pegging the new Ríkisdalur to the US Dollar, currency stabilisation will be achieved, while all monetary control and policy will stay within the country. By various other means, too long to describe here, this will also enable solutions to the other problems.



## Húmanistaflokkurinn (xH) ("The Humanist Party" (HP))

**Party Chair:** Júlíus Valdimarsson  
**EU:** Anti  
**Currency:** Pro-Króna  
**Website:** www.internationalhumanistparty.org

### Who they say they are in one sentence:

The party's agenda is to prioritise the human being before money and to create an economy that is in the service of people and their needs rather than the other way around.

4. The most pressing, short-term issue is the needs of the thousands of Icelanders who now live in agony because of the financial crash and its consequences. Long term it's a new monetary system in which the Central Bank is the only institution allowed to produce money and it does so according to the needs of the economy. We also aim for a banking system without interest.

7. We will change the money system, taking the power to create money from the banks and putting it into our own hands through the Central Bank and begin working on creating interest-free banks. Bringing real democracy into the workplace and rewarding the process of forming co-operatives, for instance by changing all companies the go bankrupt into workers cooperatives. Cooperative enterprises endure economical crises far better than the private ones and they are generally managed more efficiently due to their democratic vote.

8. While the beast is loose you should have it in chains, but it would be better to replace it with a more useful and human-friendly animal.

12. The crash was that of an old mentality which accepts that some human beings are above other human beings and that the interest of individuals are greater than the interests of the whole. It's a culture of letting others take responsibility for our existence rather taking that responsibility into our own hands in a real participatory democracy.

14. We do not think that Iceland should be part of EU, which is in our view a European Union of Banks rather than people.

16. We call for reduction in economic growth. The level of consumption in Iceland is far higher than in all other countries and this has to change. The natural resources should be under control of the state and be used so that the environment can be delivered to the future generations in the same or better conditions.



## Samfylkingin (xS) ("The Social Democratic Alliance" (SDA))

**Party Chair:** Árni Páll Árnason  
**EU:** Pro  
**Currency:** Pro-Euro  
**Website:** www.samfylkingin.is

### Who they say they are in one sentence:

The Social Democratic Alliance (SDA) advocates for economic stability and sustainable growth with equal opportunities for all in an open welfare society.

2. The SDA is a centre-left political party that formed out of an alliance of four left-wing parties in the run up to the parliamentary elections in 1999. The SDA's historical roots are in traditional left-wing politics, the labour unions and the fight for human rights and women's liberation in the past century. The SDA has been in government since 2007.

12. Opinions may vary on this issue, but most agree that the collapse of 2008 was more than an economic one and that it revealed an erosion of civil society and values of thrift and common decency in the financial and business sectors.

7. Homes and businesses in Iceland will in the coming years need, above all, economic stability. We need to stabilise the króna, lift capital controls and make investment in Icelandic firms a feasible option. Iceland should become a member of the EU during the next term. If we achieve that we can improve standard of living and increase jobs and investment in the private sector.

17. Iceland has been ranked at the top of the World Economic Forum Global Gender Gap Report for the last four years. We are a feminist party and many important milestones have been reached in the last four years, but the fight for human rights never ends. We can still do better and we will!



## Framsóknarflokkurinn (xB) ("The Progressive Party")

**Party Chair:** Sigmundur Davíð Gunnlaugsson  
**EU:** Anti  
**Currency:** Pro-Króna  
**Website:** www.framsokn.is

### Who they say they are in one sentence:

Radical-rationalism. This is about being open to radical ideas and being willing to debate them in order to come together for the best solution. Our feeling is that there isn't enough discussion and people are just shouting at each other. We want to be radical about being rational.

4. The Progressive Party considers job creation, the removal of indexation on consumer loans and correction of consumer loans that have grown abnormally (because of the financial collapse and the indexation) to be the main focus both in the election and for the next four years to come.

9. In the last four years there have been about 200 changes to the tax system. The Icelandic economy has to be stable, transparent and trustworthy to create an environment where initiative, hard work and social justice are the primary objective.

For that to be a reality the tax system needs to be relatively simple to approach and competitive. The Progressive Party believes in a tax burden that reflects the standard of healthcare and other public services we'd like to see. But first and foremost there needs to be private and cooperative employment to increase tax revenue.

12. There was a failure of institutions as described in the SIC report and was dealt with in part by a parliamentarian conclusion. That work is on-going.

17. There are still some issues that need to be dealt with. The Progressive Party would like work against negative gender stereotypes, prepare both genders during their early years to work together in society, secure gender equality in the distribution of public funds and, last but not least, to reach pay equality for women.

19. The Progressive Party sees Christian values as the foundation of Icelandic culture and supports the national church as it is set in the current law.



# Proceeding With Caution For Nature's Sake



Svandís Svavarsdóttir is a Left Green MP and Minister for the Environment and Natural Resources.

Iceland is a country of abundance, at least in relative “per capita” terms—the most popular measuring stick for any small state. It has enough hydro and geothermal power to make us the world’s biggest producer of electricity (per capita) and it covers enough area to make it Europe’s most sparsely populated country (per capita). But Iceland is also abundant—in absolute terms—in a number of things, albeit things you might find more difficult to quantify.

One of Iceland’s greatest assets is its nature. It’s an endless source of inspiration, spiritual refreshment, a place to be filled with a sense of awe for Mother Earth. Far too often, Iceland’s nature has been seen as a means to an end, a tool to serve GDP-growth. The geologist Sigurður Þórarinnsson once pointed out that too often we measure the value of waterfalls in kilowatt hours, when we should bear in mind that they also hold a potential on which we cannot place monetary value, that of hours of pleasure.

For the past decade and a half, Icelandic experts have attempted to strike a balance between nature’s value for the energy-industrial-complex on one hand, and its value for other forms of use on the other. With tourism booming during the same period, these “other forms of use” have become increasingly apparent as a major source of traditional wealth as well as Sigurður’s “hours of pleasure.” This led to parliament passing Rammaáætlun (“Master Plan for Hydro and Geothermal Energy Resources”) this January, a plan for proposed power projects, based on the best available scientific research and information, taking into account both their economic implications and their environmental consequences. This is a big step toward ensuring that the further exploitation of our energy resources is carried out in accordance with the principles of sustainable de-

velopment, but at the same time it’s regretful that such a plan wasn’t in place decades ago.

Some of the biggest scars on the face of Iceland have been inflicted in the interest of power-intensive industries. A few of them may have been justified, but all in all, they are too many and too big. Over the past few months, increasing evidence has shown how the Kárahnjúkar dam in East Iceland has severely impacted the ecosystem of Lagarfljót. What was once a clear blue river is now a murky glacial river due to the sediment running off the dam. Environmentalists warned of the consequences of the project, but their words of warning fell on deaf ears.

It is necessary for public authorities to have a sound understanding of the common good, encompassing implications for the economy, society and the environment. This is a big task, and an important one. We must be cautious when making big decisions with wide-ranging consequences. In the north of Iceland, plans for a geothermal power plant at Bjarnarflag might put Lake Mývatn at risk. Midway between Iceland and Jan Mayen Island, ideas of oil exploration might put the ecosystem of the Arctic Ocean at risk. We must always proceed with caution when the stakes are this high.

Iceland’s unique nature is fragile and it is our duty to take good care of it. Fortunately, nature conservation has gained ground over the past few years, at the same time as tourism has become a major component of the economy. Nature conservation is the foundation of tourism; nature must be respected and protected to maintain its appeal. It is important to learn from our experiences and improve the way we interact with nature—for nature’s own sake, for the sake of its ecosystems and for the sake of future generations.



## Alþýðufylkingin (xR) (“The People’s Front of Iceland”)

**Party Chair:** Þorvaldur Þorvaldsson  
**EU:** Anti  
**Currency:** Pro-Króna  
**Website:** www.althydufylkingin.blogspot.com

**Who they say they are in one sentence:** We want socialisation in the country’s infrastructure, not the least in the financial sector, making it a public good run not for private profit, but for the benefit of society.

10. At the moment, and in the foreseeable future, the alternative to capital controls would be economic ruin—and we have plenty of that already. So, no, we would not work to lift them. Also, in general we oppose foreign investment, as we see it as sucking value out of the economy.

17. People should be welcomed as people and not as mere labour power. The state should ensure that all immigrants learn enough Icelandic to be able to read contracts, understand public safety warnings etc., so that they can access the information they need to enjoy their rights and be safe. Also, refugees should be treated with the same dignity as other people.

18. Well, not really; membership in our party is not conditioned by views on church and state, but I think most of us are for total separation of the two entities.



## Regnboginn (xJ) (“The Rainbow”)

**Party Chair:** Jón Bjarnason  
**EU:** Anti  
**Currency:** Pro-Króna  
**Website:** www.regnboginn.is

**Who they say they are in one sentence:** We are united under a vision for an independent and sovereign Iceland outside of the European Union, a society driven by sustainability in which everyone has equal rights to prosper and where Icelandic nature is allowed to flourish for future generations.

2. This is a movement of people who wish to prevent further negotiations with the European Union. We also share other values in terms of welfare, equal opportunities throughout the country, human rights and nature conservation. Our history as a joint movement is short, in fact, we consider this a project aimed solely at the upcoming elections to address the most pending issue in Icelandic society today: the imminent merging with the European Union. It is an issue that touches upon every sector of our society and cannot be silenced or ignored. People have the right to know exactly what sacrifices and irretrievable changes will follow should negotiations with the EU continue.



## Björt framtíð (xA) (“Bright Future”)

**Party Chair:** Guðmundur Steingrímsson  
**EU:** Pro  
**Currency:** Pro-Euro  
**Website:** www.bjortframtid.is

**Who they say they are in one sentence:** Björt framtíð wants to change politics and introduce a more constructive, solution-aimed and consensus-driven way of doing politics under a liberal and a green umbrella.

3. We have made some connections with liberal parties in Europe through the ALDE group [Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe] at the European Parliament. Radikale Venstre in Denmark are for instance a member of that group and so are the Lib Dems in the UK. We are a similar liberal party with a twist.

7. We need to join the EU and given that the agreement is good, take up the Euro, increase the value of our exports (which a stable currency, among other things, will help us in doing) with more industrial variety and increased efficiency of labour and money generally. We should not sell our green power cheap.

12. We have witnessed and experienced a manifold crash in trust. That needs to be fixed.

15. A new constitution was being called for long before the financial crisis happened. We want a new constitution based on the current draft. But we need to do this as well as we can. Just a bit more work needs to be done, and then we can finish it. We would like a binding national referendum to be the final conclusion of this fine procedure.



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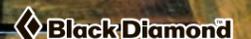
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# The Passage Of Time

Sequences Real Time Art Festival

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In a conversation published in this paper in late 2012, curator Markús Þór Andrésson spoke up for art which makes an emotional engagement, challenging the assumption that theory-based, academic critique is necessarily the most relevant art for politically turbulent times. "Abstract concepts are of course relevant to us," he clarifies, "but they are somewhat limiting on a human level." Now, as curator of the sixth Sequences Real Time Art Festival, returning to Reykjavik from April 5–14, he'll have the opportunity to put his principles into practice. Sequences brings together Icelandic and international artists working in durational installation, performance and media art; this year's mission statement proclaims that the art comprising Sequences VI "resists the surge of logic and reason into art by reflecting the constant uncertainties of the everyday."

Markús explains that the artists he's assembled are "sharing the experience of everyday life, by looking at how each individual is coming to grips with time passing." The festival, with its overarching emphasis on time-based art, naturally wrestles with the common matter of living. More specifically, he says, many of the exhibitions and performances will examine "how you try to take charge of your own life, but there's always something out there—the wheel of fortune, if you will—that you cannot control."

The festival's featured artist is Gretar Reynisson, whose show, 'The Decade,' at The Living Art Museum and the adjacent Artima gallery, represents ten years of his life, presented in public for the first time. At the turn of the century, Markús says, Gretar made the decision to withdraw from exhibition and, in essence, live his life as a series of systematic, repetitive artistic gestures. The piece "52 Shirts" is a rack from which hang the identical white dress shirts Gretar wore every day for a year, switching out one for another every week. The approach, Markús says, "is rigorous and mathematical, but also physical—you see that the shirts are worn out, with sweat stains and smudges."

It will be quite a challenge, Markús allows, to accurately represent ten years of work in a ten-day festival, but in a sense that gap, between life as lived and as documented, or even as remembered, promises to weigh heavily on the show. Memory is a key concept within "Kept but Forgotten," a tableau of small-custom-built boxes—"it's like a landscape, like looking onto Manhattan"—each containing an object, like a dead computer mouse or inkless pen, which had exhausted its function in Gretar's life. "He says that he stops remembering what's in each box," Markús says.

## LETTING LIFE IN

Gretar's "cool, distant, calculated attitude" towards the passage of time is contrasted with a full spectrum of approaches. "The repetitive notion of the everyday," as Markús describes it, will be fodder for structural discipline and humorous intervention. "Life always finds its way into the work, no matter how preplanned," he continues: the festival will be, in short, "full of stories."

To wit: the Dutch-born artist Guido van der Werve is showing a video, 'nummer veertien, home,' which documents him as he swims, bicycles, and runs the thousand miles from Warsaw, birthplace of Frédéric Chopin, to his gravesite in Paris's Père Lachaise cemetery, accompanied by his own classical music composition. Markús describes the piece as a "grand, poetic gesture reflecting the self-inflicted strain of making art."

A number of other media artists will play with the passage of time. Tumi Magnússon's 'Four Times to the Shop' is a four-way split-screen video in which recordings of his regular grocery trip are sped up or slowed down to the same running time. Aging, and its technological sibling obsolescence, are the respective preoccupations of the American feminist artist Martha Wilson's 'I have become my own worst fear,' which juxtaposes a video from the '70s with a recent self-portrait, and Rebekka Erin Moran's 'don't stop now, cuz we're havin' a time,' an installation inspired by the Spinning Wait Cursor.

## THE POLITICS OF THE EVERYDAY

For his 'Self portraits from room 413,' Ragnar Kjartansson explains, "I checked myself into Room 413 at 3 o'clock on the 21st of March with five empty canvases and oil colours and a toothbrush. Then I checked myself out at two the next day with five self-portraits," which will hang in the hotel's gallery during the festival. Ragnar has done this sort of "performative painting" before—representing Iceland at the 2009 Venice Biennale, he painted a friend, in public, every day for the duration—and describes the paintings that result as "documentations, in a way... The happening of the painting becomes omnipresent." Over the course of time in which a painting, even a self-portrait, is being painted, the things surrounding it find their way in. Ragnar thinks the viewer will be able to see how his paintings grew out of the hotel's "sort of '80s interior design, all that mahogany and gold and pale pink walls," as well as its gallery, the most extensive survey of 20th century Icelandic painting on permanent view, including murals by Ragnar's grandfather and namesake, the sculptor Ragnar Kjartansson.

Ragnar describes his all-nighter as "a daydream come true, to order Chablis, gravlax, and paint... a little holiday from my life." He suggests that "to look at yourself is kind of escaping yourself." But on the other hand, looking outwards at the world means looking from a specific place—"like the old painters used to say, every painting is a kind of self-portrait. Nobody has really anything new to say—but people have their personal point of view, and that can be fresh and new. I am a crazy art aficionado because I am interested in going into somebody's personal world, whether it's an artist or a writer or a musician. It's all self-portraits, but what we are looking for is how they reflect on us."

Similarly, Markús describes the art in the Sequences VI program as "generous": the featured artists are making offerings of their experience. And it's in this sense that he feels that the festival, though turning away from the academic, is not a retreat from the political. In the Grapevine conversation from late 2011, he rejected the notion that, in times of national crisis, art needed to force itself into political dialogue: "Emotional arguments for social or environmental affairs can be just as weighty and 'concrete' as 'political' ones."

"We're not dealing with issues that come from social structures, it's about how you as an individual are dealing with the passing of time," Markús says of this year's programming. "It's self-reflective, but not wallowing, self-pitying. We're dealing with common issues, which takes us from the viewpoint of the individual to the social and communal, and in that sense the personal becomes political."

✎ - Mark Asch



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# The Winner Takes It All

Iceland's unsigned bands duke it out in a battle to the death, metaphorically speaking of course...

By Bob Cluness & Birkir Fjalar Viðarsson



It's that time of the year again! Since 1982, the annual Músiktilraunir (Iceland Music Experiments) competition has been waged to find the best in new, unsigned music from Iceland. The contest has had a decent pedigree with bands like Maus, Mínus, Mammút, Agent Fresco, and Of Monsters And Men bagging the top prize. This year the rewards for the winning act included 250,000 ISK from music label and event sponsor Sena, studio time at Sigur Rós' studio, Sundlaugin, and spots in music festivals, such as Iceland Airwaves and Stage Europe Network.

So with some anticipation we decamped to the Cultural Box House of Doom (aka Harpa's Silfurberg Hall) to check out the finalists.

## FOR COLOURBLIND PEOPLE

The first band up was a five-piece from Akureyri featuring a mix of clanging guitars and plastic synths. Birkir noted that that there were moments in their music that resembled a diet Jimmy Eat World whereas I felt like they came across like Biffy Clyro with Granddaddy keyboard sounds. But the end result was oddly flat. The songs really didn't connect with us, which was a shame because their singer was emoting and thrashing for all his worth, along with his high-end transatlantic vocals.

## CEASETONE

The second act was a guy on a guitar whose playing was all about "the craft." He showed tremendous skill as his hands moved furiously up and down the frets, ping-pong off tricky harmonic notes willy-nilly, but his lyrics were rather bland with lots of words to communicate vague platitudes. It also didn't help his performance that any momentum he built was scuppered when his laptop failed on him at the beginning of his final number. But he did recover well in the end as he played his impersonation of Pétur Ben doing a Ratatat cover.

## GLUNDROÐI

We recognised this band almost immediately from last year's finals. Ditching their Mumford waistcoats from 2012, they were dressed in suit jackets and bow ties. They also had a new secret weapon—a harp! Their sound though was still the same, a mix of country ho-ho-ho Americana with some rocked up folk sounds. Their final song ended with a tightly arranged sound that was all the rage in folk clubs in Scotland 15 years ago. These guys would be popular on the folk festival circuit in Europe.

## SKERÐING

Just when Birkir started complaining about the lack of energy from the bands, on came the delights of Akranes, the punk band Skerðing! Although it was obvious that they weren't going to win the title, their rather snotty, loose, rough pop punk sound with song titles like "Downtrodden, Lonesome, Bohemian, Lo-Fi, Teenage, Existentialist Blues," (catchy!) was a good response to the over earnest seriousness we'd experienced so far. They elicited a good response from the crowd and rightly so.

## ARAGRÚI

We yawned as what seemed to be another faceless krútt pop-looking band took the stage. But then the singer started singing and man she was powerful, almost reaching Florence Welch levels of foghorn, but with one difference—she could actually sing in tune! Their sound was also interesting, perhaps going for a take on the grungy acoustic sounds of Blind Melon and Edie Brickell & New Bohemians. All in all it was well put together and rather entertaining.

## YELLOW VOID

White Signal may not have reached the final this time, but the teeny-bop preppy quotient was there in the form of Yellow Void. It has to be said they were the youngest band in the finals, but everything about their songs and the performance really wasn't doing it for us. It all seemed disjointed as if the 15-odd band members had been thrown together by some zealous youth centre workers. They certainly did their best though with one of the keyboardists bopping along and getting the audience into another clap-along.

"They were pure retro blues boogie daddy rock, right down to the 'Hurrh Yeahhhh!' and 'I won't work for THE MAN!' vocals."

## KALEO

"All the way down from the delta swamp and rocking it to you hard. We're BLUESHAMMER!" Okay, Kaleo didn't introduce themselves like that, but they may as well have. They were pure retro blues boogie daddy rock, right down to the "Hurrh Yeahhhh!" and "I won't work for THE MAN!" vocals. With this music, it's a fine line getting the primacy right, and it was there in fleeting moments, especially with the guitarist thrashing around. But these guys were more Black Keys than The Jon Spencer Blues Explosion. The crowd was really into it though and broke out into the first unprompted clap-along of the night.

## KJURR

They set up to a slightly awkward silence (one of many during the night), but once they got going, their music piqued our interest. The singer/guitarist was throwing some unorthodox playing shapes allied with a very strong bouncy bass/pounding drum combo. The only downside was that the vocals weren't up to much—they were more mumbled/breathed than sung. Their last song, with cold electronic beats that resembled The XX, sounded great until they ruined it half-

way through by completely changing to a boogie funk tempo, which caused the singer to tear off his t-shirt and race through the crowd with a megaphone. Nice boxer shorts though.

## VÖK

A duo from Hafnarfjörður, these guys went further down the electronic rabbit hole of The XX and Samaris. And like Samaris, they too had an instrument with a limited range as a cornerstone of their sound (in this case the saxophone). But these guys were good. Very good. Some entrancing melodic lines and hooks with a real sense of presence, which was down to the vocals of the singer. She seems to have really picked up on the inflections of The Knife/Fever Ray singer Karin Dreijer Andersson. We could see these guys being really popular with the moody electronics crowd.

## IN THE COMPANY OF MEN

We've seen these guys around a bit outside of Músiktilraunir, reviewing them at last year's Eistnaflug festival for example. Unlike the other acts, they had a frontman that could fill time like a pro when there was a delay in setting up the drums at the start. And they looked and acted more fucked up and obnoxious (in the best possible way) than before, running and jumping around like monkeys dosed on purple drank. They even had a lovely one-man mosh pit at the end. The songs? Weeeell, they weren't really songs to be honest. Overly flip-pant versions of The Dillinger Escape Plan that sounded like a treble mess. Still, they were incredibly entertaining to watch. They will be Dr Spock v2.0 in the future.

## HIDE YOUR KIDS

It had been a long night, but thankfully the last band was a good listen overall. The singer's distinctive style intrigued Birkir especially. He had an unusual breathy register that hinted at the likes of Brian Molko and Ben Gibbard. The music was the usual synth-driven pop with some tight rhythms and nu-trance moments. Like many other bands they did this weird thing of starting a song in one style before changing direction in a jarring and abrupt fashion. In this case they started a song off like Rush, before going into lounge room funk style. Competent and well put together.

As we waited for the winners to be announced, Birkir and I discussed who we thought they should be and we actually agreed on the same final three, Aragrúi, Kjurr and Vök, albeit in different positions. And shock horror, the judges went in a similar direction as well!

## AND THE WINNERS WERE...

- 3: ARAGRÚI
- 2: IN THE COMPANY OF MEN
- 1: VÖK

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### Futuregrapher

LP

2012

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

[Jungle is aliiiiive!](#)

Futuregrapher makes jungle. Rapid-fire beats composed from familiar breaks, dreamy pads with major sevenths, vocal samples and the occasional jazzy riffs: It's all in here. Of course, this is somewhat unusual since the genre has pretty much been dormant since the mid-nineties, in the sense that there's hardly been any development although new tracks have continued to surface. Or maybe I just stopped paying attention. Either way, in Futuregrapher's case it hardly matters. This is an excellent LP that would sit nicely next to titles by Boymerang, Jonny L or something off of Good Looking Records.



### Retro Stefson

Retro Stefson

2012

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

[Retro Stefson move on up to the next generation.](#)

If there's a band that best embodies the "party" spirit of Iceland's music scene over the last several years, then Retro Stefson must surely be close contenders. This interest has seen the band being tipped by many to achieve big things beyond these shores. With m-indie backing from Berlin's Vertigo Records, their third self-titled album now sees them make that first big push into international crossover territory.

The first thing you notice when you play 'Retro Stefson' is that a lot of time and effort has gone into the production. Many people won't care to admit it, but Retro



### Ophidian I

SOLVET SAECLUM

2012

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

['Solvat Saeclum' hints at greatness, but the band has yet to control their overzealous enthusiasm.](#)

'Solvat Saeclum' is crisp and cutting like latter day Death but without the choruses and anthemic attributes. Its virtuosos are exhausting like Obscura, but without the crunch. Ophidian I follow what has

"Elísa" might be the highlight. A jazzy track with layered old-skool breaks, thick and warm bass-tones, spacy sax riffs, and a bunch of twitching acid on top. It is perhaps only matched by "Kjamminn" with its unforgiving groove, smooth wurlly chords and growling bass synths. "Think" is a busy cut featuring local activist/conspiracy-theorist Guðjón Heiðar Valgarðsson half-speaking, half-rapping a call to arms against capitalist and martial powers to acid bass lines and machine gun snare-rolls. This works surprisingly well—Guðjón is calm and sensible, yet pointed in his lyrics, and his unusual delivery and vocal pitch prop one's ears open. Closer "Bons" is based on ear-splitting beats reminiscent of Aphex Twin over sub-bass and pads.

As is compulsory on any drum 'n' bass or jungle record, there are some cuts here in different, slower grooves. "James Acid" is a decent acid track with ambient undertones (Think Carl Craig or the bleep and bass of early Warp), and "Engihjalli Ambient" is a brief pad-driven opener that sets a warm and comfortable mood. More forgettable is "Stapi," with its attempts at melody coming off improvisational and naïve.

But hats off to Futuregrapher for sticking to a style and coming up with something tasty fifteen years after the raw materials' expiry date. **👉 - Atli Bollason**

Stefson's first two albums just didn't sound that good, coming across as dry and flat and failing to capture the band's vaunted live energy. But now the music feels brighter and tighter, and everything rushes along with a busy energy.

This leads to the second thing you notice about 'Retro Stefson.' That is, the band has traded in their old loose-limbed groove for an electronic sound more aligned with disco and house music, due in no small part, to the influence of album co-producer Hermigervill. While some of the old Retro Stefson is still there in tracks like "Miss Nobody," which rails with some heavy rock riffing, and "(O) Kami" (the best song in the album), which combines smooth melodies with reggae-infused rock rhythms, there are now tracks like "Julia," which comes complete with choppy house-y synth lines and "Time," which goes for a plastick '80s nu-pop style.

This isn't an album that boasts grinding grooves for getting down and dirty. The rough edges have been sanded off, leaving a smooth, shiny album that contains barely an inch of attitude or frisson. But this is an album of pure unabashed groove pop that finally realises the energy and potential that they've been promising for a long while now.

**👉 - Bob Cluness**

become somewhat conventional technical modern death metal. The busyness and frequent change-ups are now a staple in an over-populated genre. Quite frankly, it's becoming too much, and our local boys don't add much to the flora.

But these guys have it all. They're talented as fuck and their performances are stellar. Their guitar solos are probably the tastiest in Icelandic metal right now. They've penned awesome riffs and execute them with force and command, but the songs cannot breathe. There are too many licks and transitions flying around. The parts that want to connect with you don't stand a chance. As soon as you think something is going to be built upon, there's a shift robbing the song of its momentum, which happens too often to mention.

It's far more challenging to kill your own darlings (in this case, simplify the structure and lose some riffs) than string together everything you come up with. Had Ophidian I done that, the album would be more memorable.

**👉 - Birkir Fjalar Viðarsson**

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Photo: Alisa Kalyanova

# I've Never Been North

A first-timer's review of Aldrei fór ég suður

Close to the northernmost tip of Iceland lies Ísafjörður, a small town nestled deep in the crook of Skutulsfjörður. Several hours of mountain road from the lights of Reykjavík, it's a remote spot for a music festival, especially in the usually chilly Icelandic springtime. But the climate doesn't deter the organisers of Aldrei Fór Ég Suður, or the 2,000+ festivalgoers who have kept this popular occasion rolling into its tenth year.

The Grapevine team set out for Ísafjörður under blue skies, scything around the sea road at the feet of Esja, through the long tunnel north and past mountains draped in leftover snow and reflected in mirror-like fjords. We see the remains of recent heavy blizzards, with drifts engulfing roadside fences completely and mountaintops gleaming like iced cakes.

But as the Westfjords draw near, a wall of weather sweeps in. The car is swiftly eaten by clouds and the journey turns into a nerve-wracking whiteout. The ice-blue snowdrifts grow together until they merge with the sky in a yawning, bright white void. It feels like we're driving from nothing, into nothing, the car a slow skier slaloming between the roadside markers and shocks of yellow grass.

By the time we crawl around the tip of the final peninsula and down into the dramatic, sweeping bay of Ísafjörður, Sindri Már Sigfússon is on stage. He cuts a recognisable figure even from way back in the car park, standing static with his distinctive stoop as he strums and sings. His band Sin Fang has changed configuration since 'Flowers,' their sunny, melodic sound taking an indie-rock flavour via the addition of a second guitarist. The set is comprised entirely of unreleased new material, but Sindri's eddying vocal melodies lend a sense of familiarity and continuity to the show, winning a rousing reception from the bustling crowd.

## A WORKING CLASS HERO

After a short break, the festival's tiny beer & pylsur tent empties for Bubbi Morthens. Looking like a lost member of Status Quo in sunglasses and a waistcoat, his style is gleaned directly from the impassioned Americana of giants like Dylan and Springsteen. Kids are hoisted onto shoulders and there suddenly seem to be a lot of stetsons in the crowd. The festival is in a party mood for this show, erupting almost immediately into a mass sing-along.

Bubbi is apparently Iceland's working class hero, his everyman lyrics transposing Icelandic culture onto traditional rhythm & blues—so rather than being about the cotton fields or the dusty crossroads, his songs are about working in fish processing plants and surviving the long, dark winter nights. He seems like he could go on for hours, revelling in the limelight and packing his thirty-minute set with crowd participation antics, but even this legend of native rock only gets a short extension on the standard twenty-minute slot.

After an equally Icelandic take on rockabilly from Langi Seli og Skuggarnir and some workmanlike post-rock from Stafrænn Hákon, the night is rounded off by Valdimar, who plays a celebratory set of jubilant, enticing songs backed by an impressive big band. The sound quality has been uniformly excellent throughout, especially considering the hasty changeovers, but it seems to click especially well for Valdimar. After a warm-hearted and thoroughly charming performance, people pour out into the snow, beaming their smiles into the darkness.

## THE LOCAL SCENE

After a morning spent exploring the defiantly remote and breathtakingly picturesque nearby towns of Flateyri and Suðureyri, we head back to catch some of Ísafjörður's local bands and hometown heroes. The first act we see is the unashamed dad-rock five-piece Sniglabandið, who grin from ear to ear throughout their robust set; they're followed by proficient-but-nervous teen metallers Hörmung, who've clearly put in the practice-room hours but are perhaps a little dazzled by the stage lights.

If there has been a slight lack of edge in the music so far, Futuregrapher reverse the situation with a set of mid-afternoon jungle and hard breaks, accentuated by some genuinely unhinged, simian dancing. After starting the music, Futuregrapher comes out in trackie-bottoms and proceeds to bounce around the stage screaming for a few minutes, jabbing at the crowd and conducting the rapid-fire rhythms like the scariest 7 AM amphetamine-tramp at Glastonbury; he's joined by a rapper who seems comparably zoned out and almost gets into a confrontation with the laptop operator when a sudden change of pace interrupts an extended anti-capitalist rant. The music itself isn't breaking any new ground, but the aggressive, nihilistic stage spectacle is absorbing and creepy in equal measure.

Prins pólo play with an extended line-up that includes Benni Hemm Hemm on bass and Borko on extra percussion, giving an impressive boost to their ever-charming scruffy indie sound. They're followed by Dolby, who finish on a ruthlessly efficient crowd-pleasing medley of soft rock anthems that includes snatches of "Smoke On The Water," "Jump" and "Eye Of The Tiger."

## A JUBILANT FINALE

The young stars of Reykjavík on tonight's bill are Oyama and Samaris, both of whom up the art-factor considerably. Full disclosure: I work with Oyama, so I somewhat predictably like them a lot, but I was a fan first, and the show reminds me why as they gallop through a four-song set of stylish, discordant shoegaze. The shimmering intro of "Everything Some Of The Time" gets a roar of recognition before the drawn out noise-rock finale of "The Garden," which peaks at ear-splitting volume.

Samaris are becoming a vehicle for the maturing talents of Jófríður Ákadóttir, whose breathy, emotive vocal delivery is spine tingling tonight. On the strength of this performance the sky is the limit for the eighteen-year-old singer, and as Samaris play set-highlight "Góða Tungl" I wonder if the warm but '90s-retro production can match her rapid development.

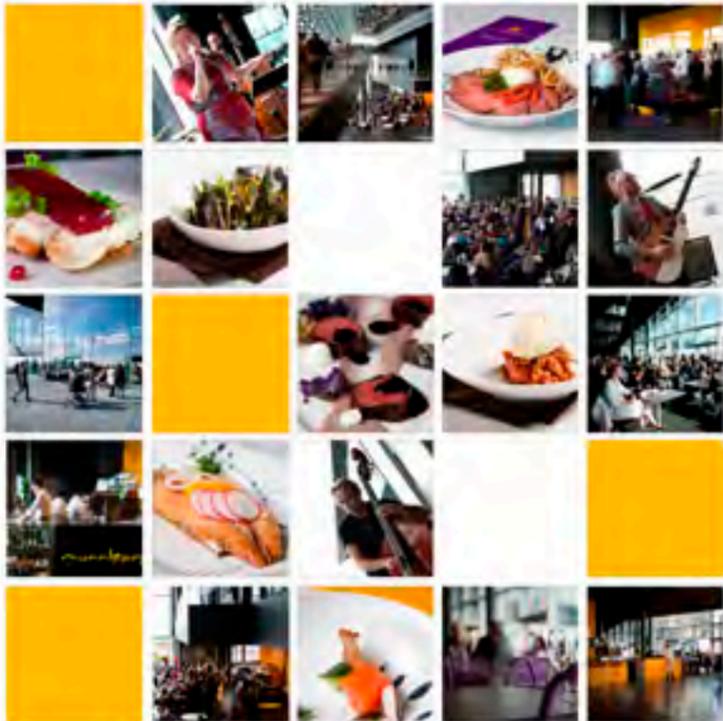
Ojba Rasta deliver an effortlessly entertaining collection of dubby reggae, playing with a laid-back passion that earns them a rare Aldrei encore. This paves the way for Jónas Sig, who is joined by roughly half the town's inhabitants in the shape of the Ísafjörður town orchestra, for a jubilant finale to a fun night.

The Bubbi lyric from which the festival takes its name goes "I never went south, I never had the courage." But in 2013 it takes more courage to head into the freezing north, and for those who braved the cold, there was a party worth the journey. 🍷 - John Rogers



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# Retro Stefson

Music videos, sexy shower shoots and word games



Photos: GAS

“Do you remember Dudley, Raleigh St. Clair’s test subject in ‘The Royal Tenenbaums’? Well, I think he’s got the same syndrome,” Retro Stefson frontman Unnsteinn explains, pardoning his band mate Hermigervill for asking our photographer/plumber extraordinaire whether he had any upcoming photo shoots in the ‘pipes.’ “It’s related to his acute sense of hearing—it’s the same brain function that spots these word application-options that usually creates music,” Unnsteinn continues. “I guess genius always comes with a by product like this.”

After Unnsteinn’s apology, the two go on debating whether it’s more important to emphasise the visual or the narrative in music videos. Hermigervill prefers using the format as a platform for visual art experiments while Unnsteinn is more of a storyteller. That,

and a negotiator par excellence who manages to solve this debate in a way that leaves both parties content, making apparent his strength as the leader.

## MEET RETRO STEFSON

We’re in the company of three members of Retro Stefson’s 8-piece outfit: the core Stefson Brothers, or Les Frères Stefson, as they’ve tattooed on their upper arms, and their most recent addition, Hermigervill, a red-bearded synthesizer-prodigy. The band is an ever-evolving organism that has been alive for an admirably long time compared to the average age of the band, which is a little over 20-years-old. They started it when they were in elementary school as some kind of a school project and now almost one decade, two records

and countless successful shows later, they’re still going strong.

At this point they’re far out of their comfort zone of 101 Reykjavík, in the lobby of the recently opened Fontana Spa in Laugarvatn with three steam rooms, a Finnish-style sauna, and outdoor mineral baths and pools.

The bunch are equipped with trunks and other essential spa accessories and they’re eager to get into the hot tubs and boil out last-night’s sins in the natural steam baths. Tomorrow they’re shooting a music video with wunderkind director Reynir Lyngdal and the following day they’re off to follow up the European release of their new record, lucidly named ‘Retro Stefson,’ with a several-week-long tour. So yeah, they’re busy.

After devouring some locally earth-baked rye bread with smoked salmon chaperoned by a few Boli beers, it’s finally time to dip our toes into the geothermal baths. There’s no time for a chat in the locker-room, as the aforementioned photographer/plumber extraordinaire reminds me that this slot was booked a long time ago for a ‘sexy-showershoot’ as he describes it. But after all disposable memory cards had been filled up with luscious photos of the hot-boy trio, we continue talking about their music video enthusiasm.

## HUNTING THE QWEEN FOX

“We probably wrote about seven or eight drafts of the script and tomorrow we’re shooting a final version that we’re pretty happy with. It’s a about a foxhunter and his adventures,” Unnsteinn says, describing his collaboration with Reynir, the director of the music video that they are shooting tomorrow for their song “Qween.” The story about the foxhunter, played by Unnsteinn himself, is more atmospheric than narrative and combines the two elements Hermigervill and Unnsteinn previously debated. “Not A LOT happens as it’s only a couple of days in his life, but we see a few relatively big events.”

Retro Stefson have been pretty busy video-wise. Earlier this month they shot another video for their yet-to-be-released song, “She Said.” And on top of that they received the

Icelandic Music Award for a video they shot last year for “Glow.”

Unnsteinn tells me one of the main reasons for this productivity in the video-part of the promotion is his enthusiasm in the field. Whereas a more orthodox workflow would have the director involved in the initial creative work, Unnsteinn wrote the concepts for the two last videos they made and brought them to the directors. This has resulted in an impressive number of videos thus far and he’s not ruling out the possibility of taking his film-drive beyond Retro Stefson.

While they ponder this possibility in the hybrid between a pool and a hot tub that we’re lying in, a generous spa employee arrives with a tray filled with what is possibly the greenest drink I’ve ever laid eyes on. And luckily for the photo shoot that was about to take place in the cold winds of the north, it was ragingly alcoholic and full of vitamin-rich seaweed.

## YOUTUBE CHANNELS AND LURING TITS

After moving out of the cold and into the boiling natural steam bath, the gang continues to dissect their graphic tendencies. They talk about how this promotional stuff not only serves as an artistic platform these days but it’s also becoming a vital thing in the viral age we live in.

“It’s considered both dull and banal to have your album covers on the monitor when people are jigging to your tunes, so you have to produce music videos.”

Hermigervill points out that it’s all about YouTube these days: “If you want to listen to a song, you go to YouTube so you kind of have to have a strong YouTube presence.” Logi adds: “It’s considered both dull and banal to have your album covers on the monitor when people are jigging to your tunes, so you have to produce music videos.”

“Nowadays there are also these

YouTube-channels,” Logi goes on. “I started noticing them about a year ago. They are like really nice clubs with hot ladies and nice music that you can always go to—except it’s on YouTube.” Hermigervill complains about the cheap marketing method of using tits and ass to lure listeners into your channels, but Logi concludes: “that’s what you gotta do.”

## KEEPING THE VISUAL SHIT TOGETHER

After abandoning that toxin-cleansing steam bath, we’re back in the lobby where the brothers sit and enjoy a piece of carrot cake. Hermigervill is however MIA and the brothers reckon he’s still drying his Viking beard; it usually takes a while, they tell me.

Our conversation turns from video to graphics as they were not only awarded the aforementioned music video award, but also the best album cover of the year by the tabloid DV. This time the credit goes elsewhere. “I’m not really graphically inclined,” Unnsteinn says humbly. “When we release an album I’d prefer it to be completely empty, without a cover.”

He goes on to explain that they’re surrounded by a lot of talent and ever since Sara María of Naked Ape fame, Árni Rúnar from FM Belfast and Halli Civelek showed up with the first batch of unsolicited band t-shirts made without their knowledge just before the release of their first album, all the graphic creative work has been in the hands of others, but mainly Halli Civelek. “He’s a no-compromises kind-of-guy,” Logi tells me, “and it might seem like we’re preoccupied with the visual aspects of our albums, but it’s all him.” They stress that they owe a lot of their image to the good people around them.

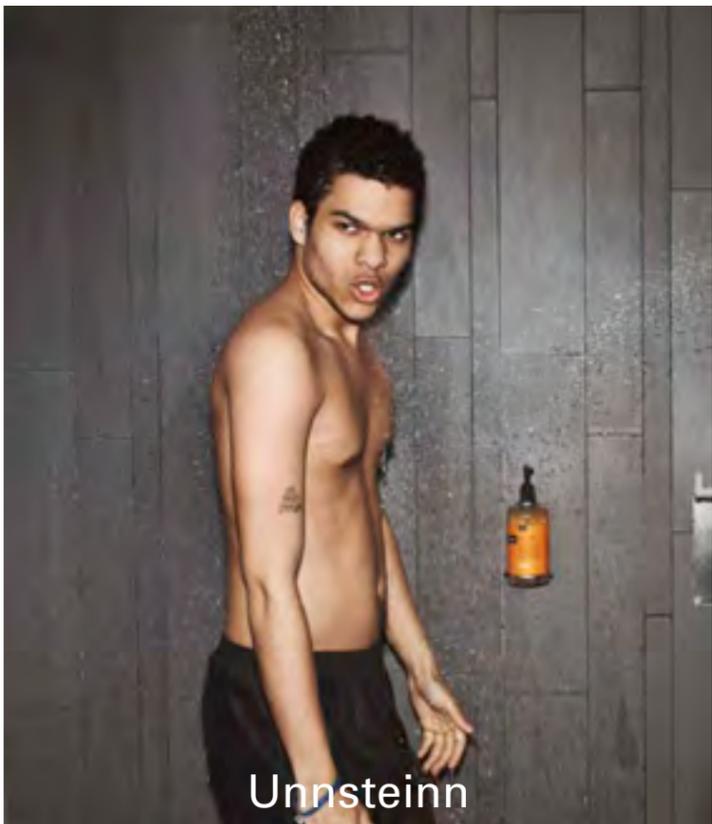
At that moment our bus rolls up and a bunch of tourists on the Golden Circle tour surround the Retro gang. When the driver announces that we’re going to stop by Pingvellir national park before we hit the streets of Reykjavík, the guys don’t mind. It’s an excellent warm up for the next couple of months when they’ll spend most of their time on a bus, contemplating their next moves.

✂ - Sigurður Kjartan Kristinnsson



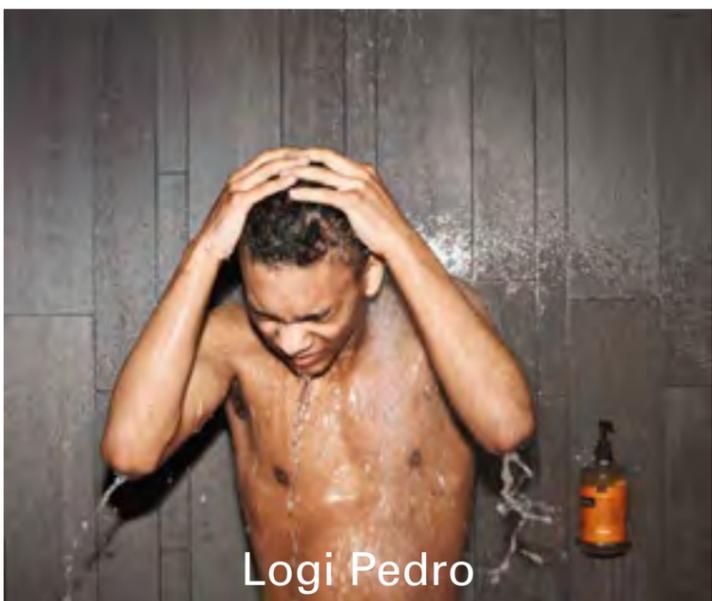
Hermigervill

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Unnsteinn

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# Iceland: The New Morocco?



Words & photos: Elli Thor Magnússon

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When I started surfing in Iceland 11 years ago, people would ask me the same question over and over again: "Surfing in Iceland! Are there any waves here?"

At first I would enthusiastically explain that, yes, being an island smack dab in the middle of the powerful Atlantic Ocean, we indeed had some waves and in fact the countless shipwrecks littering our coastline were a pretty strong testament to that. But I always suspected that the people I talked to at the gas station or outside the supermarket did not quite believe what I was saying; they just nodded their heads with a kind of a smile on their face that said it all: 'Yeah right, you fool....'

### YES, THERE ARE WAVES IN THE OCEAN

Of course they had to know there were waves here. You can't ignore the facts. Iceland has for ages built its livelihood around the ocean. But I guess when most people think of surfing they think of palm trees, girls in bikinis and white sand beaches and surfing in Iceland is as far away from the stereotypical surfer dude image as you can get. It's cold, it can be scary and it is in no way cool. Standing naked from the waist down in January, clutching your wetsuit while you're being hammered by sleet and wind, your nose is running and your teeth are chattering—this is definitely not cool.

It's not all bad though. With a coastline of 4,970 kilometres open to swells from all directions, Iceland really can get some world-class waves. During the warmer summer months the surf isn't very consistent, but autumn sees the arrival of proper 5ft+ (1.5 metre) waves and is perhaps the nicest time to surf in Iceland. The sea is relatively warm (a whole 14°C) and the days are still quite long. As fall progresses into winter, sea and air temperatures drop and daylight hours grow scarce. However, if you can brave the cold, and it does get really f-ing cold, this is the time of year when Iceland is pounded by swells almost day in and day out.

### INTRODUCED BY AMERICAN SOLDIERS

Americans from the now defunct naval base in Keflavík were the first to see Iceland's surfing potential in the early '90s, and a small group of local snowboarders

caught on shortly thereafter. Back then, wetsuits and surfboards were hard to come by and people made do with whatever they could find. My friend Ingo started in a two-piece diving suit and on one of those boogie boards they used to give away for free on the back of Nesquik chocolate milk packages.

Little by little, the group of surfers has grown since those first days when you

could fit the whole surf population into a small van. Some of the originals have given up because of the harsh conditions or real life commitments, others have stuck with it and a few newbies have joined the ranks. It is estimated that there are now around 30 active surfers and, as you can imagine, with so much coastline, overcrowding out in the surf is not a big issue.



Elli was introduced to surfing on a plastic Bic (yes, the pen and lighter manufacturer) surfboard with pink flowers that a friend brought over from France. At the time he thought it was the coolest thing in the world. His first time out in the water ended with a mouth-full of sand, a cold scary swim back to shore and a vow never to go surfing again. His most memorable surfing experience is seeing a minke whale breach the surface right out in the line up. He occasionally surfs, snowboards and takes pictures of his friends on their various adventures.

### BECOMING THE NEW MOROCCO

While almost every break in California or Hawaii has been explored, every wave ridden, Iceland still has potential for exploration. This is what makes surfing here so special. It's still in its infancy so you don't have to fight with 50 other surfers for a decent wave. Combine this with today's high tech wetsuits and surfing during the coldest winter months is starting to feel pretty tolerable.

And the word is out. Every year, like migrating birds, more and more professional surfers are arriving with their board bags and camera equipment, discovering new surf spots on almost every trip. The surf media has its eye on Iceland; it's even been referred to as the new Morocco, the place everybody's going to because nobody is going there.

So nowadays if someone asks me about the surf here in Iceland I have a pre-programmed answer: "No, there are no waves in Iceland. It's cold, miserable and never under any circumstances should you try surfing here."

Answer to trivia question on page 2:

A Winston Churchill

LINE.

## AIRICELAND.IS



# From Plumbing To Poetry To Hard-Hats And Bouncing Back

Norðurpóllinn bids farewell to its house and looks forward to its next adventure...

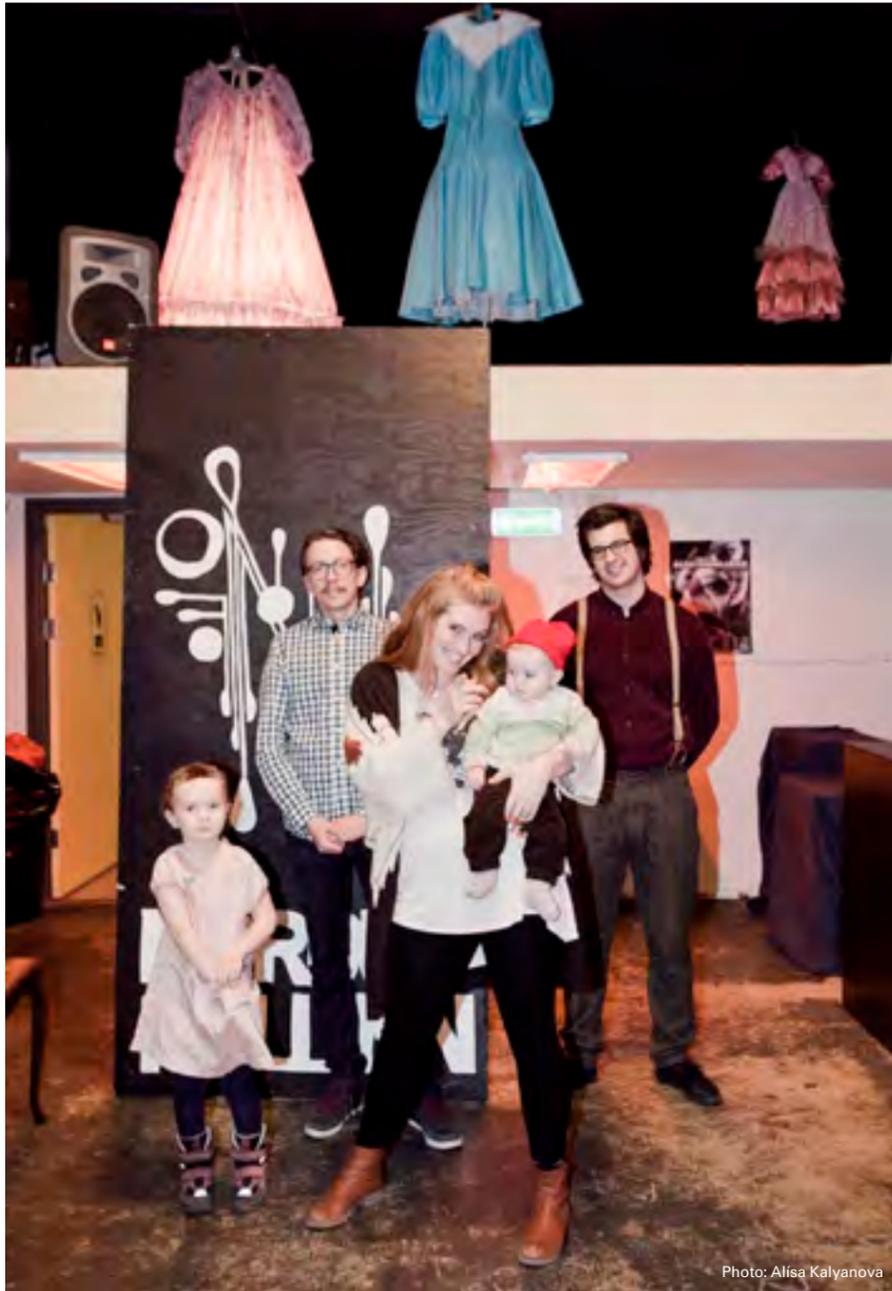


Photo: Alisa Kalyanova

Rumour has it in Reykjavík that Norðurpóllinn is quitting. They're not. In fact, the quirky theatre group is more enthusiastic than ever, despite the fact that a huge road is about to be plonked over the company's 'house': an ex-factory building used by Norðurpóllinn as an experimental space for artists. "We always knew that we were losing the house," says Íris Skúladóttir, sipping a coffee and keeping half an eye on her young daughter who is running about with a rather dangerous looking hot chocolate, "but we're optimists. We hit a wall and we bounce back. New doors are opening."

Íris is one of the four people who set up the independently run theatre company in 2009 to provide

physical space for performers to use: from actors to artists, poets to painters, and professionals to children. It relocated to its current home in a large industrial building on Seltjarnarnes in 2010 and has generated some of Iceland's most inventive work in recent years. In fact, it has produced as many, if not more, performances than 'Þjóðleikhúsið' ("National Theatre") and 'Borgarleikhúsið' ("Reykjavík City Theatre") every year, and its focus on grass-roots theatre means Norðurpóllinn has served as a crucial outlet for the creative minds of Reykjavík to experiment and express themselves. So what's all this gossip about Norðurpóllinn losing its house?

## DERELICT FACTORY TURNED THEATRE

It turns out that the group has been fighting for their house from the get-go. In 2010, Íris and her friends Arnar, Denni and Gríma stumbled upon an abandoned factory in Seltjarnarnes. And in true Grotowski-style, they adopted this run-down building and their theatrical love child, Norðurpóllinn, as we know it today, was officially born. But it was not an easy birth.

"The biggest challenge we faced was to get the house going, transforming the setting into a useable space," Íris admits, "and the house was a total mess and we had to do everything ourselves." Without any financial support from the local funding bodies in Seltjarnarnes, Íris and company were forced to use their connections and call in favours from friends and family, including fellow actors. As actors are not well known for their skills in plumbing or fire-safety, it is a wonder that the house is still standing.

Yet if they are anything, actors are resourceful: cue paint-wielding thespians dashing madly about the derelict building, painting wildly and frantically blocking holes in the wall with plastic bags. Such a scene pretty much forms the basis of the Norðurpóllinn house's physical creation. In fact, "the factory setting is an element of the house," says Búi Bjarmar Aðalsteinsson, Íris's boyfriend and fellow organiser of Norðurpóllinn. "In a factory there is an element of making, of raw manufacture. That was the spirit of the space as we were creating it, and is the spirit of the house now."

It seems that creativity, raw energy and sheer determination paid off, as Íris and friends virtually built a multi-functional performance space and grass-roots theatre out of nothing. Luck and improvisation of course lent a helping hand, but wiring lights and moving a brick wall halfway across the room on top of all the other crazy things which life threw at them was not really a matter of luck, but of hard work and dedication. Of course, Íris looks back and laughs at this period of mayhem, though it is clear that this was a time of great stress, especially after Norðurpóllinn officially opened on February 17, 2010.

"We had official maintenance men come and check the house on quite a few occasions," explains Íris and, in spite of working day and night to get the house ready, "they already wanted to shut us down in 2010. What's more, we had three shows running at the time." But like all challenges thrown their way, the artisans-come-handymen at Norðurpóllinn met it head on. Equipping themselves with hard-hats and flameproof paint, they smiled the smug-smile of victory when, a year later, the straight-faced maintenance inspectors admitted, somewhat begrudgingly, that they had 'zero comments' and the house was fine: Norðurpóllinn had finally ticked all of the boxes.

## WHERE ANYTHING IS POSSIBLE

With the go-ahead given and the paint on the walls still wet, Norðurpóllinn opened its doors to the public in 2010 and enjoyed great success. In 2011, it ran a performance of 'Fjalla-Eyvindur og Halla'

written by one of Iceland's most famous playwrights, Jóhann Sigurjónsson, which was nominated for the Gríman awards. In a poll which considered the number of plays each theatre produced annually, Norðurpóllinn was ranked third highest in Iceland, trumped only by Þjóðleikhúsið and Borgarleikhúsið.

Yet Norðurpóllinn is more than just a theatre; it has held everything from poetry readings and belly-dancing classes, to school plays and the Reykjavík Dance Festival. Jón Gnarr celebrated his birthday there, and the huge Reykjavík-Bergen-Nuuk event, which saw bands from all over Iceland, Norway and Greenland, was just another one of many exciting events forming Norðurpóllinn's repertoire.

The company also places strong emphasis on theatre and workshops for children, encouraging kids to get involved and think creatively. 'The Maze,' a play written and directed by Íris herself, offered an interactive experience for the young audience. "We even had real grass," Íris says, "and had to keep the lights on at night to help it grow"

Such opportunities for real experimentation with physical setting is limited on the fixed, proscenium arch stages of bigger theatres in Iceland, and this is exactly what Norðurpóllinn wants to avoid: in the Norðurpóllinn house, you can do what you want. Literally. Paint the walls yellow, stick a pond in the middle of the room or glue furniture to the ceiling (although the latter has yet to be done). In the Norðurpóllinn house, anything is possible. "People need that," Íris says, "I mean, knowing that they can do anything. People need a space with no restrictions."

## TO BE DESTROYED TO MAKE ROOM FOR A ROAD

Unfortunately, not everyone feels the same way. Whilst Iceland is happy enough to build roads that veer around elf-stones, the luck of the land-spirits it seems is not with Norðurpóllinn. The local council in Seltjarnarnes is plonking a shiny new tarmac-wonder over the company's house; performing on a roadside may certainly be 'experimental,' but it is not really ideal.

But Íris and her boyfriend Búi are not sad. "We set out to create a theatre and ended up doing so much more. We became events managers, created a space to rent to painters and poets and hosted all kinds of children's workshops. We've swept floors and mended light-bulbs, and we've created this organic, wonderful space," Búi says proudly. And Íris is adamant that this doesn't mean the end for Norðurpóllinn. "Although the physical space is going, Norðurpóllinn is continuing," Íris says. "New doors are opening. We're not quitting, we're not going anywhere. This is the chance for something new."

But the house itself will continue being used right up until the first block of cement is torn down and Norðurpóllinn is hosting a fantastic line-up over the next month before it embarks on its next house-hunting adventure. So ignore the rumours: the house might be going, but Norðurpóllinn and its quirky, creative spirit is here to stay.

✎ - Anna Millward



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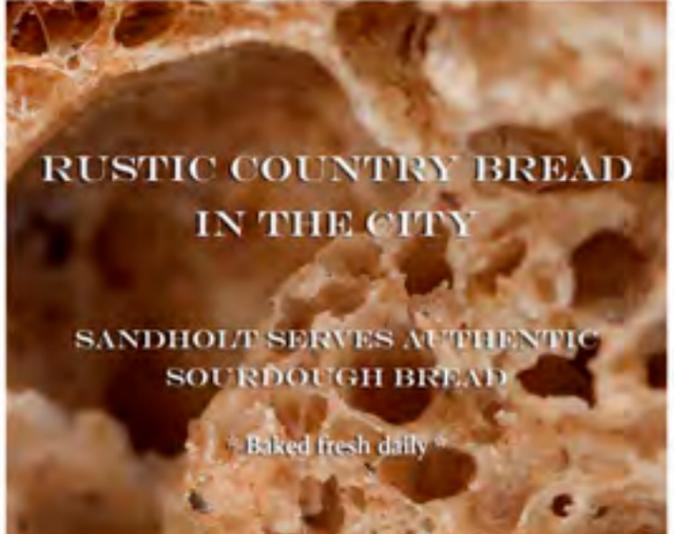
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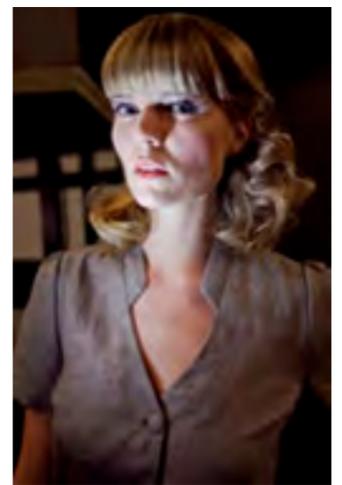
**VOTE FOR THE FUTURE**



# RFF N°4

Photos by Alisa Kalyanova

The fourth Reykjavík Fashion Festival took place at Harpa midway through March. As expected, the perfume-filled halls were packed with high cheekbones, way-too-many champagne glasses and of course, fashion. The Icelandic scene showcased its true colours and boasted everything from Ella's conservative women's collection to MUNDI's crazy fusion-performance, combining film, fashion and performance art. For a few days the banal streets of Reykjavík morphed into a venue for high fashion, parties and glamour.



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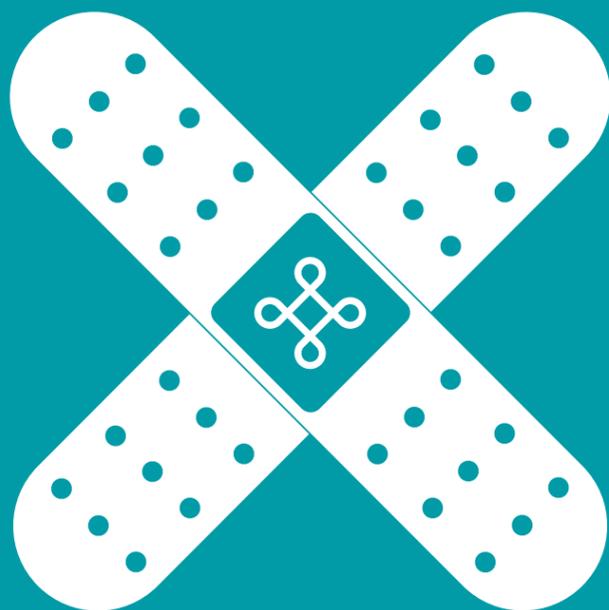


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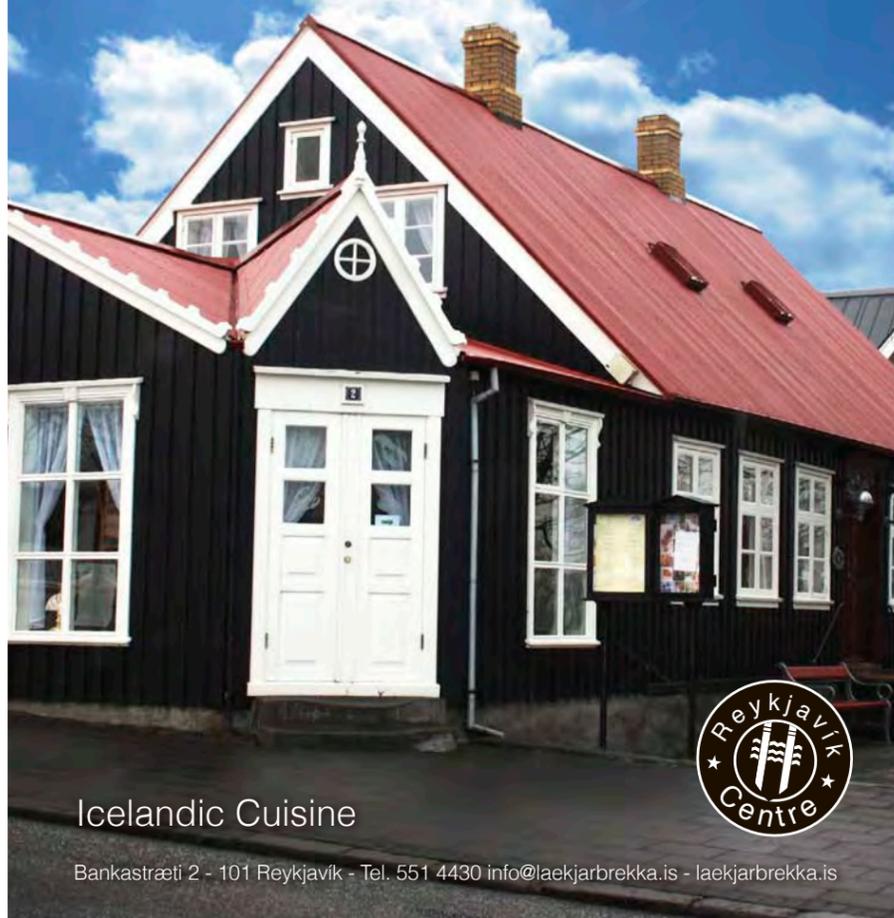
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Page 6



"What followed was a Kafkaesque court case wherein no corpses, no evidence and no realistic motives for the alleged murders materialised."

**A decades old miscarriage of justice gets re-examined**

Page 8



"This increased the amount sediment in Lagarfljót, reducing visibility and thus the amount of sunlight that reaches plants living in the water, which causes fewer plants to grow, leading to a collapse in the population of fish species which subsist on said plants, and therefore also in bird species which eat the fish."

**Another lake bites the dust.**

Page 10



"Aunties will pinch your cheeks and your dad's friends will tell you that the grand old days of youth are behind you while you nod and smile. You have never kissed a girl, never had a sip of wine."

**Icelandic confirmations are no match to sneaking Manischewitz and moshing to Hava Nagila**

Page 28-29



"It's finally time to dip our toes into this newest addition to Iceland's boundless selection of geothermal-driven nature baths. There's no time for a chat in the locker-room, as this slot was booked a long time ago for a 'sexy-showershoot'."

**We went on a date with Retro Stefson and we'll definitely be calling them back**

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April 4 - April 15



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# MUSIC

## CONCERTS & NIGHTLIFE

April 5 - May 9

### Friday April 5

- Harpa**
  - 19:30 Iceland Symphony Orchestra
- Vegamót**
  - 23:00 Gunni Stef
- Faktorý**
  - 22:00 Babies/Positive Vibrations / DJ Pabbi
- Dillon**
  - 22:00 Dorian Gray
- Harlem**
  - 22:00 Solaris Sun Glaze
- Kaffibarinn**
  - 22:00 DJ Alfons X
- Bar 11**
  - 22:00 Dimma & Rekkverk
- Dolly**
  - 22:00 Buggimenn
- Hressó**
  - 22:00 Lára Rúnars
- Glaumbar**
  - 22:00 Suit Up Party
- Prikið**
  - 22:00 Emmsjé Gauti/DJ Árni

### Saturday April 6

- Vegamót**
  - 23:00 Benni B-Ruff
- Harpa**
  - 17:30 Wacken Metal Battle 2013
- Faktorý**
  - 22:00 Mammút / 303 / DJ KGB
- Dillon**
  - 22:00 Contalgen Funeral
- Kaffibarinn**
  - 22:00 DJ Margeir
- Bar 11**
  - 22:00 Jón Þór
- Dolly**
  - 22:00 Brotherhood of Steel
- Hressó**
  - 22:00 Spútnik
- Glaumbar**
  - 22:00 Twisted Disco
- Prikið**
  - 22:00 DJ Benni B Ruff
- Café Rósenberg**
  - 22:00 KK Band

### Sunday April 7

- Harpa**
  - 20:00 Pearls of Icelandic Songs
- Faktorý**
  - 21:30 Live Jazz
- Kaffibarinn**
  - 22:00 DJ Kristinn Pálsson
- Dolly**
  - 22:00 DJ Gulli
- Prikið**
  - 21:00 Cheers Season 1
- Kaffibarinn**
  - 22:00 DJ Hunk of a Man

### Monday April 8

- Kaffibarinn**
  - 22:00 DJ Hunk of a Man
- Prikið**
  - 21:00 DJ House and Prikið Games

### Tuesday April 9

- Kaffibarinn**
  - 22:00 DJ Pilsner
- Prikið**
  - 22:00 Lightbearer

### Wednesday April 10

- Dillon**
  - 22:00 Jam Night
- Harlem**
  - 22:00 DJ Jóni de la Rosa
- Kaffibarinn**
  - 22:00 Extreme Chill
- Dolly**
  - 22:00 OCP
- Prikið**
  - 22:00 Elli from RVK Soundsystem
- Café Rósenberg**
  - 22:00 Dusty Miller

### Thursday April 11

- Dillon**
  - 22:00 Metal Extravaganza
- Harlem**
  - 22:00 DJ Katla
- Culture House**
  - 21:00 Ólöf Arnalds Release Concert
- KEX Hostel**
  - 20:00 Borko
- Bar 11**
  - 22:00 Kjurr & Ceasetone
- Dolly**
  - 22:00 Weirdcore

19  
Apr



**Ste McCabe**  
*The One-Man Band*

Dillon | 22:00 | Free

Since 2006, Ste McCabe has been performing as a one-man band using only a distorted guitar, drum machines, and a synthesizer. His highly politicized indie, queercore, and punk compositions have drawn the attention of LGBT activists and music junkies alike. McCabe's stop-over performance in Reykjavik is sure to give audiences a taste of his eccentric musical style. **JW**

- Hressó**
  - 22:00 Flass
- Culture House**
  - 20:30 Robert the Roommate
- Glaumbar**
  - 22:00 Grime & Dubstep
- Prikið**
  - 22:00 DJ KGB
- Café Rósenberg**
  - 22:00 Gálan & Bjartmar Guðlaugsson

### Friday April 12

- Faktorý**
  - 23:59 RVK Soundsystem / FM Belfast & Prins Pólo / DJ Benni-B-Ruff
- Dillon**
  - 22:00 Ingó Indigó
- Harlem**
  - 22:00 FM Belfast DJs
- Kaffibarinn**
  - 22:00 Lagaffe Tales
- Dolly**
  - 22:00 KÁRI and LOVISA
- Hressó**
  - 22:00 Rúnar Eff
- Glaumbar**
  - 22:00 DJs Silent F\*\*K & Ruy Zardo
- Café Rósenberg**
  - 22:00 Kelly Joe Phelp

### Saturday April 13

- Faktorý**
  - 22:00 Hausar 004 / DJ Plan B
- Dillon**
  - 22:00 Knife Fights & Ofvitarnir
- Harlem**
  - 22:00 Rósinkrans og Gullinstjarna
- Kaffibarinn**
  - 22:00 DJ Kári
- Bar 11**
  - 20:00 Rokkfest 2013
- Dolly**
  - 22:00 Benni B Ruff
- Hressó**
  - 22:00 Timburmenn
- Glaumbar**
  - 22:00 Basic House Effect

- Prikið**
  - 12:00 Fleamarket/DJ Introbeats

### Sunday April 14

- Harpa**
  - 20:00 Pearls of Icelandic Songs
- Faktorý**
  - 22:00 Live Jazz
- Harlem**
  - 22:00 NBA
- Kaffibarinn**
  - 22:00 DJ Kristinn Pálsson
- Culture House**
  - 17:00 Beauty Concert Series
- Prikið**
  - 21:00 Army of Darkness

### Monday April 15

- Harlem**
  - 22:00 Old-school hip hop
- Kaffibarinn**
  - 22:00 DJ Alfons X
- Prikið**
  - 21:00 Drink n Draw Mondays

### Tuesday April 16

- Harlem**
  - 22:00 Wonderism
- Kaffibarinn**
  - 22:00 DJ Símon
- Dolly**
  - 21:00 Pub Quiz
- Prikið**
  - 22:00 Berndsen's Sour Tuesdays

### Wednesday April 17

- Faktorý**
  - 22:00 Engelsholm Castle (DK)
- Dillon**
  - 22:00 Rock Pub Quiz
- Harlem**
  - 22:00 DJ Bear/Lion
- Kaffibarinn**
  - 22:00 DJ Terrordisco
- Dolly**
  - 22:00 Purple Light by the Bar
- Café Rósenberg**
  - 22:00 Þóra Björk

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### Thursday April 18

- Faktorý**
- 22:00 DJ Pabbi
- Dillon**
- 22:00 Audio Nation
- Harlem**
- 22:00 Engelsholm Electronic
- Kaffibarinn**
- 22:00 HúsDJús
- Dolly**
- 22:00 Ice Cream in a Cone
- Hressó**
- 22:00 Famina Futura
- Glaumbar**
- 22:00 Trap & House Night
- Prikið**
- 22:00 DJ Introbeats
- Café Rósenberg**
- 22:00 Lára Rúnars
- Dillon**
- 10:00 Ste McCabe

### Friday April 19

- Faktorý**
- 22:00 It Is Magic vs. Nolo / DJ Óli Dóri
- Harlem**
- 22:00 DJ Ívar Pétur
- Kaffibarinn**
- 22:00 DJ Yamaho
- Dolly**
- 22:00 Plan B
- Hressó**
- 22:00 VS Band
- Glaumbar**
- 22:00 Glow Party
- Café Rósenberg**
- 22:00 Guggurnar

### Saturday April 20

- Faktorý**
- 00:00 Hunk of a Man
- Dillon**
- 22:00 Beggi Smári & Band
- Harlem**
- 22:00 Benni B-Ruff
- Kaffibarinn**
- 22:00 DJ KGB
- Dolly**
- 22:00 DJ YAMAHO
- Hressó**
- 22:00 Goðsögn
- Glaumbar**
- 22:00 Glow Me Away
- Prikið**
- 22:00 House Band/Egill and Bjössli
- Café Rósenberg**
- 22:00 Skúli Mennski

### Sunday April 21

- Harpa**
- 20:00 Pearls of Icelandic Songs
- Faktorý**
- 22:00 Live Jazz
- Harlem**
- 22:00 NBA
- Kaffibarinn**
- 22:00 DJ Kristinn Pálsson
- Prikið**
- 20:00 Cheers Marathon

### Monday April 22

- Harlem**
- 22:00 New Wave Night
- Prikið**
- 21:00 Game night

### Tuesday April 23

- Harlem**
- 21:00 Thule Music Quiz
- Café Rósenberg**
- 22:00 Jón Gunnar
- Prikið**
- 22:00 DJ GaY Latino

### Wednesday April 24

- Faktorý**
- 22:00 Geysir Records showcase
- Harlem**
- 22:00 DJ Danni Deluxe
- Kaffibarinn**
- 22:00 Dubious Brothers DJ Team
- Dolly**
- 22:00 DJ Margeir
- Hressó**
- 22:00 Playmo
- Café Rósenberg**
- 22:00 Robert the Roommate
- Prikið**
- 22:00 Maggi Legó Wednesday

### Thursday April 25

- Dillon**
- 22:00 Desibel Night
- Harlem**
- 22:00 Hits & Tits Karaoke
- Kaffibarinn**
- 22:00 DJ Katla
- Hressó**
- 22:00 Audio Nation
- Glaumbar**
- 22:00 Karaoke Night
- Café Rósenberg**
- 22:00 Dægurflugur

- Prikið**
- 22:00 DJ Moonshine

### Friday April 26

- Faktorý**
- 22:00 DJ Housekell/Benni-B-Ruff
- Dillon**
- 22:00 Esja
- Harlem**
- 22:00 DJ KGB
- Kaffibarinn**
- 22:00 DJ Pabbi
- Dolly**
- 22:00 Lagaffe Tales
- Hressó**
- 22:00 Span
- Glaumbar**
- 22:00 Basic House Effect
- Café Rósenberg**
- 22:00 VOR

### Saturday April 27

- Faktorý**
- 22:00 Lagaffe Tales / Nuke Dukem
- Dillon**
- 22:00 Morgan Kane & Axeorder
- Harlem**
- 22:00 DJ Housekell
- Kaffibarinn**
- 22:00 DJ Símon
- Dolly**
- 22:00 DJ KGB
- Hressó**
- 22:00 Dalton
- Glaumbar**
- 22:00 DJ Cyppe
- Café Rósenberg**
- 22:00 KK & Maggi
- Prikið**
- 22:00 DJ Benni B Ruff

### Sunday April 28

- Faktorý**
- 22:00 Live Jazz
- Dillon**
- 22:00 Hughrif Ambient Night
- Harlem**
- 22:00 NBA
- Kaffibarinn**
- 22:00 DJ Kristinn Pálsson
- Prikið**
- 21:00 Rushmore Movie Screening
- Hafnarborg**
- 20:00 Contemporary Concert



### The Annual Wacken Metal Fest METAL FRENZY!

Harpa - Eldborg | 17:30 | 3500ISK

This year's Wacken Metal Battle will feature six carefully selected bands competing for an opportunity to represent Iceland at the Wacken Open Air Festival in Germany. What's at stake? The band that goes on to represent Iceland will then be competing for the coveted record deal with Nuclear Blast Records, the grand prize in Wacken Germany. For Spectators, this guarantees the very best performances that each of these bands has to offer. JW

### Monday April 29

- Harlem**
- 22:00 Post-Punk Night
- Kaffibarinn**
- 22:00 DJ AnDre
- Prikið**
- 22:00 DJ House

### Tuesday April 30

- Harlem**
- 22:00 DJ Dauði
- Kaffibarinn**
- 22:00 DJ Atli Viðar
- Dolly**
- 22:00 DJ DeLaRosa
- Café Rósenberg**
- 22:00 Slow Train
- Prikið**
- 22:00 DJ Lady and Sura

### Saturday May 4

- Faktorý**
- 22:00 DJ KGB
- Dillon**
- 22:00 Biggi Maus
- Gamli Gaukurinn**
- 21:00 Cosmic Call
- Gay 46**
- 22:00 DJ Veloci
- Glaumbar**
- 21:00 Basic House Effect
- Lebowski Bar**
- 22:00 DJ Jesús
- Prikið**
- 21:00 DJ Introbeats

### Sunday May 5

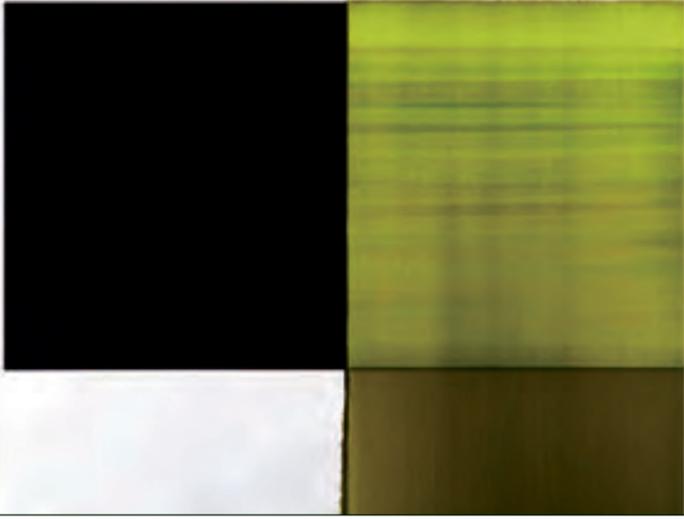
- Faktorý**
- 22:00 Live Jazz

### Monday May 6

- Dillon**
- 22:00 Chill Out Zone: DJ AnDré & Krummi
- Kaffibarinn**
- 22:00 Dabi and Skúl of Life

### Tuesday May 7

- Faktorý**
- 22:00 Witch Mountain (US) & Plastic Gods

**i8**i8 Gallery  
Tryggvagata 16  
101 Reykjavík  
www.i8.is15 March - 20 April 2013  
**CALLUM INNES****HVERFISGALLERI**Hverfisgata 4  
101 Reykjavík  
Iceland+354 537 4007  
f +354 537 4008  
info@hverfisgalleri.is  
www.hverfisgalleri.is**SIGURÐUR ÁRNI SIGURÐSSON**  
28 February - 4 May 2013**THE TIN CAN  
FACTORY**

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culture  
history  
foodlearn **Icelandic** – one day – two days – three  
days – four days – five days – learn how to  
**cook Icelandic dishes** with Icelanders –  
**walk** with the natives around **Reykjavík** –  
learn about the **story of Reykjavík** and  
Iceland and **enjoy** Reykjavík in a **different**  
**way** – a help with **native eyes** beside you –  
**best of Icelandic** ingredients – learn  
**Icelandic** and about Iceland – one **evening**  
– stay with us – **www.skoli.eu****ART****OPENINGS AND ONGOING**

April 5 - May 9

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

April 20

**Kristín Jónsdóttir - Words, Time,  
and the Color of Water**Works from 1984-2013 touching  
various themes on Kristín's  
palette consisting of handwritten  
texts, paintings on plexiglass and  
watercolors on paper.

Runs until May 12

**Gerðuberg**

April 21

**Birds - The Art of Flight**Birds in all possible manifestations  
are the subject of this Springtime  
exhibit.

Runs until June 21

**Hafnarborg**

April 25

**Hellisgerði, Flower and  
Recreation Park**The exhibition looks at the public's  
use of the park, vegetation and  
overall mood of the park in different  
time periods. The exhibition opens  
on the first day of summer in  
Hafnarborg's Svorrissalur.

Runs until June 17

**i8 Gallery**

April 25

**Hamish Fulton Art Exhibition**

British artist works displayed

Runs until June 1

**Kunstschlager**

April 6

**Emily Wardill - Game Keepers  
Without Game**Exhibition presented as part of the  
Sequences festival.

Runs until April 14

**The Living Art Museum**

April 5

**Grétar Reynisson - Decade**Decade by Gretar Reynisson,  
Sequences honorary artist. The  
Living Art Museum is one of  
the founding organisations of  
Sequences, which now is held for  
the 6th time.

Runs until April 14

**Nordic House**

April 11

**Nordic Film Festival**The Festival will be showing films  
from all the Nordic countries. All  
films will be shown with English  
subtitles. There is no entrance fee.

Runs until April 21

May 2

**Drawn**A group of twelve Swedish artists  
will show drawings at The Nordic  
House in connection with the  
exhibition Tecknat they will arrange  
a workshop which will involve a  
creative dialogue about drawing  
with local art students.

Runs until May 26

**Reykjavík Art Museum -  
Hafnarhús**

April 20

**Iceland Academy of the Arts:  
Graduation Exhibition 2013****They Must Be Crazy!****Lárus Sigurðsson & Hallmar Freyr Þorvaldsson - 'GOD'****Reykjavík Museum of Photography**

April 4 - May 21 | Free

Many of us often imagine how our lives would be if we were  
creatures of mythology (okay, yes, some people have god  
complexes). But what about the idea that the gods of ancient Viking  
mythology could be like us? What kind of job would Loki hold  
down? What would Baldr wear? What kind of house would Freyja  
live in? Would they be rich or poor, hard working family-types living  
in the suburbs driving Subaru Forresters or drunken slackers eating  
Styrofoam burgers from the 10-11 for breakfast? Photographer  
Lárus Sigurðsson and designer Hallmar Freyr Þorvaldsson grabbed  
some well-known local faces (such as... it's a surprise!) to  
represent the imagined lives of the mythical beings from Iceland's  
historical texts. Maybe your life isn't so far off from a god's after all.  
**RL**Graduating BA students from  
the Department of Fine Art and  
the Department of Design and  
Architecture show their work  
Runs until May 5**Ongoing****ASÍ Art Museum****Permanence is but a Word of  
Degrees**Unndór Egill Jónsson displays his  
exhibition about life

Runs until April 14

**Eygló Harðardóttir**

Exhibition by Eygló

Runs until April 14

**The Culture House****Medieval Manuscripts, Eddas,  
and Sagas**It includes principal medieval  
manuscripts, such as Codices Regii  
of the Poetic Edda, Prose Edda, law  
codices and Christian works, not  
forgetting the Icelandic Sagas.

On permanent view

**Child of Hope - Youth and Jón  
Sigurðsson**Exploring the life of Icelandic  
national hero Jón Sigurðsson, made  
especially accessible to children,  
families and school groups.

On permanent view

**Millennium - Phase One**A 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 displays books of  
Icelandic cultural history dating fromthe 16th century to the present day.  
Works include the oldest published  
versions of the Sagas, Edda Poems  
and more.

On permanent view

**The Einar Jónsson Museum**The museum contains close to 300  
art works including a beautiful tree-  
clad garden adorned with 26 bronze  
casts of the artist's works is located  
behind the museum.

On permanent view

**Gerðuberg Cultural Centre****Hens by Eduardo Perez Baca**Baca's exhibition of hens are painted  
with wax crayon and plywood.

Runs until April 7

**Hafnarborg****My Perception**

Exhibition by Erla Stefánsdóttir

Runs until April 21

**i8 Gallery****Ragna Robertsdóttir**A collection of landscapes which are  
applied directly onto the wall.

Runs until March 9

**Kling and Bang****Knitting Iceland**Come and knit at Laugavegur 25,  
3rd floor, every Thursday, 14:00 -  
18:00.

On permanent view

**Latin Dance Studio, Faxafen 12****Guided Practica**Argentine tango, Sundays from  
17:30-19:30. Register by phone 821  
6929 or email [tangoadventure@](mailto:tangoadventure@gmail.com)  
[gmail.com](mailto:gmail.com), 500 ISK for students, 800  
ISK for others. Six- week courses are  
also available.

On permanent view

**Museum of Design****A Glimpse of Glit**

An exhibition on chosen items from

**THREE Course Menu**

Sushi - Lamb or fish - Chocolate Kr. 6.990-

[www.rub23.is](http://www.rub23.is)魚 [RUB23] 海  
FISH + MEAT + SUSHIRUB23 | Aðalstræti 2 | 101 Reykjavík | Phone: +354 553 5323 | [reykjavik@rub23.is](mailto:reykjavik@rub23.is)RUB23 | Kaupvangsstræti 6 | 600 Akureyri | Phone: +354 462 2223 | [rub23@rub23.is](mailto:rub23@rub23.is)



The REYKJAVÍK GRAPEVINE

# IN YOUR POCKET

WHATS INSIDE | Reykjavík Map | Happy Hour Guide | Places we like | Best of Reykjavík | Practical Info

Reykjavík Area

April 5 - May 9

Keep it in your pocket

## Five Weeks

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

24 APR

Outer Space  
What Music Looks Like



**EVE Online Symphony**  
2900 / 3900 ISK available at [midi.is](http://midi.is)  
Harpa, Eldborg, @ 21 :00

In celebration of the 10th anniversary of EVE Fanfest, the Icelandic Symphony Orchestra will be performing Wednesday evening in the pre-show. The internationally acclaimed ensemble will be recreating the melodic sounds of EVE Online in harmony with the visual images displayed on the big screen. This ultimate audio-visual immersion serves as a colorful starting point for Fanfest 2013. **JW**

**13 April EMO Knife Fights & Ofvitarnir** The inaugural concert by a fresh and provocative new band, who play noisy 90s style indie rock with artful lyrics and really nice pants.

**17 April SOUL The Songwriter's Collective, Engelsholm Castle (DK)** consists of more than ten songwriters, all rooted in contemporary music. The members have their own individual style, ranging from soft Nepali pop to dramatic diva soul.

**Sundays CLASSICAL Pearls of Icelandic Songs** features compositions about elves, ghosts, outlaws, and much more. These classical folksongs exemplify an important cultural aspect of Iceland.

**26 April RAWK Esja** is a legendary Icelandic rock band playing in this rare and intimate concert. The band features Krummi Björgvins and Daníel Ágúst in an indisputable powerhouse of a pairing.

6 APR

Dance Bonanza  
THE BIG SLEEP



**THE VIKING**  
FAMILY BUSINESS FOR 50 YEARS

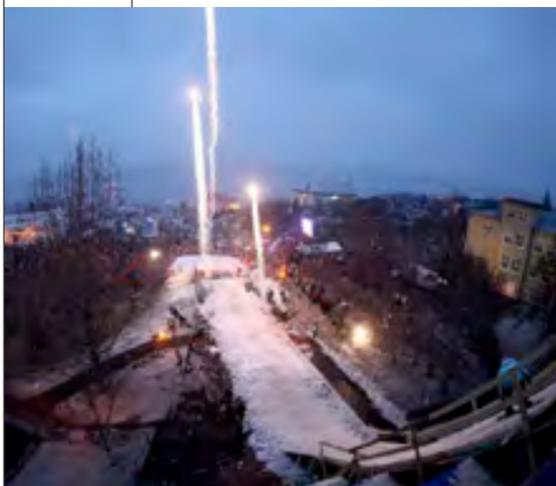
THE VIKING : INFO

Laugavegur 1 • Reykjavík • 581 1250  
Hafnarstræti 3 • Reykjavík • 551 1250  
Hafnarstræti 104 • Akureyri • 461 5551  
Aðalstræti 27 • Ísafjörður • 456 5552  
email: [info@theviking.is](mailto:info@theviking.is)  
[www.theviking.is](http://www.theviking.is)



4-7 APR

Extreme Sports  
Come On, Guys! Let's Go Get Some Fuckin' Mountain Dew!



**AK Extreme**  
3000 ISK  
Various locations in Akureyri

Alright bros! Throw your boards in the Rover and go North to hit the slopes! There's gonna be some sick ass jumping going on and fuckin' partying with some wicked rappers all weekend! My main bro G-Money is tight with those sponsor dudes from Burn and they're gonna hook us up with so many energy drinks so all we gotta do is bring the fuckin' coconut vodka! I am so fuckin' pumped! It's gonna be sick!!! EXTREEEEEEEEE!!! **RL**



**Vinnslan in Norðurpóllinn**  
1000 ISK  
Norðurpóllinn, Seltjarnarnes @ 20 :00

The notorious art collective Vinnslan celebrates its fifth version of the self-titled performance *Vinnslan*. This is the last piece produced in Norðurpóllinn, so fireworks are anticipated. The collective is known for experimenting in their performance art and disrespecting any boundaries that could possibly exist between different art forms. You can surely expect a rollercoaster through the various territories of the creative, when the collective bids their old theatre farewell. **SKK**



Laugavegur 4 • 101 Reykjavík • Iceland • 555 4477

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## sushibarinn

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Open: Monday-Saturday 11:35-22:30  
Sunday 11:00-22:00

A

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HAFNARSTRÆTI 5 & SKÓLAVÖRÐUSTÍGUR 10

B

**Café Loki**  
in front of  
Hallgrímskirkja



Enjoy some solid homemade Icelandic food  
Open 9-21 Mon-Sat and 11-21 Sundays

C

# MAP

## Places We Like

### Food

#### 1 Ban Thai

Laugavegur 130

Although some claim service at Ban Thai can at times be lacking, most have no complaints about the food. One of the few Thai restaurants in Iceland, Ban Thai gives the diner a unique experience in both atmosphere and cuisine.

#### 2 Höfnin

Geirsgata 7c

Located at the old Reykjavík harbour, Höfnin offers the perfect setting to enjoy some fresh seafood. This charming restaurant serves up traditional Icelandic food in a rustic, but elegant and charming environment. Their service is also quite friendly.

#### 3 Noodle Station

Skólavörðustígur 21a

While their menu is limited to three choices—chicken, beef, and vegetarian—there's just something about Noodle Station's noodles that keeps folks hooked. Noodle Station also provides an international atmosphere that's been missing from Reykjavík—this is very welcome.

#### 4 Munnharpan

Austurbakki 2

Danish cuisine with the inherent French influence and a little more French sprinkled on top. Munnharpan is owned by the same people that run Jómfrúin, a long-standing favourite in the local scene. The meals are mostly suitable with plenty of light courses offering a selection of smørrebrød (Danish open faced sandwiches) mixed with classic French courses.

#### 5 Dill

Sturlugata 5

Pioneering New Nordic Kitchen style cuisine in Iceland, Dill Restaurant has very quickly gained status as a Reykjavík favourite. Using fresh and classic Nordic ingredients exclusively, Dill offers a unique dining experience whether you go for their short and simple lunchtime menu or the extensive evening one.

### Drinking

#### 6 Micro Bar

Austurstræti 6

One of Reykjavík's newest bars also boasts one of the city's largest selection of draught beers. It carries eight different kinds of beer on tap, as well as bottled beer from microbreweries in Iceland, Denmark, Belgium and Scotland. No doubt the biggest beer selection in town.

#### 7 Bar 11

Hverfisgata 18

At Bar 11, DJs call the tunes every weekend, emphasising old rock'n'roll classics, chart-toppers and sing-along hits (but only if they rock). The packed dance floor tends to turn into a war zone on weekends – an appealing experience if that sort of thing appeals to you. Thursdays often feature great live music.

#### 8 Kaffifélagið

Skólavörðustígur 10

There is coffee, and then there is coffee. The kind that makes your mouth foam with delight at the mere thought of it. The kind that can wake you up from a horrible day's slumber, instantaneously drying your snow-wet feet. Kaffifélagið may be small, but it more than makes up for it in quality and atmosphere. Take your coffee to go or drink your espresso at the bar.

#### 9 KEX Hostel

Skúlagata 28

The hippest 'hostel' in town, and possibly anywhere. Located literally steps away from Reykjavík harbour, with a gorgeous view of Esja, it's a popular hangout amongst Icelanders who go there to enjoy the restaurant and bar, with a great selection of bottled and on-tap beers, pub grub and a great atmosphere.

### Useful numbers

Emergency number: **112**

Medical help: **1770**

Dental emergency: **575 0505**

Information: **118**

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

BSR: **561 0000**

### Tax Free Refund

Iceland Refund, Aðalstræti 2, tel: 564 6400

### Tourist information

Arctic Adventures, Laugavegur 11,

tel: 562 7000

City Centre, Aðalstræti 2, tel: 590 1550

Iceland Excursions – Grayline Iceland,

Hafnarstræti 20, tel: 540 1313

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

### 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](http://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.

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.



D

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Save Water, Drink Beer

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## New In Town



### 13 Fish.

Skólavörðustígur 23

Not one, but two Fish restaurants have opened up, one on Ingólfsstræti, the other on Skólavörðustígur. Whether it's the catch of the day or a chicken pesto sandwich you're ordering, you can't go wrong!

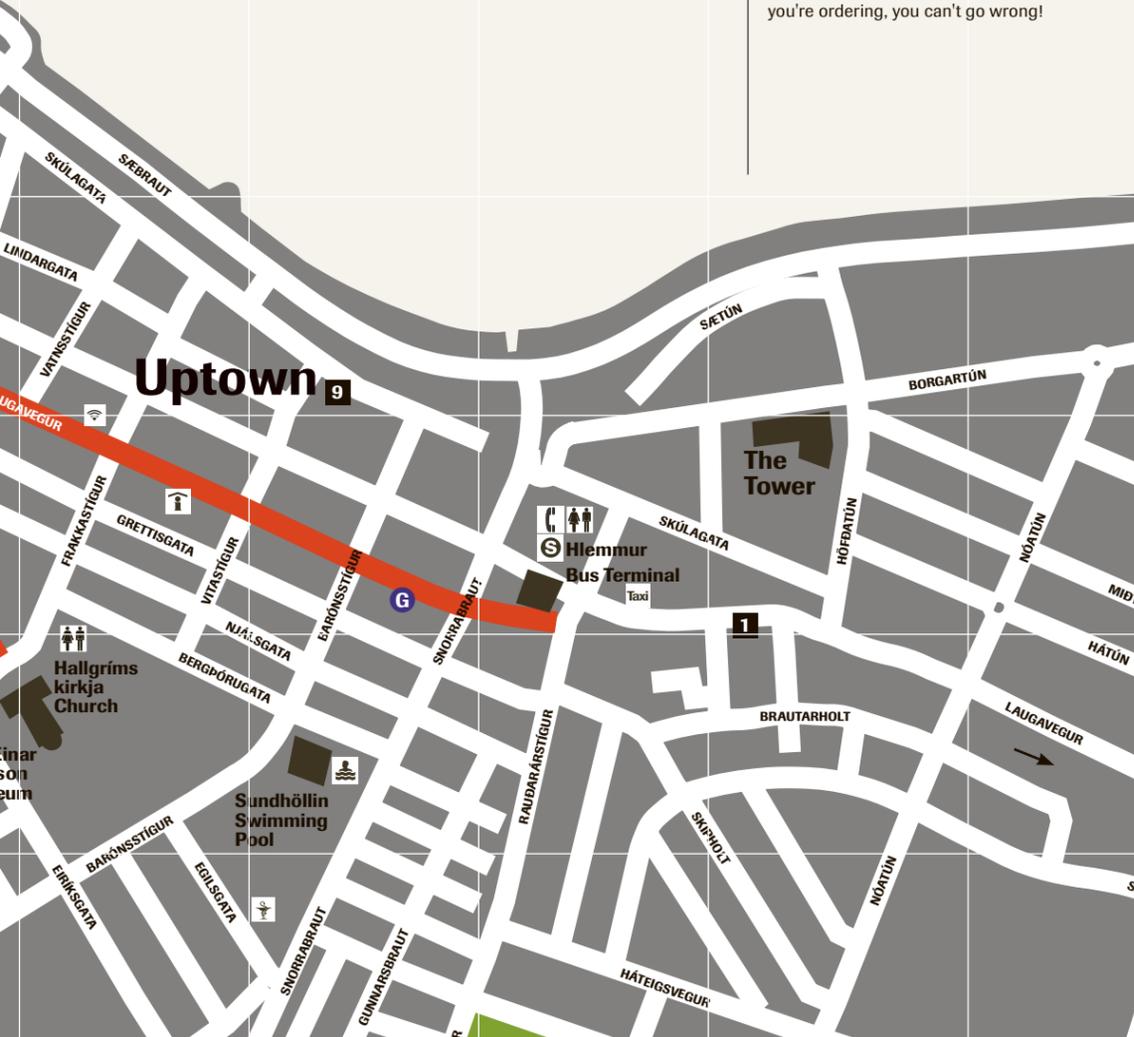
## Venue Finder Music & Entertainment

- Amsterdam**  
Hafnarstræti 5 | **D3**
- Austur**  
Austurstræti 7 | **E3**
- B5**  
Bankastræti 5 | **E4**
- Babalú**  
Skólavörðustígur 22 | **F5**
- Bar 11**  
Hverfisgötu 18 | **E5**
- Bjarni Fel**  
Austurstræti 20 | **E4**
- Boston**  
Laugavegur 28b | **F6**
- Café Paris**  
Austurstræti 14 | **E4**
- Celtic Cross**  
Hverfisgata 26 | **E5**
- Den Danske Kro**  
Ingólfsstræti 3 | **E4**
- Dillon**  
Laugavegur 30 | **F6**
- Dolly**  
Hafnarstræti 4 | **D3**
- Dubliner**  
Hafnarstræti 1-3 | **D3**
- Esja**  
Austurstræti 16 | **E4**
- English Pub**  
Austurstræti 12 | **E3**
- Faktory**  
Smíðjustígur 6 | **E5**
- Gamli Gaukurinn**  
Tryggvagata 22 | **D3**
- Gay 46**  
Hverfisgata 46 | **E5**
- Hressó**  
Austurstræti 20 | **E4**
- Mánabar**  
Hverfisgata 20 | **E5**
- Kaffi Zimsen**  
Hafnarstræti 18 | **D4**
- Kaffibarinn**  
Bergstraðastræti 1 | **E5**
- Mánabar**  
Hverfisgata 20 | **E5**
- Nýlenduvörverzlun Hemma & Valda**  
Laugavegur 21 | **E5**
- Næsti Bar**  
Ingólfsstræti 1A | **E5**
- Ólsmiðjan**  
Lækjargata 10 | **E4**
- Ólstofan**  
Vegamótastígur | **E5**
- Prikið**  
Bankastræti | **E4**
- Rósenberg**  
Klapparstígur 25 | **E5**
- Sólón**  
Bankastræti 7A | **E4**
- Thorvaldsen**  
Austurstræti 8 | **D3**
- Vegamót**  
Vegamótastígur 4 | **E6**

**Hornið**  
Restaurant - Pizzeria

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

Lunch offers every day.  
Open every day from 11.00 to 22.30  
For reservations call 551-3340



## Museums & Galleries

- ART67**  
Laugavegur 67 | **F7**  
Mon - Fri 12 - 18 / Sat 12 - 16
- ASÍ Art Museum**  
Freygata 41 | **H6**  
Tue-Sun 13-17  
www.listsafn.is
- Árbæjarsafn**  
Kistuhyllur 4
- The Culture House**  
Hverfisgata 15 | **E5**  
Open daily 11-17  
www.thjodmenning.is
- The Einar Jónsson Museum**  
Eiríksgröta | **G6**  
Tue-Sun 14-17  
www.kulptur.is
- Gallerí Ágúst**  
Baldursgata 12 | **G5**  
Wed-Sat 12-17  
www.galleriagust.is
- Gallerí Fold**  
Rauðarárstígur 14-16 | **G8**  
Mon-Fri 10-18 / Sat 11-16 / Sun 14-16  
www.myndlist.is
- Kaolin**  
Skólavörðustígur 22 | **E5**  
www.kaolingallery.com
- Gallerí Kling & Bang**  
Hverfisgata 42 | **E6**  
Thurs-Sun from 14-18  
this.is/klingogbang/
- Ásgrímur Jónsson Museum**  
Bergstaðastræti 74  
Mon-Fri through Sept. 1
- Gerðuberg Cultural Centre**  
Gerðuberg 3-5  
Mon-Thu 11-17 / Wed 11-21 / Thu-Fri 11-17 / Sat-Sun 13-16  
www.gerduberg.is
- Hitt Húsið**  
Gallery Tukt  
Pósthússtræti 3-5 | **E4**  
www.hitthusid.is
- i8 Gallery**  
Tryggvagata 16 | **D3**  
Tue-Fri 11-17 / Sat 13-17 and by appointment. www.i8.is
- Living Art Museum**  
Skúlagata 28 | **E7**  
Wed, Fri-Sun 13-17 / Thu 13-22. www.nylo.is
- Hafnarborg**  
Strandgata 34, Hafnarfjörður  
www.hafnarborg.is
- Mokka Kaffi**  
Skólavörðustígur 3A | **E5**  
www.mokka.is
- The National Gallery of Iceland**
- Frikirkjuvegur 7 | F4**  
Tue-Sun 11-17  
www.listsafn.is
- The National Museum**  
Suðurgata 41 | **G2**  
Open daily 10-17  
natm.is
- The Nordic House**  
Sturlugata 5  
Tue-Sun 12-17  
www.nordice.is
- Restaurant Reykjavík**  
Vesturgata 2 | **D3**  
www.restaurantreykjavik.is
- Reykjavík 871+/-2**  
Aðalstræti 17 | **E3**  
Open daily 10-17
- Reykjavík Art Gallery**  
Skúlagata 30 | **E7**  
Tuesday through Sunday 14-18
- Reykjavík Art Museum composed of Hafnarhús**  
Tryggvagata 17 | **D3**  
Open 10-17  
Thursday 10 - 20
- Kjarvalsstaðir**  
Flókagata 24  
Open 10 - 17
- Ásmundarsafn**  
Sigtún  
Open 10 - 17  
More info on www.listsafnreykjavikur.is
- Reykjavík City Library**  
Tryggvagata 15 | **D3**  
Mon 10-21, Tue-Thu 10-19, Fri 11-19, Sat and Sun 13-17  
www.sim.is/Index/Islen-ska/Artotek
- Reykjavík Maritime Museum**  
Grandagarður 8 | **B2**  
www.maritimemuseum.is
- Reykjavík Museum of Photography**  
Tryggvagata 16 | **D3**  
Weekdays 12-19 / Sat-Sun 13-17 - www.ljosmyndasafnreykjavikur.is
- Sigurjón Ólafsson Museum**  
Laugamestangi 70  
www.lso.is
- SÍM**  
Hafnarstræti 16 | **D4**  
Mon-Fri 10-16
- Skörin**  
Aðalstræti 10
- Spark Design Space**  
Klapparstígur 33 | **E5**  
www.sparkdesignspace.com

**PICCOLO ITALIA**

Small, authentic Italian restaurant in Central Reykjavik. Fresh pasta made on the premises every day. Pizza, ravioli, gnocchi and other traditional Italian dishes.

Cheese, olives, fresh baked bread - all from Italian ingredients.

**Cozy local, friendly service.**

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WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/PICCOLO.ITALIA

## Shopping

**10 Red Cross Shop**  
Laugavegur 12B

Our favourite place to find bargains. They've got a nice selection of Icelandic sweaters, and sell all types of clothes for both men and women. Pretty nice if you're low on cash, especially considering the outrageous prices you can pay elsewhere in this darn city.

**11 Brynja**  
Laugavegur 29

In business for more than 90 years now (and with good reason), this Laugavegur hardware store offers everything you need to fix up your house, and compliments it with some helpful and knowledgeable clerks that can even guide you through simple repairs. So good, you'll forget Bauhaus even exists!

**12 Rauðhetta og úlfurinn**  
Skólavörðustígur 8

Rauðhetta og úlfurinn are an enduring favourite when it comes to supplying the good people of Reykjavik with their trendy haircuts—which is odd because trends keep changing and fashion is notoriously fickle. "I can always count on excellent service at Rauðhetta og úlfurinn, they make me look good every time," one reader noted.

- 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 Reykjavík City Library, Tryggvagata 15

- The National and University Library, Arngrímsgata 3
- Tourist Information Centre, Aðalstræti 2
- Icelandic Travel Market, Bankastræti 2
- Reykjavík Backpackers, Laugavegur 28
- Swimming Pools**  
There are several swimming pools in 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.

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

**The Official Tourist Information Center**

Aðalstræti 2 • 101 Reykjavík  
Tel. 590 1500 • www.visitreykjavik.is

**Reykjavík City Library**  
Tryggvagata 15 | **D3**  
Mon 10-21, Tue-Thu 10-19, Fri 11-19, Sat and Sun 13-17  
www.sim.is/Index/Islen-ska/Artotek

**Reykjavík Maritime Museum**  
Grandagarður 8 | **B2**  
www.maritimemuseum.is

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

**Sigurjón Ólafsson Museum**  
Laugamestangi 70  
www.lso.is

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

**Skörin**  
Aðalstræti 10

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# Best Of Reykjavík

Every year around the beginning of July, we make a BEST OF REYKJAVÍK ISSUE celebrating some of what makes Reykjavík-life worthwhile, posting some good entries into a hopefully never-ending discussion. The primary purpose of BEST OF REYKJAVÍK is celebration! It's about big-upping stuff, giving mad props to it and patting it on the shoulder. The following are some nice tips we culled from BEST OF REYKJAVÍK 2012, which you can find in full at [www.grapevine.is](http://www.grapevine.is)



### BEST POOL: LAUGARDALSLAUG



Swimming is a favourite pastime in Iceland. Most towns around the country have a swimming pool and Reykjavík has seven of them. They do in fact all have their charm, but we think it's safe to call Laugardalslaug the best pool. Why? Because it's huge, it has a bunch of hot tubs at varying temperatures, it has a killer waterslide and the stadium seating blocks out the cold northerly winds, which are usually accompanied by sunny rays. Not to mention, it was just remodelled this past Winter.

Located at Sundlaugavegur 30



### BEST BOOKSTORE: MÁL OG MANNING



After several years of humiliation, Mál og menning—once Reykjavík's favourite bookstore—seems to have finally gotten its shit together in a big way. Aside from building up a respectable (for Iceland) stock of literature and magazines and hosting various fine literary events (readings, discussions, etc), they have opened an art gallery on their top floor in conjunction with the crew from Havarí and generally seem in good spirits. This is great news for downtown Reykjavík!

Located at Laugavegur 18



### BEST MAINSTREAM BAR: THE ENGLISH PUB



The Grapevine is not exactly super mainstream, but we think a mainstream bar is one that appeals to a wide range of people and plays music that appeals to the masses, featuring for instance cover bands and troubadours playing lots of Bubbi songs. English Pub fits the bill pretty well. However, the Lebowski Bar—formerly Oliver—was a really, really close second.

Located at Austurstræti 12

## A GUIDE THAT FUCKS YOU UP

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

**101 Hótel**  
Every day from 17:00 to 19:00. Beer for 450 ISK, wine for 645 ISK.

**Austur**  
Every day from 20:00 to 00:00. Beer for 495 ISK and wine 550 ISK.

**B5**  
Every day from 16:00 to 22:00. Beer 550 ISK, cider 750 ISK, wine 550 ISK.

**Bjarni Fel**  
Every day from 17:00 to 19:00. 2 for 1 beer for 890 ISK.

**Boston**  
Every day from 16:00 to 22:00. Beer 500 ISK. Wine glass 500 ISK, wine carafe 1000 ISK.

**Celtic Cross**  
Every day from 17:00 to 20:00. Gull and Tuborg for 500 ISK.

**Den Danske Kro**  
Every day from 16:00 to 19:00. 2 for 1 beer and wine for 900 ISK each.

**Dillon**  
Every day from 16:00 to 20:00. 2 for 1 beer for 850 ISK.

**Dolly**  
Every day from 16:00 to 20:00. Beer 500 ISK and wine 500 ISK.

**Dubliner**  
Every day from 16:00 to 20:00. 2 for 1 beer (Pilsner Urquell) for 1000 ISK.

**Faktóry**  
Every day from 17:00 to 20:00. Gull beer for 500 ISK.

**Fálkinn bistro**  
Every day except Sundays from 17:00 to 22:00. Beer for 500 ISK and wine for 500 ISK.

**Harlem**  
Every day from 17:00 to 22:00. Beer 550 ISK, wine 700 ISK.

**Hemmi og Valdi**  
Every day from 12:00 to 20:00 (to 22:00 for Viking Lager). Draft beer for 550 ISK, Viking Classic and Viking lager. Wine for 700 ISK.



## Download the FREE Grapevine Appy Hour app!

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

**Hilton Hotel Bar**  
Every day from 17:00 to 19:00. Beer for 500 ISK and wine for 650 ISK.

**Hótel 1919**  
Every day from 16:00 to 19:00. 2 for 1 beer for 1000 ISK, white wine for 1190 ISK, Red wine for 1290 ISK, Cocktail of the Day for 1919 ISK.

**Hótel Holt Gallery Bar**  
Every day from 16:00 to 19:00. Stella for 475 ISK, Kaldi for 550 ISK, Wine for 695 ISK, sparkling wine for 750 ISK, Cocktail of the Week for 950 ISK.

**Hótel Plaza Bar**  
Every day from 17:00 to 19:00. Beer for 500 ISK.

**Kaffi Zimsen**  
Sunday - Thurs from 17:00 to 22:00. 2 for 1 beer for 800 ISK.

**Kaldibar**  
Every day from 17:00 to 20:00. 2 beers or 2 glasses of wine for 900 ISK, 2 for 1 on all drinks.

**Kolabrutinn**  
Every day from 17:00 to 19:00. Beer for 500 ISK. Wine for 700 ISK. All cocktails 1000 ISK. Champagne glass 1500 ISK.

**Lebowski Bar**  
Every day from 16:00 to 19:00. 2 for 1 beer for 900 ISK and wine for 1000 ISK.

**Micro Bar**  
Every day except Saturday from 16:00 to 19:00. Selected draft microbrew for 500 ISK, 2 for 1 on beer on Saturdays.

**Miðgarður Bistro bar**  
Every day from 17:00 to 19:00. 50% off all drinks. Beer for 500 ISK, wine for 600 ISK.

**Obladi Oblada**  
Every day from 12:00 to 20:00. Beer for 600 ISK.

**Prikið**  
Weekdays from 16:00 to 20:00. 2 for 1 beer for 690 ISK.

**Roadhouse**  
Friday and Saturday 22:00 - 23:00. 2 for 1 Beer for 790 ISK, wine for 790 ISK.

**Slippbarinn**  
Every day from 17:00 to 19:00. 50% off beer 475 ISK and wine 500 ISK.

**Stofan**  
Every day from 17:00 to 20:00. Beer for 500 ISK and wine for 600 ISK.

**Tapashúsið**  
Every day from 16:00 to 18:00. 2 for 1 beer for 950 ISK and wine 1150 ISK.

**Uno**  
Every day from 17:00 - 19:00. 50% off all drinks. Beer for 450 ISK, wine 575 ISK.

**Uppsálar - Bar & Café**  
Every day from 17:00 to 19:00. 2 for 1 Beers for 900 ISK, except Tuborg Classic for 950 ISK, wine for 1100 ISK.

**Pinghólsbar**  
Every day from 17:00 to 19:00. Viking beer for 500 ISK.

# ART ONGOING

— continued —

the Glit Pottery from between the years 1958 and 1973.  
*Runs until May 26*

## The National Gallery Old Treasures

A display of past Icelandic and foreign artist.  
*Runs until May 5*

## Foreign Influences

A collection of various foreign artworks which influenced the Icelandic Art.  
*Runs until May 5*

## The National Museum

### Across Greenland, 1912 - 1913

This exhibit features photos taken by four explorers who traversed across Greenland for a year.  
*Runs until May 26*

### 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*

### The People Þórgata

Alda Lóa Leifsdóttir documents the residents of Þórgata through photographs over an eight year span. She aims to capture the beauty and individuality of the residents.  
*Runs until May 26*

### Behind the scenes - making of a museum

Concerning the 150th anniversary, the national museum invited a group of students to create an exhibition.  
*Runs until May 12*

### Photography in Iceland 1970 - 1990

*Runs until May 26*

### Icelandic silverwork

A collection of the Icelandic silver work is displayed. The exhibition shows pieces from different time periods.  
*Runs until May 26*

## Nordic House

### Water and Earth

A Jewellery exhibition presented by a Finnish-Icelandic group who let them inspire by the wild nature  
*Runs until April 14*

### The Long Moment by Cooper and Gorfer

Sarah Cooper and Nina Gorfer combine digital photography and classic painting. Since 2005 they have worked together and had various exhibitions in Europe  
*Runs until April 21*

## The Icelandic Phalological Museum

The museum contains a collection of more than two hundred and fifteen penises and penile parts belonging to almost all the land and sea mammals that can be found in Iceland.  
*On permanent view.*

## The Reykjavík City Library

The collection centers around new Nordic literature, both fiction and nonfiction. The library lends out novels, academic publications, audio books and more.  
*On permanent view*

## Reykjavík Art Museum - Ásmundarsafn

### The Fire Within

A collection of sculptures by Ásmundur Sveinsson housed in his



## Ministry Of Silly Walks Iceland Dance Company premieres 'Walking Mad'

Reykjavík City Theatre, Listabraut 3

April 12 - May 28 | 20:00 | 3.900 ISK

Socrates once said that life's greatest blessings come by way of madness. As long as it's not completely incapacitating, losing one's mind can be the best way to find creative energy. Most great art has been made by people who were right on the edge of a total madness, just past the brink, or just full-on irrevocably insane. Whatever the mental state of the dancers and choreographers at the Iceland Dance Company, we can at least expect to find humour and delight from the madness of their newest production, 'Walking Mad'. The evening will begin with a redux of their production 'Ótta', a word which translates to the wee hours between midnight and dawn when a creative streak is most likely to strike hard. **RL**



Find all art listings  
online  
[listings.grapevine.is](http://listings.grapevine.is)

former home. The pieces explore three major themes: the woman as lover, the brutality of war and the unknown frontier of outer space.  
*Runs until April 14*

## Reykjavík Art Museum - Hafnarhús

### Erró - Graphic Art, 1949-2009

For the first time the general public are able to view Erró's graphic art spanning half a century.  
*Runs until August 25*

### Spill - Ívar Valgarðsson

The artist comprises three drips of paint which are on the floor of the Art Museum and three photographs.  
*Runs until April 14*

## Reykjavík Art Museum - Kjarvalsstaðir

### Kjarval - Key Works

Reykjavík Art Museum draws on its extensive collection of works by Jóhannes S. Kjarval for ongoing exhibitions at Kjarvalsstaðir.

## 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, open daily 10:00-17:00, 1.100 ISK per adult, 650 ISK per person in groups (10+) and free for children 18 and under.  
*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

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

# Experience Icelandic Art and Design



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

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Erla Stefánsdóttir**

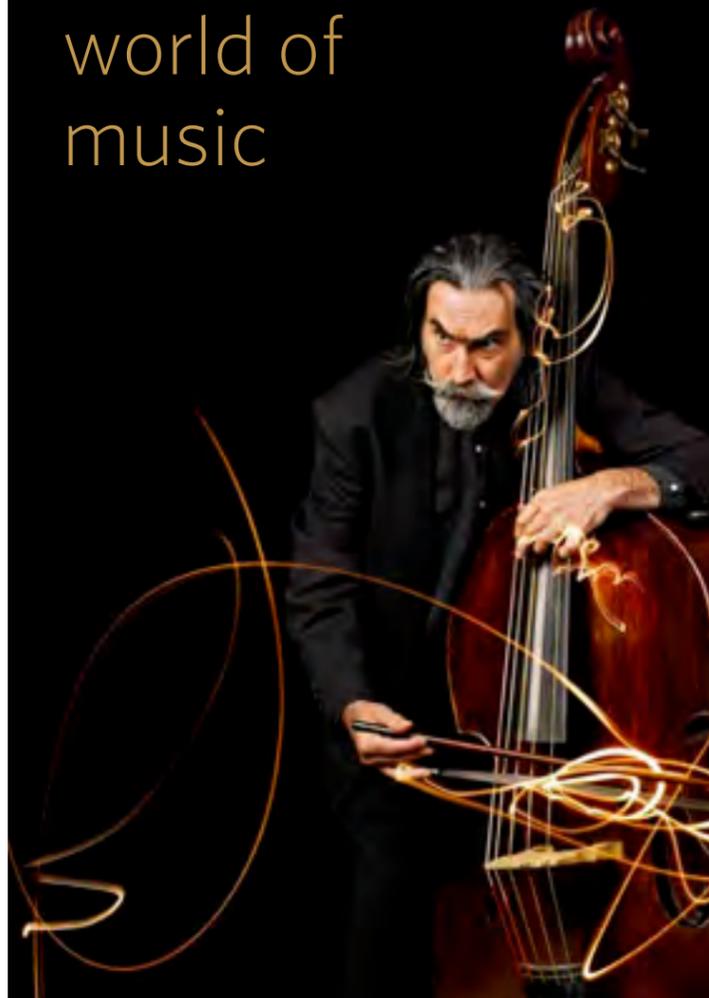
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by Patricia Pormar



## A New Flavour In Town

Located in what is arguably the most tastefully preserved hotel in Reykjavík, Borg has a lot to live up to—but is off to a great start.

### Borg Hótel Borg

Pósthússtræti 11,  
101 Reykjavík  
Lunch: 11:30-14  
Dinner: Sun-Thurs 18-22, Fri-Sat 18-23

#### What we think

Fresh and exciting, good value for great food

#### Flavour:

A Southeast Asian/Caribbean take on classic Icelandic ingredients

#### Ambiance:

1930s dining-salon glamour

#### Service:

Unsophisticated and faltering, but cheerful

**Price for 2 (with drinks):**  
7.000-12.000 ISK



Hótel Borg's newly renovated interiors are a celebration of the hotel's 1930s art deco heritage coupled with a few modern touches. It's the kind of place you'd pick to have a fancy martini with James Bond, wearing your boldest red lipstick—and yet the restaurant is hardly an establishment at all. In the past couple of years it has changed names and themes more often than the Icelandic political parties change their agendas. But there's a new

cook in town. Fresh from the Bahamas, Chef Völundur Snær Völundarson has taken over the kitchen and his attempt to revive it is definitely worth a taste.

A friendly host greeted us when we arrived on a Friday night and we were seated straightaway. The menu contained a short but intriguing repertoire of dishes.

We decided to order the tasting menu, which at 7,990 ISK cost little more than a starter and main course but consisted of a sample platter of starters, another of entrées and a dessert. What followed was a parade of traditional Iceland ingredients in Halloween costumes—wonderful but almost unrecognisable. My favourite starters were the salmon with roe of plaice, charred to perfection, and the tangy Asian-style octopus salad that fizzed and sparked on my tongue. Our main course included a wonderfully rich-tasting lamb in sweet barbecue sauce and the silky-soft beef with noodle cake. The latter was the real star of the show. It reminded me of a Vietnamese pho soup minus the broth, brimming with flavour and carefully nuanced spices.

A true performer, however, saves her best tricks for the grand finale, and that is dessert. Rich but not heavy, this near-liquid carrot-and-blood orange cake, served with candied walnuts, white chocolate syrup and orange ice cream, is something you don't just eat—you have an affair with it.

When you're in a posh setting, you expect the service to match your sur-

roundings, but Lounge left me confused. The waiters, who were dressed in denim shirts and suspenders, were certainly friendly, but their performance needs polishing. Here's why: A sommelier helped us navigate the lengthy and impressive wine list—a rare service in all but the finest restaurants in Iceland—but another waiter brought us the wine after the starter had been served. It was presented to me and then poured hurriedly into two glasses without a testing sample. When I finished it, I spent a good fifteen minutes staring at my empty glass, wondering if I should refill it myself. The evening evolved into a confusing game in which we sometimes poured the wine ourselves and sometimes the waiters did it for us. At the end of the meal, our waiter asked us if we'd like to know what was for dessert ("Yes please!") to which he replied brightly, "Me too!" Points for humour, but some would find the lack of sophistication hard to digest. Would you like to know what kind of service to expect at Lounge? Me too!

Despite these arbitrary standards, we left with a pleasant buzz on our tongues, and it's simply difficult to be unhappy in such a gorgeous setting. This place has potential, but it will depend on how they hone their service. Hótel Borg is a landmark in Reykjavík—it's time its restaurant is one, too.

 PATRICIA PORMAR  
 ALÍSA KALYANOVA





## No Reason To Start Throwing Tomatoes

...but you might want to withhold applause

### Rossopomodoro

Laugavegur 40a, 101 Reykjavík  
Tel: (354) 561-0500  
Rossopomodoro.is  
Info@ Rossopomodoro.is  
Mon-Thurs 11-22, Fri-Sat 11-23,  
Sun 17-22

#### What we think

Not overly exciting, but good for groups looking for a common denominator

#### Flavour:

Homely Italian, basic but reliable

#### Ambiance:

Family-friendly, cosy and casual

#### Service:

Quick and efficient, neither friendly nor inattentive

#### Price for 2 (with drinks):

6.000-9.000 ISK



I have walked passed Rossopomodoro ("The Red Tomato") nearly every single day over the past couple of years and never once have I seen it empty during opening hours. Since its opening a few years ago, Rossopomodoro has maintained a steady

clientele and, despite the fact that few restaurants seem to thrive so far up Laugavegur, which is the main thoroughfare, it seems to have carved itself a permanent niche on Reykjavík's restaurant scene. I decided it was finally time to go and see for myself what has made it such a relative hit.

The first thing I noticed is something I would never have considered before my friends all started having babies: it had a casual, child-friendly appeal, without being unromantic. There also was plenty of space between tables, something that nobody fully appreciates until they've had to navigate strollers around people's chairs while carrying a monstrous diaper bag.

I'm a danger-seeker when it comes to pasta, but the selection on the menu, with its absence of gnocchi or any exotic ravioli stuffing, quickly bored me. Pizza lovers, on the other hand, shouldn't be disappointed; there were about two dozen varieties to choose from. The wine list contained well-known international labels as well as a few interesting Italian wines, mostly Chiantis and Valpolicellas. Bottles were reasonably priced; however, a single glass of the house wine at 1490 ISK was one of the most expensive I'd seen at a restaurant.

Since the restaurant played it safe with the menu we decided to do so as well, and stuck to our long-standing favourites: spaghetti Bolognese and the mushroom ravioli in sage and butter sauce. Our food arrived promptly, served in bowls the size and shape of upside-down sun hats. My ravioli came doused in a silky butter sauce, perfectly salted, although the pasta itself was a bit starchy. The sage, while fresh, was barely audible of over the noise of the cream and butter. Nevertheless, the food was hearty and my helmet-sized portion disappeared much sooner than I'd anticipated at the first bite. The same fate befell my partner's spaghetti, although the meat in his sauce was slightly dry and crumbly.

Neither of us walked out disappointed, though from the start our expectations certainly hadn't been soaring. While serious foodies will need to go elsewhere to electrify their palates, there is comfort to be had in the simplicity of Rossopomodoro, which is almost refreshing in the wake of so many trendy sushi restaurants popping up in Reykjavík every 15 minutes. If you're looking for a relaxed and unpretentious time, Rossopomodoro will please the crowd, if it's a none-too-picky one.



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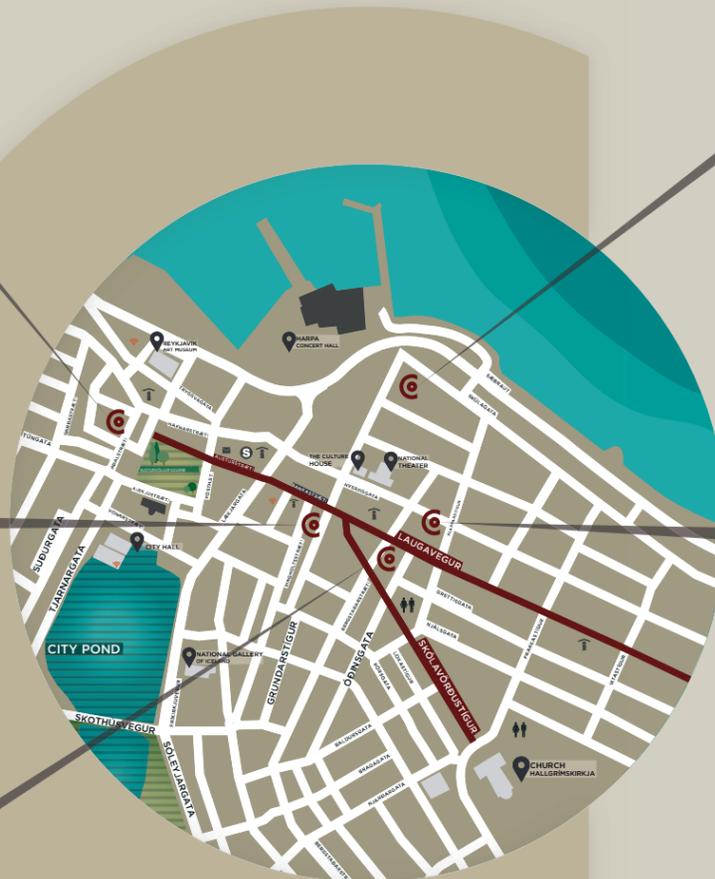


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