



*The*  
**REYKJAVÍK  
GRAPEVINE**

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In this issue:

**News:** Organ Donors + Nu-Burlesque + Sanna

**Culture:** Woman Goes To War + Blábankinn

**Music:** Geisha Cartel + SEINT + Skaði + Curver

**Food:** We Tried Every Stand At Grandi Mathöll

**Travel:** The Big Earth Of Stóruð + Beer Baths

**ICELAND WINS WORLD CUP SPECIAL ISSUE\***

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**SPECIAL THANKS:**  
Snorri Barón

**ABOUT THE PICTURE:**  
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**FROM THE EDITOR**

## Go Smite Yourself!



Valur Grettisson

We live in a time of dissolution. Social media has created a repressive divide between people, countries, genders, and even family members. We can all feel this. We're all sick and tired of this constant feud; of the repetitive debates about PC-ism, and the gulf between people's perceptions of their society. Many have chosen to be silent on social media, lurking around and watching others screaming at each other in a pointless debate about... whatever.

time as you are. Even those who you're debating with so fiercely on the internet. It's easy to forget this common ground. That's also a part of universal humanity—to think that you are alone.

Icelanders have now, like many other countries, a unique opportunity to unite again. As a nation as well as humans. Our national football team has gone to Russia. And maybe they'll lose all of their games—but it doesn't matter. Because for these few weeks, we will scream, shout, and celebrate as one nation. We'll probably hug the guy next to us at the bar when Iceland scores, and we'll cry together when we don't. We will do the tacky HÚH! move without cringing. And we will sing that unsingable Icelandic anthem like a goddamn pro.

Many of us have lost faith in our our government, our society, and the forgetting of our universal humanity; that everybody feels love at some point, and anger, and happiness. Sometimes we forget that everything that you feel in your own heart, someone else has felt before, or is having exactly the same experience at the same

We will be a part of something important. The whole world will be united, for one month. Because football is not only a game—it's this universal feeling, that finally, we are whole again. ♥



**Alice Demurtas** is from Sardinia, but moved to Iceland in 2012. She worked in fashion journalism for four years before moving on to culture and news. An avid reader of anything by Zadie Smith, Alice can't function without coffee. She also loves to fall asleep to the sound of crinkly paper.



**Elin Elisabet** is an illustrator and cartoonist born and raised in Borgarnes. At the tender age of 15, Elin moved to Reykjavik and hasn't looked back, except for the annual springtime impulse to move someplace quiet and keep chickens. Elin likes folk music, stationery, seal videos, the country of Ireland, and eggs.



**John Rogers** an Englishman who first joined us as a music writer, later graduating to Managing Editor. A constant traveller, a lover of art, culture, food and nightlife, he edits our Best of Reykjavik, Best of Iceland and Iceland Airwaves sister publications. His first book, "Real Life," was published in 2014.



**Hannah Jane** is based out of Iceland by way of NYC. An alumnus of Columbia University, Hannah has lived on five continents and speaks three languages fluently, which is very impressive. Her visionary work is known for expanding the definitions of emotion, introspection, and above all else, taste.



**Juliana Iluminata Wilczynski** is a Brazilian-American university student. Her love of the Icelandic language led her to Iceland for the first time in 2016. Somehow at age 21, she kinda sorta lives in five countries at the same time. She loves obscure linguistics facts, samba, and a good bloody mary.



**Sveinbjörn Pálsson** is our Art Director. He's responsible for the design of the magazine and the cover photography. When he's not working here, he DJs as Terrordisco, hosts the Funkþátturinn radio show, or sits at a table in a Reykjavik café, drinking copious amounts of coffee and thinking about fonts.



**Þorsteinn Davíðsson**, a notorious graffiti artist, graphic designer and a hell of a layout guy. He's the only man in town that knows who's behind every badly drawn tag you can find on a wall or a pillar-box in the city. He's a family man with a dark streak but some say he is a dark streak with a sense of responsibility.



**Paul Fontaine, News Editor** Originally from Baltimore, Paul has lived in Iceland since 1999. He was also the first foreign-born member of the Icelandic Parliament, an experience he highly recommends for anyone who wants to experience a workplace where colleagues work tirelessly to undermine each other.



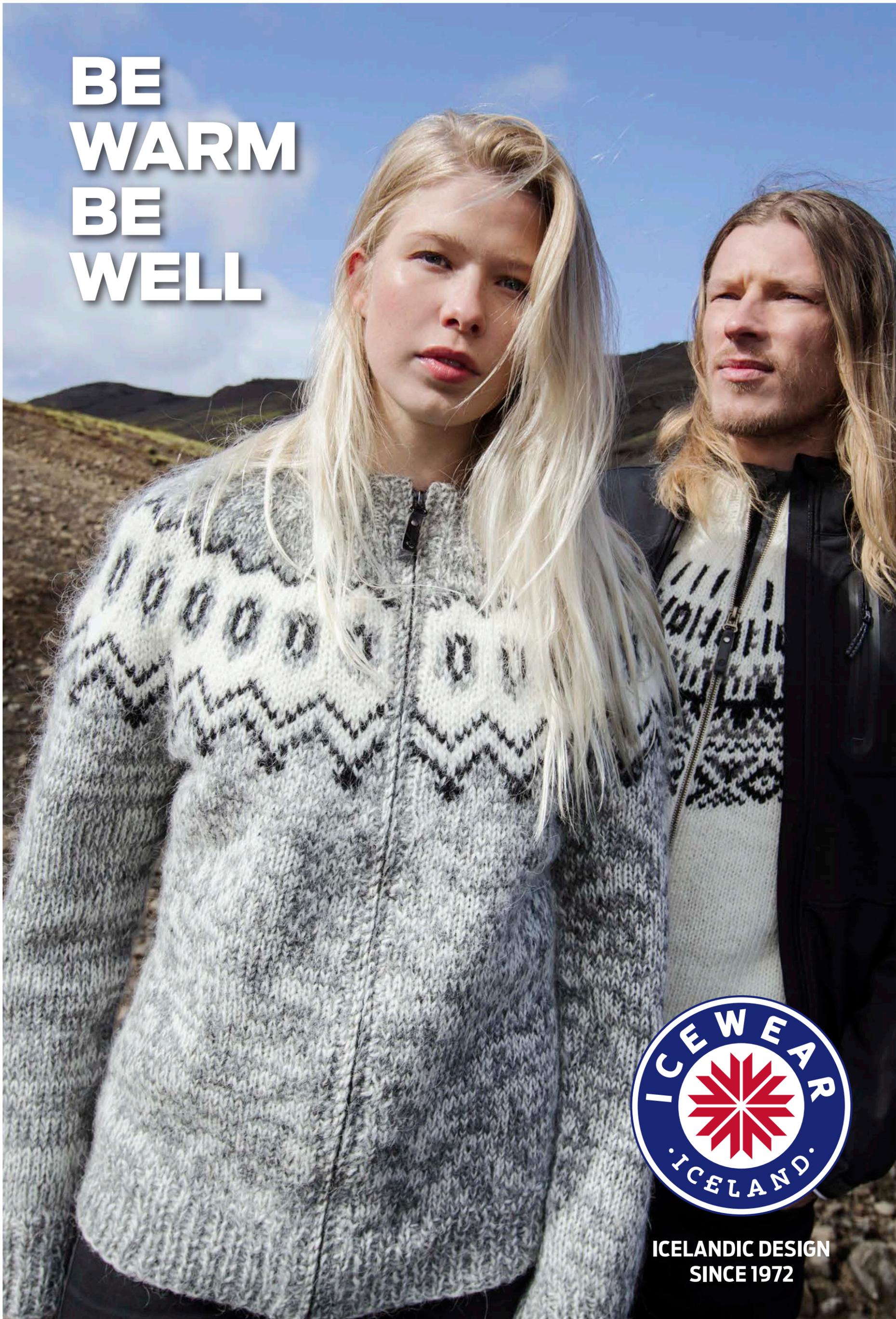
**Lóa Hlín Hjalmtýsdóttir** is a national treasure. One of Iceland's leading illustrators, when she's not drawing she's the front-woman of Icelandic electro-pop supergroup FM Belfast. Her comic strip Lóabrátorium appears every issue on page eight, and is also available as a daily dose on her Twitter.

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HÚH!

# What Are Icelanders Talking About?

Football, football, football and backlash

Words: Paul Fontaine Photo: Art Bicnick

It used to be that Eurovision was Iceland's one and only chance to shine on the international stage. But now, with Iceland going to the World Cup, we have another reason to celebrate. As with Eurovision, there are the fans, those who are maybe a little too excited about the event, and the buzzkill detractors.

First, there was a promo video from the Icelandic Football Association (KSÍ), which featured a hyperbolic Viking-themed illustration with the hashtag #fyriríslan (#foriceland). We do a lot of Viking-themed promotion of Icelandic football here at the Grapevine, so it was interesting to see the reactions to this illustration. Namely, many Icelanders expressed embarrassment, with music critic Arnar Eggert Thoroddsen saying it had "Aryan undertones", while many non-Icelanders thought it was a great representation of the national men's team.

**"The apex of consumption and wastefulness"**

In the same vein, a supergroup of Icelandic musicians released a song that was presumably supposed to pump us up for the upcoming event. Instead, the vast majority of Icelanders have reacted much the same way they do to our Eurovision entries: pouring scorn and ridicule on the effort, calling it cheesy and schmaltzy, and being generally embarrassed.

But the crowning point in all this has been recent news that came out that the Icelandic men's team would be bringing 2,900 pairs of socks with them to Russia. For the record, washing machines do exist

in Russia, and no one is entirely sure why a couple dozen players and staff need so many socks, but Rakel Garðarsdóttir, the spokesperson for Vakandi, a group dedicated to more sustainable living, has criticised it as being "the apex of consumption and wastefulness".

## Fool shivers

There's a special word in Icelandic for the feeling of being embarrassed for someone else: kjanahröllur, literally "fool shivers". It's a word that's been popping up a

lot when Icelanders talk about the news and pep-up events around the World Cup.

What's striking is that the more embarrassed Icelanders are by how some are choosing to represent the nation at the World Cup, the more foreign fans of the Icelandic men's team seem to absolutely love these representations. You could probably chart a line graph illustrating this: as Icelandic kjanahröllur rises, so too does the enthusiasm of the foreign fanbase.

Icelanders, like people everywhere, are creatures of contradiction. They won't be pushed around by larger nations, and are very proud of their language and culture. But that's supposed to be an inside thing. When these attitudes are expressed to the world at large, they suddenly become self-deprecating and embarrassed for themselves. Icelandic national pride is always going to tread a thin line between self-satisfaction and fool shivers..



ELÍN ELÍSBET



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These all almost ended up in somebody's attic

## Ancient Artefacts (Nearly) Lost In The Garbage

Literally throwing away history

Words: Paul Fontaine

Photo: mbl.is/Arnþór Birkisson

MBL reports that the National Museum of Iceland received a peculiar phone call the other day, when they were asked to inspect a series of strange objects that had landed in one of charity shop Good Shepherd's collection bins. The items in question, wrapped in toilet paper and placed in a plastic box, turned out to be priceless artefacts from antiquity.

Amongst the items discovered were spear points, axe heads, arrowheads and similar items, all of them obviously remarkably old.

### Thousands of years old

Archeologist Vilhjálmur Örn Vilhjálms-son was amongst those who saw these objects on the news when the story was first reported. By his estimation, they are actually far older than the Dark Ages estimation that reporters were bandying about. Writing on his blog on the matter, he believes that the spear heads, for example, likely date to the time of Christ, or possibly even older.

But the story gets even weirder.

Hey, that's my stuff! Arró Stefánsson wrote about the matter on Facebook and, as it turns out, he has a special connection to the items.

"Around 4AM last Sunday morning I was awoken by the incessant ping- ing of my phone getting flooded with messages from my family and friends asking if I knew anything about a particular news story that appeared in one of the weekend newspapers," he wrote. "I almost had a heart attack

when I read the arti- cle...in short, it said that a box containing various ancient arti- facts had been found at one of the rubbish heaps in Reykjavík."

**"Writing on his blog on the matter, he believes that the spear heads, for example, likely date to the time of Christ, or possibly even older."**

Arró confirmed that his cousin had thrown the items away; the oldest item in the collection is 3,000 years old. He is currently in correspondence with the National Museum, who now have possession of the artefacts that were nearly lost to history.

### ASK A

## Philosopher

Q: What is the island mentality, and do you think it exists in Iceland?



Words: Juliana Iluminata Wilczynski Photo: Kristinn Ingvarsson

We asked philosopher Gústav Adolf Bergmann Sigurbjörnsson, PhD candidate in philosophy at the University of Iceland and chairman of the Icelandic Philosophy Society, about the island mentality in Iceland.

Island mentality is a colloquial term and, as such, is rather vague. It is loosely supposed to capture two characteristics that are said to be typical of island communities (though not exclusive to them). On the one hand there is a positive kind of exceptionalism, the belief that your community is generally better than other communities, and on the other there is a sort of provincialism that is characterized by a disregard or enmity to outsiders and outside values— a certain kind of narrow-mindedness. All communities establish norms, ways of being and ways of conceptualising the world that are particular to that community and relate to its history, its present and suggest to it a future. If the imagery that these ideas evoke are generally positive they are likely to relate to other communities with an air of superiority. This is not something particular to islands or closed off communities. It's typical in-group behaviour and you can find it in large communities ("Make America great again!") as well as in small ones ("HÚH!"). The exceptionalism that characterises Icelanders is strongly linked to our self-image as one of the Nordic states, evoking both the perceived successes of the states of the North Atlantic as well as some, well, rather confused notions of a Viking heritage.

### FOOD OF ICELAND

# Malt- extrakt

There are few beverages as iconic to Icelandic culture as Maltextrakt. The closest available comparison is the Russian drink kvass, in that both are non-alcoholic beverages made from grains used in the process of making beer (note: Maltextrakt is 1% alcohol, rendering it

even less powerful than the near-beer sold in grocery stores).

As the name suggests, Maltextrakt's active ingredient is liquid malt extract, which gives it its molasses colouring and rich flavour. You can also probably taste traces of licorice and cara-

mel. Not a drink that you chug on a hot day, it's more something you would sip with beef, lamb or chocolate. It's been billed as good for digestion since the early 20th century and one half-litre can will definitely prove why.

It cannot be emphasised enough just how Icelandic this drink is. In 2013, on

the 100th anniversary of Maltextrakt's creation, Egils Brewery released a celebratory commercial that is so Icelandic you can smell sulphur and fermented shark as you watch it. Brewed with virtually the same recipe since 1913, Maltextrakt is mostly consumed around Christmas time, when it is mixed with orange soda to

create Jólalabland, or "Christmas mix", but it's actually quite nice on its own. An Icelandic classic. PF



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An Icelander winning stuff, yesterday

WHAT HAVE WE WON?

# The 2018 World Cup

The Vikings smite all

In 2018, having previously established themselves as a force to be reckoned with at the Euro 2016 tournament, Iceland went to the World Cup finals for the first time in the country's history. With a pre-tournament period plagued by injuries to star players and lukewarm results in friendly games, expectations were low. But it quickly became apparent that Iceland weren't at the tournament to make

Words: John Rogers

Photo: Art Bicnick

up the numbers: they came to smite.

The first game, against Lionel Messi's fading Argentina side, could not have been better. The Iceland team defended heroically against Lionel's wily ways, eventually lashing home via Alfreð Finnbogason for a famous win. Croatia and Nigeria were rattled by Iceland's combative style, and were duly swept aside as we romped into the knockout stages.

What followed is an unforgettable passage in footballing history. When Iceland faced Cristiano Ronaldo's Portugal, it was a grudge match, after the forward's snide remarks at Euro 2016 about Iceland's "small time mental-

ity." But even Iceland's most fervent supporters didn't expect the team to give Portugal such a mighty thrashing. There were face moths, #Ronaldotears, and goals galore. HÚH!

**"Even Iceland's most fervent supporters didn't expect the team to give Portugal such a mighty thrashing."**

Iceland duly smited the German side, and then beat Brazil in a memorable final that ended with Gylfi Sigurðsson smashing in the final penalty with such immense force that it opened a rip in the space-time continuum. The earth was sucked inside, and reappeared in another dimension. And that's how you're able to read this report before the tournament even takes place. Wow! 🍷

WORD OF THE ISSUE

Let's say you're playing a friendly game of football in Akranes and your buddy Þórgrímur wanders a little too close to the opposing team's goal. The ball is on the other side. He's behind the defence. You hold your breathe. The whistle blows. "HELL," cries the referee. Say what?

Yes, the Icelandic word for a sports penalty literally translates to 'hell'. Yes, that hell, as



Viti

in that red, warm, burning place that starts with the unbaptised and virtuous pagans and ends with Judas encapsulated in ice and Satan himself. For plebs, this seems a bit extreme, but for sports fans, it's totally accurate. Watching your team get a red flag is fucking hell.

HJC

LÓABORATORIUM



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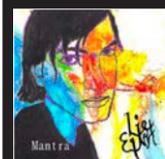
The must-hear tracks of the issue



**Fufanu - Hourglass**  
Fufanu are a genre-skipping band that have released krautrock epics, new wave tracks, alt-techno, and indie-rock. Their new track is another swerve—it's a languid, mournful song that you might not even recognise as Fufanu initially. It comes from the first 'Dialogue' EP in a promised series that the band declares is "an exercise in exploring our multiple sonic personalities." JR



**HRNMR - Ég held það bara! ft. Smjörvi & Dadykewl**  
Ég held það bara' might genuinely be the best Icelandic rap video of all time. Featuring godzilla and lots of green screen 'flying', it—as well as the song itself—proves that all you need to create something iconic is imagination, bitch. HRNMR always impresses with his bizarre as hell rap and this is no exception. Bump it in your Prius. HJC



**List Einn - Mantra**  
List Einn's debut single opens with a groovy bassline that immediately makes you move your ass to the dancefloor. It offers a few surprises, however—after the funky beginning, the song develops into a melancholic electro-ballad, perfected with a catchy melody and repeated lyrics—making it an irresistible mantra of self-realisation PW



**We Made God - Beyond The Pale**  
Seven years after the band's sophomore album "It's Getting Colder", the Icelandic post-rockers return with a new record. There is still the same gorgeous despair in their music, framed by a cold yet atmospheric guitar sound, and an emotional vocal delivery. If you ever needed a soundtrack for a ten-month long winter, this is it. PW



**Countess Malaise feat. Lord Pusswhip - Do You**  
The Countess and Lord are back with some goth realness for us peasants to get down to. Make sure your subwoofer is working, because this song demands it to be performing at its best. Close your eyes, and let Countess Malaise's sermon and Lord Pusswhip's beats consume you. JW



**When 'Airy Met Fairy - When I'm Old**  
Lovers of múm, sóley, Cocorosie and all things krútt might enjoy this new single from Thorunn Egilsdóttir's project; determined haters of said genre might find themselves throwing their coffee cup at the wall from all outeness. Either way, the video, which features a mysterious gold-painted figure, is worth a look. PW

Listen, watch & more tracks: [gpv.is/play](http://gpv.is/play)



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Jacqueline takes to the stage

# Jacqueline Boxx's Subversive World of Burlesque



A groundbreaking stage artist comes to Iceland

Words:  
Juliana  
Illuminata  
Wilczynski

Photo:  
Courtesy  
Jacqueline  
Boxx

Baltimore native Jacqueline Boxx has created quite a wave in the world of burlesque. She is shattering stereotypes in a commonly misrepresented art form, and pushing the boundaries of burlesque. "I must have been six years old when I started dancing, and I've done all different kinds of dance," says Jacqueline. "I just loved to dance my whole life." Now, she is a burlesque

dancer, performer, and teacher of burlesque. But what sets her apart from other burlesque acts? Jacqueline is a disabled burlesque star, and performs while seated.

Jacqueline's mobility started decreasing when she was a student, and worsened after she finished university and moved to Tucson, Arizona. This was exacerbated

by a broken leg, and things went from bad to worse. "I had to stop doing everything dance related while we hunted for an answer. We finally found a doctor who was able to diagnose me with Ehlers-Danlos Syndrome."

## A heartbreaking diagnosis

Her life came to a standstill when her doctors advised her to stop dancing for good. One fateful day, she went with a friend to see a performance of a burlesque troupe in Tucson. They had a sign-up area for people that were interested in being mentored by the burlesque troupe. Although she was still nervous about the strict advice that her doctors had given her, her friend encouraged her to continue pursuing her dreams, telling Jacqueline, "If you sign up you're gonna find a way to do it, and I believe that you can figure out a way."

Through the help of the mentorship, she was able to

develop an act that could be performed while seated. Jacqueline was initially hesitant to use mobility aids, and remembers thinking, "that could never be for me, that's for other people." Eventually, she gave in, and bought her very own wheelchair. "My mentors were the ones who convinced me that a wheelchair could be a really positive thing, and that it would help me have a more fulfilling and active life," she says. "I was spending all of my time hiding inside, not being able to spend time with friends or go do anything because it was too difficult. So, I got my first wheelchair as a result of that workshop."

## Sit down, be humble

Jacqueline made her first wheelchair into a throne, by spray painting it gold and making tufted cushions for it. "I created an act around my first wheelchair and how it made me feel because it was so positive," she says. "I got to spend time with my friends and stop hurting myself and I was taking care of my body for the first time. It was like me coming into a seat of power, and it changed my life for the better. Ever since then I was like, 'I can still be a performer, I can even still be a dancer, even if I'm not putting weight on my legs. That's not required in order to dance.'"

Many years later, Jacqueline will soon perform her first international show ever in Iceland. "One of the issues with performing locally to me is that it's very inaccessible. Baltimore's a very old city, which means that a lot of performance venues are in very, very old buildings, so they don't have elevators, everything has lots of stairs, so I have a lot of trouble finding places that I can physically perform in."

## Iceland and burlesque

Iceland is the perfect choice for her first international performance and first international burlesque classes because of her special connection to the country, having been here twice previously. Jacqueline's honeymoon was in Iceland, and she and her husband renewed their vows at a ceremony in Hellnar. "There's something about the landscape of Iceland that is so deeply meaningful to me," she says. "It's this feeling of extremes. Like you have these vast flat areas, ridiculously tall mountains, volcanoes, glaciers, and this beautiful gray sky with black mountain peaks, and black sand against it."

Margrét Maack, a pioneer of the Icelandic burlesque and cabaret scene, saw that Jacqueline was in Iceland through social media and asked her to perform and teach in Iceland, thus connecting her to the local scene.

## Subversiveness of burlesque

Burlesque is not just a hobby for Jacqueline. It's much more than that. "It's important to me because it's a way for people who have felt marginalised or disenfranchised to speak on their own terms, to decide what they want to say and how they want to say it," she explains.

The stage of burlesque has also become a site of social justice. "People are using it as an art form to do difficult things and say difficult things, and one of the most difficult things I think is for women to love themselves and how they look. That's just not socially acceptable," she says. For women, burlesque has an incredible relatability, and a powerful message that resonates. "Being on a stage and saying, 'I love how I look, and I love who I am' is one of the most subversive things a woman can do." ❖

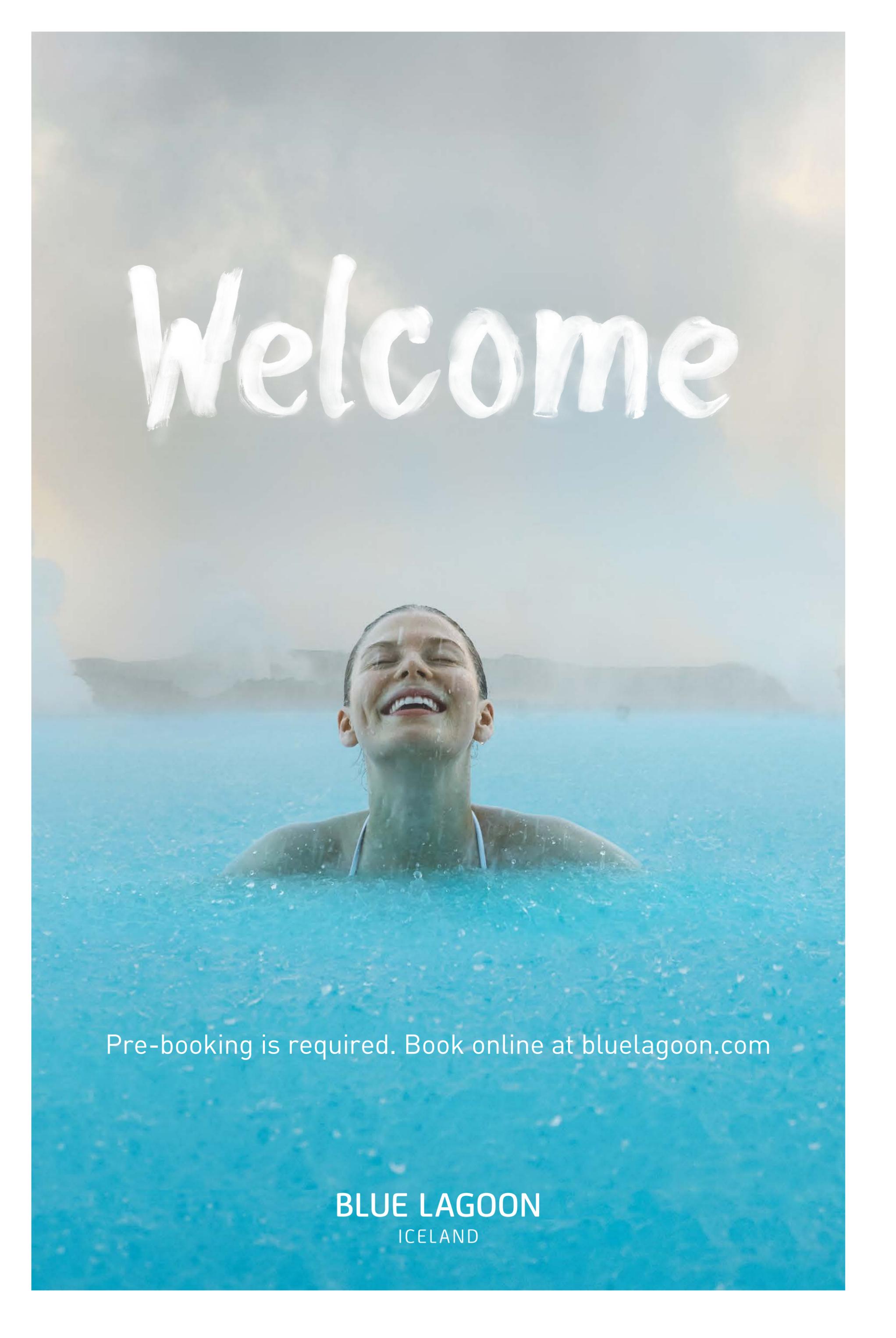
**"Being on a stage and saying, 'I love how I look, and I love who I am' is one of the most subversive things a woman can do."**

FLATEY



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A woman with her eyes closed and a joyful smile is partially submerged in clear, bright blue water. The background shows a hazy, mountainous landscape under a soft, overcast sky. The word "Welcome" is written in a large, white, brushstroke-style font across the upper portion of the image.

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### But isn't Iceland already socialist?

One of the more prevailing myths about Icelandic society is that full equality has been achieved here; that we jailed all the bankers, poverty doesn't exist, and the feminists have won. The reality, of course, is very different from this.

"I think there's this huge myth that in Iceland we don't have any classes," Sanna explains. "This isn't true, but everyone just wants to keep things hush-hush and doesn't want to talk about it. They say everyone is equal here in Iceland and everyone has equal rights. I think the main reason why the Socialist Party came about is because we feel the parties on the left wing abandoned their socialist background, their roots. They're more of a movement catering to the middle class, and forgot about the grassroots; the people they're supposed to be fighting for. So we feel the so-called left haven't been doing their job. The working poor, pensioners, the disabled, immigrants — we in the Socialist Party built our base on the experience of these people. That's the difference. We are the people."

While there are leftist parties in Iceland, their approach to inclusivity can leave a lot to be desired.

"People will say 'hey let's have a board meeting about people with disabilities' and think to ask maybe one person with a disability to come and sit at this meeting," Sanna says. "They think they're including all voices, when they should be actively talking to lots of people who have this experience."

To counter this, Sanna intends to make it her mission to make the voices

Words:  
Paul Fontaine

Photo:  
Timothée  
Lambrecq

The revolution begins here

# At The Edge Of The Vanguard

Sanna Magdalena Mörtudóttir of the Socialist Party speaks up

Sanna Magdalena Mörtudóttir did not envision herself as a politician. In many ways she still doesn't; not an establishment politician, anyway.

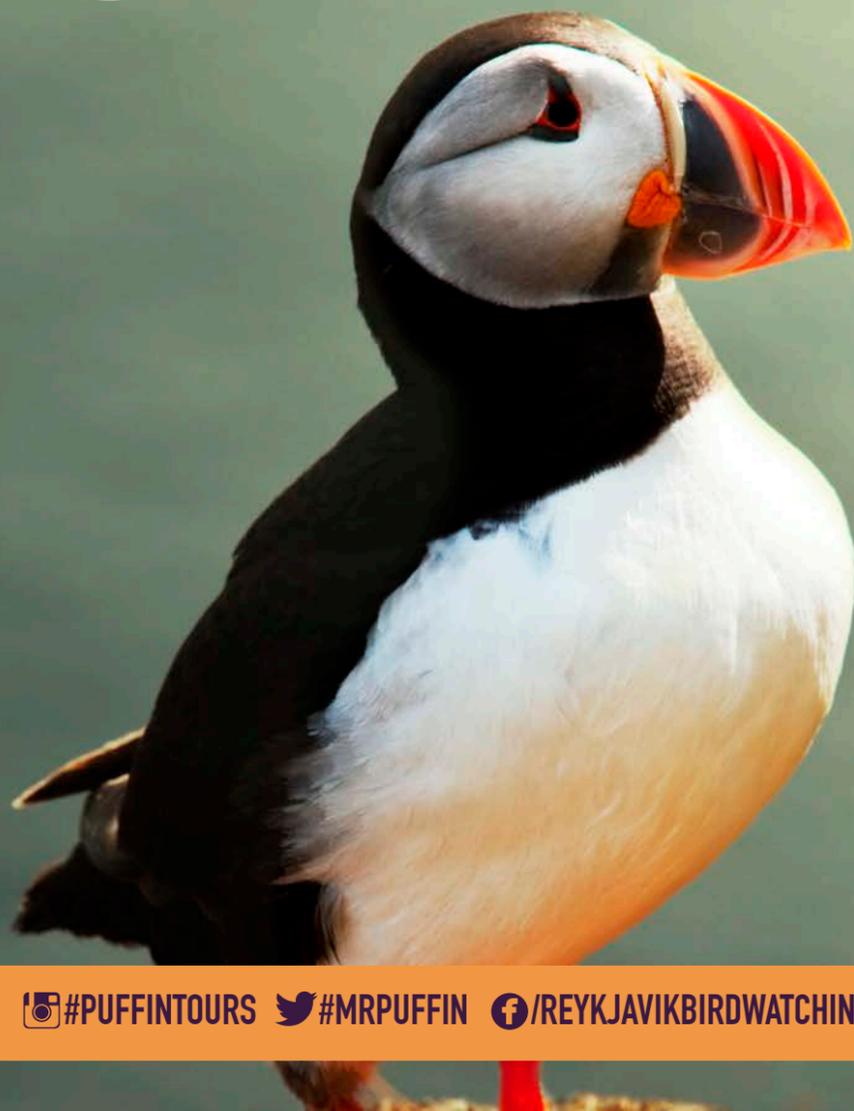
However, through growing up in poverty, and being raised as a woman of colour by a single mother, she was always keenly aware of the problems

of inequality in Icelandic society. So she spoke from her experience, in the form of a lengthy Facebook status a year and a half ago, which caught on like wildfire. Shortly thereafter, she helped found the Socialist Party.

Sanna doesn't dwell much on theory. Her party hasn't even yet defined itself as Marxist-Leninist, Maoist, or any other established form of socialism. Instead, she sees her mission as a fairly simple one: "We're about power to the people. Giving them a seat at the table where the power decisions are made. The people that experience being powerless in this society should have more say in the factors that affect their lives."



# Mr. Puffin



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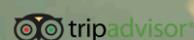
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**“We want to be a movement, and in a movement you need the voices of everyone.”**



“Safe housing is just one of the most basic welfare factors that need to be corrected in people's lives.”

of the marginalised not only heard, but present in City Council itself.

### Passing on the majority

Before the dust had even settled after the elections, people were speculating on whether or not the Socialist Party was going to help the Social Democrats and others form a broad-based centre-left coalition. Sanna's response was definitive: not only were they not going to help that coalition; they weren't going to be taking part in any majority coalition discussions.

This decision was met with confusion, and in some cases even anger, from many people. But to Sanna the

issue could not have been simpler.

“Our entire campaign was based on the experience of the working poor, pensioners, disabled and immigrants,” she says. “We didn't want to compromise or give a discount on our platform by joining a majority.”

“Also, all during the campaign we were criticising how these left parties were working, that they weren't radical enough and weren't talking against this neoliberalism that we have been putting so much focus on, so if we would all of the sudden be in a majority with them, then maybe the voters would decide that we're all very similar and there's not much difference between us. People felt betrayed by

these leftist parties. There was some misunderstanding, where people thought we were giving up, but I think now more people get it. I'm still going to have a seat in City Council. I can still make proposals and criticise. It's not like I'm packing my bags and giving up. We can do a lot more working with these marginalised people.”

### And what does “power to the people” mean?

In an additional follow up to this controversy, Sanna penned a lengthy essay that unpacked one of Malcolm X's famed essays in which he outlined the difference between people who

work towards liberation and those who, having been given small rewards for their obedience, prefer to work within the existing system — these two different classes mark a division within the same group of people. Sanna saw parallels between the phenomenon Malcolm X described and her own struggle, and wasn't afraid to highlight them.

“I really like powerful stories to explain to people what I mean,” she says. “I really like how that one story is rough, it's brutal, it's honest. It doesn't talk between the lines. So I look a lot to this kind of literature in this battle, because there's a lot of similarities with our struggle.”

The platform points Sanna is fighting for are easy to understand, but broad in scope.

“We have three points that we want to tackle: power to the people, housing for all, and to end the low-wage policy for city workers,” she says. “Safe housing is just one of the most basic welfare factors that need to be corrected in people's lives. The stress you face when you don't have secure housing is tremendous. Renters have so few rights. We'd like to look at putting a cap on rental prices. And we don't want to see this outsourcing amongst city workers. And by power to the people we mean we want to see more people be able to take an active role in deciding policy. I need to talk to these grassroots groups, and ask, ‘What is it you want to have heard in City Council? What can I emphasise?’ We want to be a movement, and in a movement you need the voices of everyone.”

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Too legit to quit

# Cashing In And Selling Out

How foreign companies are killing Iceland's tourism industry

Words: Paul Fontaine Photo: Art Bicnick



It's no secret that tourism has, in just the span of a few years, become one of Iceland's largest industries. Everyone wants a piece of the action, and Icelanders have been very diligent and creative as they compete for their share of the gold rush. However, foreign companies have also taken notice and

have sought a share of the market. While not necessarily bad in itself, Grapevine has learned that many of these companies operate in legal grey areas at best; at worst, they put lives in danger, underbid local companies, underpay their workers and do not pay their share of taxes into the system.

Fortunately, there are solutions to these problems, but a lack of initiative from the government means that, until the laws are changed or more clearly defined, the onus will be on the tourists themselves to only hire Icelandic-based tour operators — often easier said than done.

## The interlopers

For Kormákur Hermannsson, founder and co-owner Base Camp Iceland, this matter is very close to his heart.

"The problem with companies operating illegally in Iceland is we have no way of competing with them," he says.

Here's how it works: Icelandic companies have to be licensed tour operators. This requires insurance, inspected vehicles that are licensed to transport people, and paying market salaries to guides, amongst other things. Companies based abroad don't have to comply with any of these rules. Many, if not most, don't pay taxes such as VAT.

To make matters worse, many of these companies will bill themselves on their websites as using "local guides", and make other claims that are difficult at best to verify.

Ásdís Dögg Ómarsdóttir, the general manager Asgard Beyond, has also noticed these companies popping up with increasing frequency in recent years. Some of these companies will even hire some of her company's

services for their own tours. The economic aspect matters to her, but there is also the issue of safety.

## Lives at risk

"Sometimes my guides will come back to the office and be like 'Oh my god you won't believe what I saw today,'" she tells us. "They might see, for example, one guide leading a stroll of 30 people. But 99.9% of the time, nothing happens, so companies and guides get away with it. But when shit hits the fan, that's when you want someone well educated and experienced to be there on the spot to figure things out."

In her experience, one thing that might be obfuscating how much danger there is with untrained and under-equipped guides running tours is when other qualified guides cover for them. Unqualified guides working for a bad company may run into trouble, not have the resources to fix it, "but our guides happen upon them by accident and sort it out," Ásdís says. "Because you're not going to leave someone in a crevasse, and not help out. Eventually there's going to be an accident, or a few of them, and maybe then something will be done. But I think the governments needs to go ahead and do something about this right away."

## Where is the oversight?

For both Kormákur and Ásdís, this is happening because of both a lack of legal framework and a lack of enforcement of what little legal framework there is.

"I think there's a lack of infrastructure for oversight, but there's also a fundamental lack of understanding of the function of the tourism

market," Kormákur says. "I know it's been growing rapidly, and when you have rapid growth like this, government authorities tend to be very reactive. They only react when something has happened. So we lack the general marketing plan for tourism in Iceland."

"In a way, the foreign companies that are operating here may be operating legally, but in a grey area," Ásdís says. "I think it's super important that anyone who runs a business that's operating here delivers the same amount of taxes into the economy. But the really sad part is that there are no regulations about safety in Iceland when it comes to tourism, except maybe for diving. One big question is, if somebody breaks the law, what's going to happen? Who's going to be responsible for punishing anyone? I think in general that's the big problem."

Until such time as the government does clarify the law and step up enforcement, those wanting to tour Iceland can take steps to ensure they have hired a local company. Vakinn, the official quality and environmental system for Icelandic Tourism, has a special page listing all the certified Icelandic companies who fully abide the law, which can be found at vakinn.is/en/certified-companies.

All that said, there is still a lot of work to be done, and Kormákur worries about the future.

"This is not only about someone having an unfair upper hand in a competitive market," he says. "It's also about, as a local, what kind of tourism do you want? Do you want to make it into a sustainable, responsible market that can be respected? Or do you want to race to the bottom of the barrel? Today, we're very close to the bottom of the barrel." ❄️



Imagine being outraged by this.

# Icelandic MP Outraged Over Topless Photo Shoot In Parliament

Sigmundur Davíð Gunnlaugsson inadvertently proves artist's point

Words: Paul Fontaine

Photo: Magnús Andersen

A parliamentarian for the Centre Party is demanding answers regarding a photo shoot that took place in Parliament, which featured topless women. The shoot itself is a part of a performance piece included

in the Reykjavík Arts Festival. The piece in question, Demoncrazy, shows topless women challenging "the besuited, middle-aged, male image of power with which they grew up", as the artist's text explains.

Which makes the complaints of Centre Party MP Sigmundur Davíð Gunnlaugsson all the more ironic.

## Are you disrespecting my authority?

His objections were voiced in the form of five formal questions he submitted to Parliamentary President Steingrímur J. Sigfússon. In the questions, Sigmundur demands to know who gave permission for the shoot "for advertisement purposes", whether this indicates a change in parliamentary dress code, and also whether "such use of the parliamentary building and parliamentary tradition is supposed to increase respect for Parliament".

Fréttablaðið reports that Sigmundur received his answer. Steingrímur informed Sigmundur that it was a member of the Independence Party,

Birgir Ármannsson, who granted permission for the shoot, that it was not for advertisement purposes, and, as the women in the photos are not parliamentarians, regulations about parliamentary dress code do not apply.

## Grateful for the discussion

The artist behind Demoncrazy, Borghildur Indriáadóttir, takes a decidedly philosophical approach to Sigmundur's outrage, telling Fréttablaðið: "I think this is actually interesting, and maybe good to get some reporting on this. In reality, [Sigmundur's reaction] is a continuation of the piece, that it's being talked about. I find it interesting that he describes the group as walking out of the building in a bit of a respectful manner ... It's interesting how he interprets this, how he interprets the exhibition." ❄️

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JUNE 15	12.00 EGYPT - URUGUAY		14.00 SAUDI ARABIA - EGYPT
	15.00 MOROCCO - IRAN		18.00 IRAN - PORTUGAL
	18.00 PORTUGAL - SPAIN		18.00 SPAIN - MOROCCO
JUNE 16	10.00 FRANCE - AUSTRALIA	JUNE 26	14.00 DENMARK - FRANCE
	13.00 ARGENTINA - ICELAND		14.00 AUSTRALIA - PERU
	16.00 PERU - DENMARK		18.00 NIGERIA - ARGENTINA
	19.00 CROATIA - NIGERIA		18.00 ICELAND - CROATIA
JUNE 17	12.00 COSTA RICA - SERBIA	JUNE 27	14.00 S KOREA - GERMANY
	15.00 GERMANY - MEXICO		14.00 MEXICO - SWEDEN
	18.00 BRAZIL - SWITZERLAND		18.00 SERBIA - BRAZIL
JUNE 18	12.00 SWEDEN - S KOREA		18.00 SWITZERLAND - COSTA RICA
	15.00 BELGIUM - PANAMA	JUNE 28	14.00 JAPAN - POLAND
	18.00 TUNISIA - ENGLAND		14.00 SENEGAL - COLOMBIA
JUNE 19	12.00 COLOMBIA - JAPAN		18.00 ENGLAND - BELGIUM
	15.00 POLAND - SENEGAL		18.00 PANAMA - TUNISIA
	18.00 RUSSIA - EGYPT	JUNE 30	14.00 ROUND OF 16
JUNE 20	12.00 PORTUGAL - MOROCCO		18.00 ROUND OF 16
	15.00 URUGUAY - SAUDI ARABIA	JULY 1	14.00 ROUND OF 16
	18.00 IRAN - SPAIN		18.00 ROUND OF 16
JUNE 21	12.00 DENMARK - AUSTRALIA	JULY 2	14.00 ROUND OF 16
	15.00 FRANCE - PERU		18.00 ROUND OF 16
	18.00 ARGENTINA - CROATIA	JULY 4	14.00 ROUND OF 16
JUNE 22	12.00 BRAZIL - COSTA RICA		18.00 ROUND OF 16
	15.00 NIGERIA - ICELAND	JULY 6	14.00 QUARTER FINAL
	18.00 SERBIA - SWITZERLAND		18.00 QUARTER FINAL
JUNE 23	12.00 BELGIUM - TUNISIA	JULY 7	14.00 QUARTER FINAL
	15.00 S KOREA - MEXICO		18.00 QUARTER FINAL
	18.00 GERMANY - SWEDEN	JULY 10	18.00 SEMI FINAL
JUNE 24	12.00 ENGLAND - PANAMA	JULY 11	18.00 SEMI FINAL
	15.00 JAPAN - SENEGAL	JULY 14	14.00 THIRD PLACE PLAY-OFF
	18.00 POLAND - COLOMBIA	JULY 15	15.00 FINAL BBC



"I've just always been of the opinion that if you can help, you should help."

## To Be Oneself Again: All Icelanders Are Now Organ Donors By Default

Siv Friðleifsdóttir shares the inspiration for the law she submitted

Words: Paul Fontaine Photo: Art Bicnick

Earlier this month, Iceland made headlines when Parliament passed into law a measure that officially recognises all Icelanders as organ donors by default, unless they specify otherwise ahead of time.

The idea is not new in Europe. Many European countries use this "opt-out" system, and now Iceland is amongst them. The idea is not new in Iceland, either. Six years ago, then Progressive Party MP Siv Friðleifsdóttir submitted a parliamentary proposal calling for the country to take up the opt-out system.

"SÍBS [an Icelandic health care non-profit] held a meeting at Iðnó, and invited a bunch of politicians to come, and I went on behalf of my party," she recounts. "One question they posed to us was, 'Will you pledge to stand for this issue?' — to change the law so that one is assumed to consent [to donate]

ing organs] rather than assumed to have denied it. I started thinking about it, and I thought it was a good idea, so I began looking into it. That's how it began."

### How "opting in" fails

Amongst the countries that use the opt-out system is Austria. In a New York Times piece from 2009, it was brought to light that 99% of its citizens donate their organs. By contrast, Germany, which uses an "opt-in" system, where people must expressly consent to donate their organs, only 12% did so.

The concept of the law is fairly simple. All Icelanders will be assumed to be organ donors by default, with two exceptions: if the deceased specified beforehand that they do not want their organs to be removed, or if the deceased said nothing on the matter but their closest relative objects.

Siv is not particularly worried about the next-of-kin clause to the law.

"This doesn't control everything, because almost without exception, if the next of kin knows that the deceased wanted to donate their organs, then the next of kin does

not object," she says. "People want to respect the wishes of their dearly departed."

Furthermore, those relatives who do give the green light for organ donation of their loved ones almost never regret the decision.

"Research has shown that next of kin who allow their departed's organs to be donated feel good about the decision," Siv says. "They feel as though their loved ones are, in some way, living on through other people. It becomes one bright point in the death of a loved one; that someone else will get to live because of their gift."

### A cause for celebration

Siv has a background in the health-care industry, being a licensed physical therapist, and, as such, has passionate interest in the field. So

the passage of the law came as a very pleasant surprise to her.

"This really pleased me," she says. "I actually didn't expect that it would be approved right now; I thought for sure it would be delayed. So I think it's great that they've finally finished this project. When I look back, when it first got into this matter, I recall meeting this group of people who had received donated hearts, livers, kidneys and lungs. They had fought hard for this law. So when this law was passed, I really took this group to heart."

Her tenure as a lawmaker has put her in contact with many people who have received organs, and one young woman she met still stays with her.

"I once heard a young woman at a meeting of the Rotary Club in Borgarnes, who had received a new liver. She described that with every breath, she felt better and better, because the new liver was starting to do its work. She was herself again. You just thought, 'Wow, that was amazing. What a gift, just the right thing to do.'"

### If you can, you should

The road to getting this law passed was not an easy one. Siv had actually submitted the measure as a parliamentary proposal twice during her time in Parliament (note: parliamentary proposals are unlike bills; they propose government policy, but do not dictate its exact implementation like bills do). It even got as far as committee the first time, which

**"It used to be that we were only receiving [organs], but in recent years we've been giving them, too. And it's very important that we can give as much as we can."**

recommended that the government make it into law. When her tenure in Parliament was over, amongst the works she handed over to Progressive Party MP Silja Dögg Gunnarsdóttir was this organ donor proposal, which Silja changed into a bill.

Now that this bill is law, Siv believes the real work can begin.

"I've just always been of the opinion that if you can help, you should help," Siv says. "There's a general shortage of organs in the world. As long as people are

waiting for organs, there's always a shortage. It used to be that we were only receiving them, but in recent years we've been giving them, too. And it's very important that we can give as much as we can." 🍷



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**“I was a drug addict, a drunk, and I've been through a lot of things. So for me to come to a crack party—I've been there.”**

this project. “This is a very political show,” Spessi stresses. “I'm not showing these people as victims.” His intention with this project is instead to portray these people and their spaces in an empowering way—in a way that authentically and accurately represents themselves and their spaces, on their own terms.

### A story of survival

“When you enter someone's intimate space, that's a very interesting spot, because then you feel some-

# 111: Straight Outta Breiðholt

Spessi shines a light on a storied Reykjavík suburb

Words: **Juliana Illuminata Wilczynski**  
Photos: **Spessi**



I ventured out from the cosy and often too comfortable 101 bubble to meet with Sigurþór Halbjörnsson—better known as Spessi—in Reykjavík's Breiðholt neighbourhood, postal code 111. Acclaimed Icelandic photographer and founding member and chairman of the Icelandic Contemporary Photography Association, Spessi is known for his dozens of album covers as well as his unusual photography projects, most notably his book 'Bensín,' in which he photographed gas stations around Iceland.

The photos in his new book, '111', were taken in the towering buildings surrounding the site of the exhibition, RÝMD — a former bakery in a one-story building with a beautifully antiquated and uneven tile floor, and so many cracks in the wall that they could be seen through the fresh white paint. The entrance to the gallery is in a busy alleyway, where buff-wearing children, snail-paced elderly folks, and nike-clad

teenagers go about their daily lives.

### Walks of life

'111' is a photographic portrait of the neighbourhood and people of Breiðholt. His portraits feature people from many different walks of life. Spessi feels a certain familiarity in Breiðholt. “There is a Breiðholt everywhere in the world,” he said. Breiðholt is unlike any other neighbourhood or community in Iceland—Many Icelanders refer to Breiðholt as ‘the only Icelandic ghetto’—and Spessi has chosen to shatter the commonly held prejudices that have come to exist about the neighbourhood and its people.

### Identity and pride

Spessi's photographic projects focus on subcultures, which is why he chose to photograph 111, and the people who live there. He found that it was important to photograph the

people of Breiðholt in order to properly represent them. “A lot of people who live here tattoo 111 on their chest,” he explains “It's this kind of identity. It's more like a state of mind, this postcode. It's like ‘I'm from the hood’—this kind of pride.”

### Well intentioned

Breiðholt was a social housing project planned and designed in the 70s and eventually built in the 80s. The idea was to build brightly-coloured apartment buildings with surrounding alleys, children's playgrounds, and football fields so that children wouldn't have to cross busy streets to go to school in the morning.

Breiðholt was well intentioned, but it didn't age well when its population rose and the city developed more. “It was a good thought in the beginning, but it was a mistake,” Spessi sighs. Breiðholt eventually

became crowded, and resulted in both the physical and social isolation of the people who lived there. “So actually, this is wrong, it's a disease in the society.”

### Spessi's people

Spessi has a personal affinity and appreciation for the people of Breiðholt, because he relates to them in a lot of ways. “I'm so used to these people,” he says. “I've been around. I was a drug addict, a drunk, and I've been through a lot of things. So for me to come to a crack party—I've been there. I grew up with my grandparents, and they were very poor. These are my people, and that's why I wanted to show the world how it is.”

He explained to me the challenges he encountered in pursuing this project during the past two years and the difficulties in deciding how to appropriately approach

thing,” Spessi says. “Sometimes you feel that they are afraid, that they don't trust you, or there's a language problem, so they don't understand what you're saying, so there are all kinds of things that happen when you come into this [space]. When I take portraits of those people I try to let them choose how they present themselves. That's why most of my photos are kind of objective.”

His portraits evoke a lot of emotion and different reactions from those who view them. It is clear that the point of the images isn't to create a feeling of melancholy or sadness. Some of the faces look lonely, or scared—but they still want to be seen. This isn't made out of pity, but rather, out of pride. It is ultimately a story of survival in the challenging realities of the everyday! 🍷

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- 28<sup>th</sup> / 29<sup>th</sup> July: Thierry Mechler, Cologne Philharmonics, Germany
- 4<sup>th</sup> / 5<sup>th</sup> August: Elke Eckerstorfer, St. Augustin Church, Vienna, Austria
- 11<sup>th</sup> / 12<sup>th</sup> August: Hans-Ola Ericsson, Organ professor at McGill in Monreal, Canada
- 19<sup>th</sup> August: Hannfried Lucke, Mozarteum University, Salzburg, Austria.

## Lunchtime concerts Thursdays @ 12 noon

- 21<sup>st</sup> June Baldvin Oddsson trumpet and Steinar Logi Helgason organist of Háteigskirkja, Reykjavík
- 28<sup>th</sup> June Elísabet Þórðardóttir, organist at Kálfatjarnarkirkja, Hafnarfjörður
- 5<sup>th</sup> July Kitty Kovács, organist of Landakirkja, the Westmann Islands
- 12<sup>th</sup> July Pamela Sensi flute, Steingrímur Þórhallsson organist of Neskirkja
- 19<sup>th</sup> July Þórunn Elín Pétursdóttir soprano and Lenka Mátéová organist of Kópavogskirkja, Kópavogur
- 26<sup>th</sup> July Lára Bryndís Eggertsdóttir, organist, Reykjavík
- 2<sup>nd</sup> August Kári Þormar, organist of Reykjavík Cathedral
- 9<sup>th</sup> August Friðrik Vignir Stefánsson, organist of Seltjarnarnes Church
- 16<sup>th</sup> August Jónas Þórir Jónasson, organist of Bústaðakirkja, Reykjavík



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Schola cantorum – 30 min: 2500 ISK





Ryan and Friða Rakel, who run the place, share a reflective moment.

# Into The Void: A Trip To Hydra Flotation Spa

Trepidation leads to release

I am floating in total darkness; naked, in a formless void where I can't see, hear, or feel anything. The darkness is completely the same whether my eyes are open or closed. I have no idea how much time has passed, no idea even if I'm awake or asleep, and I've lost all sense of my body. I am just an undefined blob of consciousness in an endless expanse of absolute nothingness. And it's the happiest I've been in a long time.

Words:  
Paul Fontaine

Photo:  
Art Bicnick

This is part of what it's like to use the flotation tanks at Hydra Flotation Spa, a newly opened flotation tank facility at an unassuming corner location at Rauðarstígur 1, just a few seconds' walk from Hlemmur. The business is the brainchild of Ryan Patrekur, a man who has spent a long time working in the tourism industry but wanted to try something completely new.

"I really wanted to create a real experience, an authentic experience, that's guaranteed no matter what the day or the weather," he tells me. "Something that couldn't be found anywhere else in Iceland, but is authentic; not a plastic prop or a video screen. Something real."

## Basically for everyone

There really isn't one ideal customer for these flotation tanks. They are very large — roughly exceeding the size of a king-sized bed — and half-filled with Icelandic water that has been heavily saturated with epsom salt. This provides not only the necessary density to float comfortably; it is also

rich in magnesium, a mineral absorbed by the skin and in which many people are deficient. The water is skin temperature, rather than body temperature, which is also important — it not only helps create that feeling of being weightless rather than floating on the surface of something, it's also not so warm that you become uncomfortable.

"I've thought about therapeutic flotation tanks a lot over the past few years," Ryan says. "It just kept clicking. For creative types, jet-lagged businessmen, all of my Reykjavík neighbours who have the soul of an Icelander and can't get out of the city but need a break from the phones, the screens, but don't necessarily go to a yoga salon or a crossfit studio."

Ryan makes no medical claims about flotation tanks, but he does recount some customers who, having experienced back pain or other joint ailments for a long time, finally experience some relief during their sessions.

## The psychological appeal

For my part, I have no such physical ailments, but I do often find it difficult to relax, concentrate, and really sort my thoughts. After the lid on the tank was closed and the lights went off, it took a few minutes for my mind to adjust to the almost total absence of sensory input. I admit, it was a little bit scary at first. But once I let go, wonderful things happened.

The brain is a really marvelous

thing. In the absence of sound or light, in the absence of even most tactile input, it wasn't boredom that descended upon me — it was fascination. Early childhood memories that I had long forgotten came to the surface. I was able to see,

**"It was, in short, like taking a nine-day vacation within the span of a little over an hour."**

hear, even smell these memories again. I let a stream of consciousness course through me as I considered a serious problem I was having with a short story I'm writing. I meditated on a couple of personal issues, and found greater clarity and insight than I'd

been able to get staring out the window on the bus.

It was, in short, like taking a nine-day vacation within the span of a little over an hour.

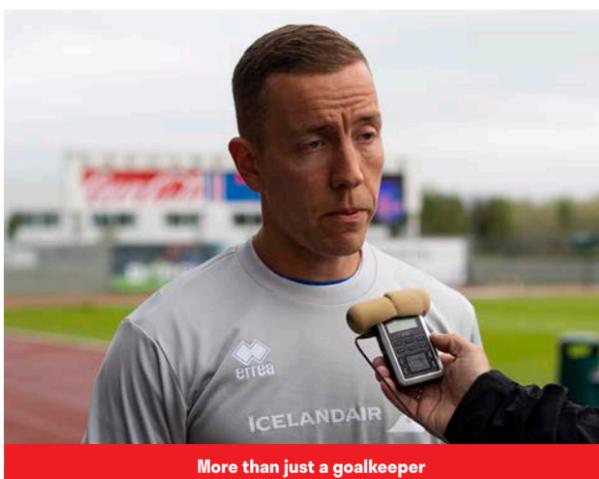
## The altruist

Ryan isn't in it for the money. His motivations are more altruistic, as he genuinely wants to help people, and continues to find satisfaction in the results.

"My vision is to provide the exact amount of comfort and service, both in personality and facility, for what the area desires," he says. "I love seeing people when they come out."

You can book a time at Hydra Flotation Spa through their website, [hydrafloat.is](http://hydrafloat.is), or reach them for question through their

Facebook page, [facebook.com/hydrafloat](https://facebook.com/hydrafloat).



More than just a goalkeeper

# Bad Ass Goalkeeper Directs Rousing Ad

Trepidation leads to release

Words: John Rogers Photo: Art Bicnick

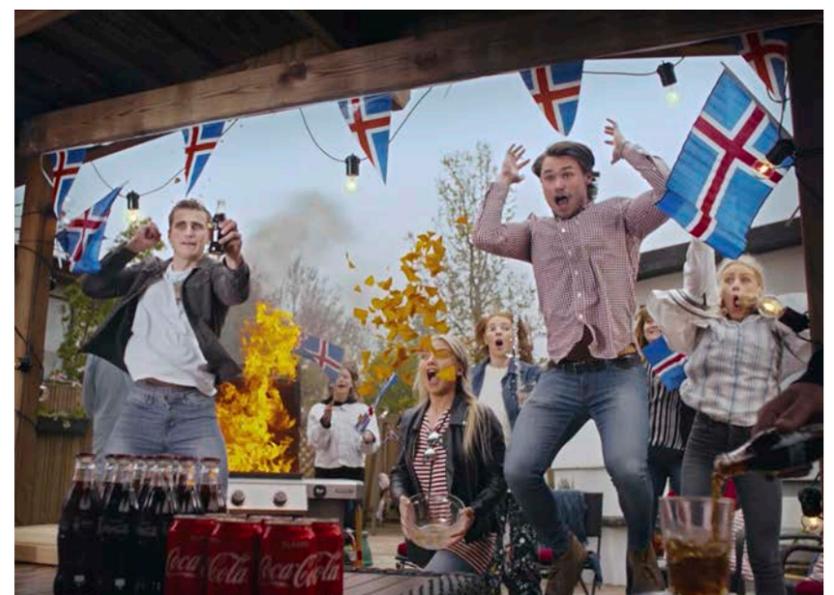
As you may have noticed if you've been following our Meet The Smiters series, Hannes "Wild Claws" Halldórsson — Iceland's number one goalkeeper — is also a film director. Hannes is currently in Russia, where his focus lies on preparing for Iceland's opening game against Argentina on Saturday — but in the seven months before leaving, he also directed a rousing Iceland-themed World Cup Coke commercial that was released today.

## Eiður Smári and Nelson

The ad features some locations viewers might be familiar with, alongside cameos from Icelandic sportsmen and football-related figures such as Eiður Smári Guðjohnsen, martial artist Gunnar Nelson, weightlifter Sara Sigmundsdóttir, and famously frenzied commentator Gummi Ben.

## Never feel alone

"We wanted to make an advertisement that touched the people," said



Hannes, in a statement accompanying the video's release. "An advertisement that would remind everyone that we're on this journey together. There may be only eleven players on the field, but we

never feel alone — we feel that all Icelanders are standing behind us."

You can watch the video itself on our website, [grapevine.is](http://grapevine.is).



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# Smite The World!

Aron Gunnarsson  
captures Iceland into  
the World Cup

Words: John Rogers  
Photos: Art Bicnick



Aron Einar Gunnarsson is, to many, the face of Icelandic football. The talismanic captain of the national team, he's an imposing presence on the field; a bearded, tattooed midfielder with a hard-tackling style that Cristiano

**“We managed to keep Cristiano Ronaldo fairly quiet at the Euros, so why should Messi get a free pass?”**

Ronaldo probably still remembers.

His impact on Iceland's mentality and performance is undeniable. While Aron doesn't have the same kind of silky skills as footballing stars like Cristiano, Lionel Messi, or Iceland's flair attacker Gylfi Sigurðsson, he personifies the committed, determined, never-say-die mentality that has driven the team's recent success.

This mentality has endeared Aron, and the Iceland team, to international football lovers. When they defied expectations to reach the quarter finals of the Euro 2016 tournament, it was Aron who, in euphoric disbelief, led the supporters in a rendition of the “Viking clap” that's since become iconic.

It was the kind of moment that reminds football fans of all stripes why they watch the game at all, and has led to a swell of support ahead of Iceland's first ever foray onto the biggest stage of all: the FIFA World Cup.

## Standing together

Aron is in relaxed and confident form before the journey to Russia. He contemplates the team's relationship with the fans—and, writ large, the nation of Iceland as a whole—as factors in the team's visible on-field motivation.

“Our deep connection with the Icelandic supporters is something that I don't believe any other team has,”

says Aron. “I know that I speak for all of the players in the team when I say that those who follow us wherever we go have a real place in our hearts. They give their all in supporting us, and they give us a real boost. We're a small nation, and togetherness is something we know by heart. We are not about to roll over and let our people down.”

For Aron, this closeness is a part of the Icelandic psyche. Due to the relatively small amount of Icelanders there are in the world, it becomes second nature to find forms of cooperation in order to collectively endure living together on the edge of the Arctic Circle.

“Generation after generation, we've had to stick together to survive in hard conditions, darkness, wind and freezing cold,” he says. “That breeds togetherness and willingness to stand up for each other when it really counts. I'm proud of those roots. I'm proud to belong to a country built by hard workers who did what they needed to do to survive. Whenever I pull on the national team shirt it reminds me to appreciate where I am from and to be grateful to those who were here before me.”

## Old fire

This kind of intensity does not go unnoticed. After Iceland's unforgettable showing at Euro 2016, Aron's impassioned performances put him on the radar of the world's media, leading the Guardian newspaper to describe him as “the obvious leader of the team, he's ambitious, passionate and driven, and brings a combative style to Iceland's play.”

“This fire is not new,” says Aron. “I've had it since I first entered a football pitch. I will always give my all, wherever I play, and I've always had a good connection with teammates, coaches, and fans at all my teams. This is common with many of us Icelandic players. Ask any manager who has had an Icelander on their team. He will tell you that we always give 100%.”

## Living identity

This much is certainly true of Heimir Hallgrímsson, the manager of the Icelandic team. Watching the team train at Laugardalsvöllur stadium ahead of the trip, a look of fondness crosses Heimir's face when asked about Aron's qualities.

“Aron is important to us in all areas,” he says. “As a person, and as

a captain, he is vital. He's a shining example of what we would like to stand for. What he stands for as a player... he's our living identity. He's disciplined in everything he does. He's a shining example, off the pitch, of how players should behave and how they should support each other; on the pitch, he's vital for organising the team. He knows

we certainly earned our right to play at the World Cup. We won our group, and we are not done yet. We're a team, and we have shown that we can perform consistently. Any team that thinks they can steamroll us is in for a rude awakening.”

One of the biggest tasks on the menu is containing Lionel Messi, argu-

**“Generation after generation, we've had to stick together to survive in hard conditions, darkness, wind and freezing cold. That breeds togetherness and willingness to stand up for each other when it really counts. I'm proud of those roots.”**

the position of every player, and he's demanding. And on top of that, he's just a very good football player.”

## World stage

These leadership qualities have reaped dividends. After a qualifying process that saw Iceland top their group—which included Croatia, Turkey and fellow Nordic nation Finland—Iceland are now hoping to continue their winning streak.

The team were pulled in a difficult group with Argentina, Croatia, and Nigeria, but Aron is optimistic about Iceland's chances of progressing to the knockout stages. “Everyone saw how good a team we really are during qualifying,” he says. “Euro 2016 was no fluke. We earned our right to play there, and

ably the world's greatest attacking player. “We managed to keep Cristiano Ronaldo fairly quiet at the Euros, so why should Messi get a free pass?” says Aron. “I'm under no illusions about our opponents. We'll play against the best of the best in the world, and we respect that. The question is, do they respect us? Underestimating us can prove to be a banana peel. Just ask England.”

## Maximum happiness

Indeed, the star-studded England team are very well aware of the team's fighting spirit. When Iceland bested them in the last sixteen at Euro 2016, the emotional outpouring of the aftermath showed how much the game meant to the players. The post-match

celebrations were televised around the world—for Iceland supporters, even thinking about it is enough to get goosebumps.

For Aron, it was a defining moment. “It was incredible,” he remembers. “The way we worked as a team in that game and the way our strategy worked perfectly. Every single one of us was up for that game. The English Premier League is a big thing in Iceland, and we loved the challenge of testing ourselves against these players. Beating them and giving a performance like we did was a dream, and I will never forget it. The moments after the game were just pure happiness. I think we reached the maximum happiness any person can reach, and to be able to share that moment with our terrific fans and to know that pretty much every single Icelander was celebrating back home made it all the more incredible. That was one of the best days of my life.”

## Fighting fit

At club level Aron plays for Cardiff City where, despite a few periods of injury, he has become a firm fan favourite. He was voted player of the season for the 2016/17 season, and his rugged performances helped fire Cardiff back into the Premier League in 2018.

His contract with Cardiff expires this summer, but with a new deal on the table, Aron is yet to sign. “I got injured at a very bad time, and I have been solely focussing on getting fit for the World Cup,” he says. “I’ve hardly given it thought what happens after that to tell you the truth, but that said, I’d be happy to be a Cardiff City player

## Viking spirit

This kind of determination has been widely described as “Viking Spirit.” The term has proven divisive, as despite often being cast as adventurous heroes in popular culture, the Vikings were an aggressive and unrepentantly violent invasive force who, for a while, terrorised much of the northern hemisphere.

But the comparison does still carry some significance. For Heimir, it’s about determination in adversity. “The only way we will win games is to be harder working and more disciplined than our opponents, and have more fighting spirit than the others,” he says. “If you can correlate that to Vikings, that’s even better: everybody knows what they stood for. They went in few numbers to invade countries, and did it. They were barbaric, of course—but we like to think we can do the same, in a fair play manner.”

Aron, too, sees some value in the comparison. “There has been a bit of controversy about what Viking spirit actually is because, to be fair, the actual Vikings weren’t really honest and trustworthy men, were they?” he says. “They were a bunch of thugs who did things none of us should be proud of.”

“What we call Viking spirit is the spirit of Nordic people giving their all to survive in hard conditions,” he continues. “If the true Viking spirit is to explore new territories, settle down, raise children and build a life, then there is definitely an inspiration there. We’re a team of motivated footballers who are passionate about what we are doing, and we don’t take anything for granted. We know we have to work



Gylfi Sigurðsson:

# Teamwork, Viking Spirit, And Iceland’s First World Cup

Words: John Rogers  
Photos: Art Bicnick

**“Finding the drive to give 100% every time comes naturally to me. It’s the only way I know how to play. And when I represent my country, that motivation reaches new heights.”**



when the new season starts. A lot will happen in the next weeks, and I’m at ease regarding this matter. I’ll start thinking about it once the World Cup adventure is done.”

That late-season injury initially put Aron’s World Cup participation in doubt. After an operation on his knee, he went to a state-of-the-art recuperation facility in Qatar to get back on track, and now looks set to play in the all-important first match against Argentina.

“I’m feeling good,” says Aron. “I’m training well and I’m doing all the things the other players are doing during the training sessions. I’m of course not rushing into anything but I feel good and I’m confident that I’ll be ready against Argentina. The trip to Qatar was great—not only for me to get the best possible treatment, but also for my wife and son to spend quality time together in the sun, and charge the batteries before the battles ahead. I am very grateful for what I have, and without them I’m not sure I would have made it through this process.”

hard and give it everything we’ve got—and we’re absolutely up for doing that. That’s the Viking spirit we’d like to be recognised for.”

## New heights

After their recent run, the Iceland team are amongst the most talked-about presences at the World Cup. But despite any hype, the team remain focused and grounded. Whether they progress from their group or not, being at the tournament is a victory in itself—and when Aron and his teammates take their Viking spirit onto the field, there’s a feeling that anything is possible.

“There are many things that motivate me,” he finishes. “The love for club, country and everyone and anyone who has ever been there for me is at the top of my mind whenever I enter the pitch. I also just love the sport, the competition and everything connected with that. Finding the drive to give 100% every time comes naturally to me. It’s the only way I know how to play. And when I represent my country, that motivation reaches new heights.”

Before Iceland boarded the longship to Russia, we went deep into the lava fields outside of Reykjavik to the horde’s secret battle camp. They were practising manoeuvres and shield walls, running through spiky lava, and wrestling mad horses in preparation for the World Cup. Some players took a few moments now and then to come to the sidelines, chug a bottle of Einstök, and chat. Here’s what star attacker Gylfi Sigurðsson had to say about Iceland’s chances at the FIFA World Cup 2018.

### What’s Iceland’s game plan for the coming matches?

“We have to work hard for each other to make sure we get results. We know a lot of the other teams are better than us technically, so we have to make up for it by working hard and working together. Playing for my country is something I’m very proud of, and working hard for the team is something we all have to do.”

### What will Iceland bring to the table?

“Other teams will find it very hard to deal with us and the way we play, and it’ll be hard to break us down. We’re very organised, we’re very aware of what we’re doing, we have good players who can score goals. I wouldn’t say we’re direct, but we know what we’re doing, and we don’t waste any time doing it.”

### How do you feel about the Viking moniker that’s been making the rounds?

“It’s not something we’re looking for, but obviously it is nice. A long time ago, most of us probably were Vikings. It sums up how we play pretty well.”

### And how about Aron?

“He’s a proper Viking. I’m the complete opposite. Look at me!”

### What does being at the World Cup mean for Iceland, and for you personally?

“It’s fantastic, as soon as I got to Iceland and I could see how excited everyone is. For the younger kids, having their own country playing in the World Cup is special. It’s something I never experienced when I was young, but now I’ll be playing in a World Cup—I can only imagine what it feels like for the younger kids to watch us playing for their country in Russia.”

### What do you think Iceland has that other teams perhaps lack?

“We’ve played together for so long, we know each other really well. Maybe not having as big a pool of players worked to our advantage, because we played together for so long. A lot of these guys are best friends, and that’s a big advantage to us.”

**“I can only imagine what it feels like for the younger kids to watch us playing for their country in Russia.”**



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# Finally, A Fucking Game

Iceland's World Cup for an American

Words: Hannah Jane Cohen Photos: Art Bicnick, Mink Viking Studio

There's an unfair accusation in Europe that Americans don't know anything about football. Actually, we freakin' love football. Not only did we invent football, but we're the best in the world at it, thanks to the Brady brothers. C'mon, who doesn't love throwing around a pigskin with their brochachos next to a Bud Lite? Nobody. It's the American Dream.

Wait—what? I just checked out the Icelandic football team. What

the hell is wrong with all of you? That's not football. Where's the padding? The defensive line? The quarterback? I knew this country was backwards but I didn't know it was full of idiots.

## IT'S CALLED SOCCER

I'm obviously joking. I understand that outside of the freest country of all time, they call what is clearly

soccer 'football'. It makes no sense, though. The word 'football' clearly conjures up images of throwing an oval-shaped leather object with one's hands, not kicking a ball around with your foot. God, do the Americans have to Normandy y'all again to save you from this Tom-(Brady)-foolery?

Once again, I am joking. I have no idea where the word 'soccer' comes from and I understand that, like our Electoral College, it makes no sense. So go ridicule us on Twitter using your iPhone in your Nikes. We'll just be over here with our AR-15s and meth.

## The plight of the winner

Anyway, I was lucky enough to live in Reykjavik during the 2016 Euro Cup, so I got to experience that incredible swell of national pride first hand. That last minute Iceland-Austria



goal, the jaw-dropping smiting of England—it was big. People ran in the streets and hugged strangers. I cried. It was unlike anything I had seen in America. People actually cared.

The thing about America is that, like DJ Khaled and Donald Trump, all we do is win. We win everything, so much so that it becomes meaningless and no one gets emotionally involved. Unless you're a one-in-a-trillion athlete like Michael Phelps, I would seriously claim that American society got more shook by Kylie Jenner's pregnancy than any international sports victory. We're just used to being good at stuff. It's cocky, but true.

## A big fucking deal

Iceland though, doesn't always win, so when a team makes an international tournament, it's a big fucking deal. People get impassioned and everyone—hipsters, loners, goths and intellectuals, alike—stop to watch. There is no American equivalent.

For me, I love this whole "getting into sports" thing. It's wonderful to have an emotional attachment and actually care about the results and have it intrinsically mean something. Whether Iceland wins or not, this is a watershed moment. This is Icelanders showing their stuff to their world. This is acceptable nationalism, and I am here for it.

That said, I am still American, so if Iceland loses, I will make like a true MAGA peep and sue the motherfucking pants off FIFA because clearly the game was rigged. Like our election. 🇺🇸

# Football, The Beating Heart Of Brazil

A Brazilian perspective on Iceland's World Cup

Words: Juliana Iuminata Wilczynski Photos: Mink Viking Studio

When you mention football to someone here in Iceland, you will receive one of two reactions. The first is of the "HÚH! I love football, let's go smite some non-viking ass! Skáll!" variety. The second reaction is: "Football sucks."

I honestly completely understand both reactions, but being from Brazil, I have a different perspective.

The first reaction comes from fans of the hypermasculine sport, and here in Iceland, it is mostly just one big excuse to drink a lot and get rowdy. The second reaction comes from those who've maybe never cared about sports, or have issues with the fact that while the men's team is glorified, the women's team is neglected and forgotten. And that's not to mention the horrific pay gap.

## The beating heart of Brazil

Whatever the reaction—I get it.

However, where I come from, football is arguably one of the most influential facets of our national identity, and is ultimately the beating heart of our country—all 200 million of us.

Yes, like many of you reading this, I hate how masculinist the institution of football has become. I hate how it's just another excuse to pile on the Tuborgs.

I hate how FIFA continues to capitalise on modern-day slave labour and people of colour, and through its accumulation of wealth and capital by dispossession. It's no secret that FIFA has evicted some of the most vulnerable people in the world just to build a football stadium that will host maybe four or five games during



the entire World Cup.

Unlike Iceland, though, Brazil is one of the most racially diverse countries in the world. With that comes great socio-economic disparities between the wealthy and powerful and the most vulnerable and marginalised people in our country. Football is one of the few uniting forces in our nation. It brings people together from all walks of life, from the favelas to the penthouses of Ipanema. Most importantly, it has created a place of acceptance for the people of colour in our country, where they are admired and revered. Football has helped raise people out of the cycle of poverty.

## The purest democracy

This week, Brazilian news giant Globo posted an article by Roberto Damatta, a famous Brazilian anthropologist, entitled "Football and Brazil." In it, he makes an extremely important point: that the game of football is the place where Brazilians experience democracy in its pure state, free of corruption, and is a place where all players are equal. It is the true sweet escape.

When football is mixed with capitalism, however, we can lose sight of the true value of the game. Brazil has a reputation for having some of the most corrupt politicians in the world, resulting

in the abandonment, oppression, and neglect of many people in my country. Having come out of our decades-long military dictatorship, and everything else that happens daily in our country, the football arena is a sacred space where nothing else matters. It allows people to escape the brutal daily reality that many in Brazil face. It's easy to lose hope in times like these, but football keeps us full of hope. It allows people to dream at night.

## Pelé, grapefruits, and hope

Pelé, undeniably the best football player in the history of football, used to practice his juggling skills with grapefruits. His first football team was named "The Shoeless Ones," because neither Pelé nor his teammates could afford shoes. Pelé had big dreams, but, most importantly, he had hope for his people, and his nation. He wanted to make them proud. Thus, football keeps our nation dreaming, despite all of our problems and despair. I'm sorry, but it's true: this is something that most Icelanders will never grasp or understand.

It's more than just muscular men running around, and it's more than huddling around a TV set to shout at the top of your lungs every time someone misses or scores a goal. It's way more than that to me. If you hate football—like I said, I get it. But you can't deny how important it is to the people of Brazil, and how it helps to keep our dreams alive. 🇺🇸

# Fifteen Minutes Of Horror

An Icelander's perspective on the World Cup

Words: Valur Grettisson

Icelanders are afraid of two things at some stage of their lives. First, it's Gýla—the baby-eating mother of the Yule Lads, and owner of the Christmas Cat (some weird-ass combination of a giant cat and a wolf), which will also eat you if you don't wear your finest clothes at Christmas. Prándur Þórarinnsson captured the true essence of Gýla in a horrific painting that went viral some years ago and still gives me nightmares.

The other thing that we're really afraid of is the "fifteen minutes of horror"—not to be mixed with the game "seven minutes in heaven," where teenagers of the opposite sex go into a dark closet and do whatever it is teenagers do today. (Spoiler: they browse their phones until it's over.)

## Snickering wizards

When I was growing up, our national teams weren't good at anything that involved balls. Although our handball teams were pretty decent, when it came to competing in smaller—dare I say, insignificant—tournaments, we were always fighting this weird curse.

During the "fifteen minutes of horror," everything just goes sideways in the worst way possible. It didn't really matter how well the team was doing in the game—we always waited for these dreadful fifteen minutes to come. It was like our beloved team became possessed by some kind of a sport version of Linda Blair.

This ghastly period would best be compared to a cheap '90s Disney movie, when everything goes wrong because of some snickering wizard and his crafty magic. But there was no trickery involved (I think!). We were just incompetent when it came to sport.

The only way to survive these terrible intervals was if the team had scored enough goals to have a secure lead before it happened. Even then, the other team would often gain a landslide of goals during these cursed minutes, and often there was no coming back. So then...

When I noticed that our football team was doing better than usual at Euro 2016, I still waited for the fifteen minutes of horror. After years of experience, I'd grown to expect any optimism to be crushed. I thought to myself—sure, they're good, but can they survive these fifteen minutes?

In the first game, it never came. A pleasant surprise. But was the curse broken? Did someone finally sacrifice a middle-aged football bully that refuses to act appropriately for his age (you know the type, it's the guy that paints his beard in the flag's colours) to break the spell?

## I wasn't really sure

It wasn't until we beat England that I dared believe we had broken the curse. Sport-Linda Blair had been exorcised (and the spirit, from the looks of it, flew straight into the souls of the English football team).

My theory is simple. It was the team's lion hearts—and perhaps having some incredibly talented players, and coaches and a solid game-plan—that vanquished the curse. Nothing can beat passion (except, perhaps, the other team's incredibly talented players and coaches and solid game-plan). And the Icelandic team is always the winner, because they fight with their hearts.

The Icelandic nation have already won. We got to the World Cup. We made sporting history in Iceland, and we have nothing more to prove. Now we'll just watch our stressed-out opponents trying to control their nerves when they meet our team on the battlefield. They're right to be nervous. We will smite those puny creatures.

And just remember, if this goes really sideways for us, we still have fifteen minutes—but instead of horror, it's our fifteen minutes of fame.



# The Road To Russia

## A Smite news recap

Words: John Rogers, Elías Þórsson & Greig Kaj Robertsson Images: Lóa Hlín Hjamtýsdóttir

Iceland's World Cup qualification campaign came to a dramatic head in October 2017, when our boys bested Kosovo to become the least populous nation ever to qualify for the finals. The months that followed would prove to be an eventful journey, with pre-tournament "unfriendlies," injury woes, massive international interest, and squad selection dilemmas. Here's a recap of Iceland's Road to Russia.

October

### "Unfriendlies" #1—The Quelling Of Qatar

One of the first announcements to come from the Iceland camp was some warm-up games for the international team. However, the idea of "friendlies" doesn't really apply to Iceland, who know not how to be "friendly" in the heat of battle, and know only how to smite. The first unsuspecting opponent was the national team of Qatar, who would be razed to the ground in a torrent of fiery footballing wrath on November 14th. The newly Iceland-curious world scrambled to find obscure streaming links for the game,

which took place in a weirdly empty Abdullah bin Khalifa Stadium in front of just 2,700 people. It ended in a 1-1 victory for Iceland. **JR**

November

### Plenty of room on the SmiteWagon

Iceland's qualification had captured the world's imagination, and the media was quick to jump on the SmiteWagon. The Washington Post published a review of the qualifying teams entitled "2018 World Cup field set: Iceland's in, Italy's out, and compelling storylines abound." To quote the article: "For those without natural rooting interests, there's a clear, cuddly choice for adoption." Cuddly? We are not cuddly; we are hardcore. Our forefathers survived famines and volcanic eruptions. We are not going to the World Cup to get a participation

**"Aron confirmed that he would play on his bloody stumps were both his legs to be cleaved off in battle."**

medal, we are going there to defy the odds and conquer nations. We are not puppies, or Dustin from 'Stranger Things.' We are fearless conquerors borne of an inhospitable wilderness. And there is nothing cuddly about that. **EP**

December

### May the smite be with you: Gylfi Erupts At Everton

Fans of Strákarnir okkar ("our boys," in English) were concerned for the first few months of the 2017-18 season, as Gylfi "The Viking Virtuoso" Sigurðsson decided to take a brief sabbatical from first-team play after a £45m transfer to Everton FC. Thankfully, he quickly recovered from carrying the whole Swansea team on his back for three seasons, and returned to form. After dispatching a 25-yard-curler in a 3-1 victory against his former side on December 18th, Gylfi added insult to the copious injuries of his former manager Paul Clement, who was given the Blood Eagle by the Swansea board two days after the plundering. **GR**

January

### "Unfriendlies" #2—The Incineration of Indonesia

On January 11th, the team inflicted a mighty thrashing on Indonesia's "Select XI" in another pre-World Cup run out. Though rumours abound that the selected XI in question would be nine rhinoceroses in defence, an elephant in goal, and a tiger up front, in the end the opposition turned out to be just 11 hapless Indonesian footballers. Iceland ran riot on a pitch flooded by the tears of the Indonesian nation, netting six times. Shot after flaming shot was smashed into the enemy goal until it was just two smashed, smouldering posts with a gibbering, wild-eyed goalkeeper rolling around in the wreckage muttering about the coming of a new ice age. Onwards! **JR**

February

### The Ice Age Cometh: Iceland arrive in FIFA Top 20

In February, the corrupt sewing circle of FIFA deemed, in their continuing infinite wrongness, that

the Icelandic national men's football team were the 18th best side in the world. It was Iceland's best ever showing in the FIFA rankings, and they leapfrogged the weaklings of Wales and swine of Sweden into the top twenty footballing nations. While it might seem impressive for a country of 340,000—the 180th most populous country, from 233 in total—to break into the global footballing elite, we at Grapevine felt that this ranking

was inaccurate. No other team, for example, rides dragons into battle, or has a training routine that includes wrestling hangry polar bears into submission. We would prove FIFA wrong soon enough. **JR**

March

### Smite the Kremlin: 20% of Icelanders request World Cup tickets

In March, after the side lost a couple of friendlies to Peru and Mexico whilst bleeding young players, it was reported that 66,000 Iceland fans—around 20% of the country's population—had applied for World Cup tickets. Iceland's Ambassador to Russia, Berglind Ásgeirsdóttir, said: "This is an indication of a great interest. We are proud to be a participant, representing the least populated country in the history of World Cup." She was, of course, playing down the masterplan: with a perfect eleven on the field, and a horde of 66,000 in the stands, both the cup and the Kremlin would be there for the taking. **JR**

April

### We will smite them on the beaches: Gory kit unveiled

Iceland unveiled a new World Cup strip in April. It was a departure from the classic shirt worn during the famous raid on Euro 2016, featuring curious red-speckled sleeves. One Icelandic journalist, Helgi Seljan, perhaps cracked the code of the design: it brought to his mind the Icelandic phrase "Blóðugur upp að öxlum," or "Blood up to the shoulders." This aphorism has been used to describe working in butchery, but also, in the distant past, conflict with neighbouring nations. The kit served as a chilling warning to all opposition: step aside, lest ye be smited into several pieces. **JR**

May

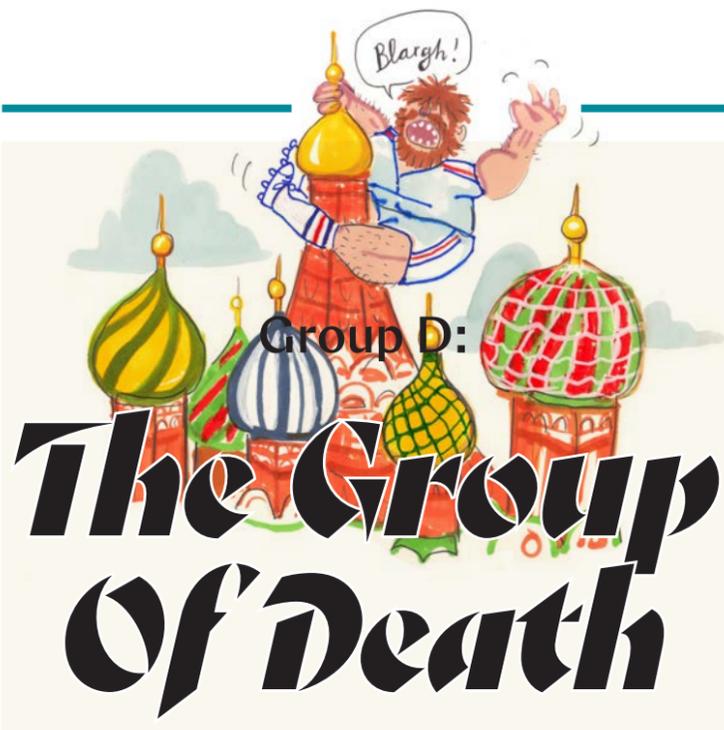
### The horde assembles: Aron to play on bloody stumps

It was the moment we'd all been waiting for. In May, Heimir Hallgrímsson—dentist, drawbridge destroyer, and manager of Iceland's national football team—announced the final 23-player raiding party that would set sail for Iceland's appointment with destiny. It was with some relief that we saw the names of Iceland's injured but talismanic star players Aron Einar Gunnarsson and Gylfi Sigurðsson on the list. Heimir revealed that Gylfi was back in training after an injury; he also said he was optimistic about injured team captain Aron, who had confirmed over the phone that he would even play on his bloody stumps were both his legs to be cleaved off in battle. So a little knee operation definitely wasn't about to stop him from leading Iceland to their inevitable World Cup-winning destiny. **JR**

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Group D:

# The Group Of Death

## Who are Iceland's first victims on the way to the trophy?

Words: Greig Kaj Robertsson Images: Lóa Hlín Hjálmtýsdóttir

When Iceland was pulled in Group D of the World Cup—alongside Argentina, Nigeria and previously-smited weakling Croatia—many called it the Group of Death. They're right. It is. For everyone else. Here are some thoughts on the first three teams Iceland will humble and destroy on the march to inevitable World Cup victory.

### Argentina

World Ranking: **5**  
 Coach: **Jorge Sampaoli**  
 Captain: **Lionel Messi**  
 Key player: **Lionel Messi**  
 Last game against Iceland: **N/A**  
 Date to be smited: **June 16th**  
 Battlefield: **Spartak Stadium**

Argentina and Iceland have never previously met, making the boys in blue undefeated against the Group D favourites. Lionel Messi's side suffered some well-documented troubles in qualification, waiting until the last game against Ecuador to book their place in Russia. Surprise, surprise: it was Leo who slammed in a hat-trick. To say La Albiceleste are over-reliant on their talismanic captain would be an understatement.

For example, without Messi in a friendly against Nigeria last November, Argentina slumped to a 4-2 defeat, having led 2-0. Things got even worse for them in March as Spain delivered a smiting of unholy proportions, trouncing the South Americans 6-1 as Lionel looked on, disgusted. Their recent 4-0 triumph over Haiti only reaffirmed this dependence, as the

little magician notched another hat-trick and assisted Sergio Agüero.

All of this is heartening for our boys—if they can mark Messi out of the game. Aron “The Annihilator” is already licking his lips at the prospect, and will take delight in strangling the G.O.A.T.'s (“Greatest Of All Time”) last shot at glory into oblivion.

### Predicted group position: 2nd

A fit and firing Leo will undoubtedly see the Argies graduate from the group if they can overcome their defensive fragility. They're prime for a smash 'n' grab pillage in the group's opening game on June 16th.

### Nigeria

World Ranking: **47**  
 Coach: **Gernot Rohr**  
 Captain: **John Obi Mikel**  
 Key player: **Alex Iwobi**  
 Last game against Iceland: **August 22nd, 1981, Iceland 3-0 Nigeria**  
 Date to be smited: **June 22nd**  
 Battlefield: **Volgograd Arena**

Nigeria's home shirt may have sold out faster than Aron Jóhannsson did to the Yanks, but can their performance on the pitch generate the same hysteria? Despite an unbeaten run in qualifying, the Super Eagles' lack of experience has proved a major talking point in the build-up to Russia and their unpredictability is likely to prove their greatest strength and pitfall.

They conceded a late penalty in a recent friendly against DR Congo

at home to draw 1-1, and had a first half to forget against England at Wembley Stadium. In the second period of the 2-1 defeat to the Three Lions, though, Gernot Rohr's men impressed, with Arsenal's Alex Iwobi turning in an eye-catching performance in the number 10 role.

Their German coach's tactical nous could well have earned his side a share of the spoils in London, so Heimir will need a dagger up his sleeve on June 22nd.

### Predicted group position: 4th

They like to play on the front foot and have significant firepower in Odion Ighalo and Kelechi Iheanacho, but their style will suit our boys. Grapevine expects proceedings in Volgograd to be in the same vein as when Iceland last smited them out of their senses in a 3-0 1981 tie.

### Croatia

World Ranking: **18**  
 Coach: **Zlatko Dalić**  
 Captain: **Luka Modrić**  
 Key player: **Luka Modrić**  
 Last game against Iceland: **June 22th, 2017, Iceland 1-0 Croatia**  
 Date to be smited: **June 26th**  
 Battlefield: **Rostov Arena**

Having almost been ended by Úlfhéðnarnir okkar in qualification, Croatia reached Russia by the skin of their teeth. While they negotiated their group decider against Ukraine and a play-off against Greece nicely, they have faltered to deceive at recent major tournaments, and will be a scalping target for coach Heimir.

Their recent friendly against Brazil on June 3rd was a case in point of their limitations; Luka Modrić and Ivan Rakitić saw plenty of the ball in the second half, without ever connecting meaningfully with forwards Ivan Perišić and Andrej Kramarić. In the eventual 2-0 defeat at Anfield, The Blazers' concentration waned, and Neymar was quick to capitalise.

Should Gylfi “The Viking Virtuoso” Sigurðsson get a similar sniff of blood, he'll gladly deliver a sucker-punch; Dejan Lovren is rumoured to have packed a suitcase full of Kleenex in anticipation.

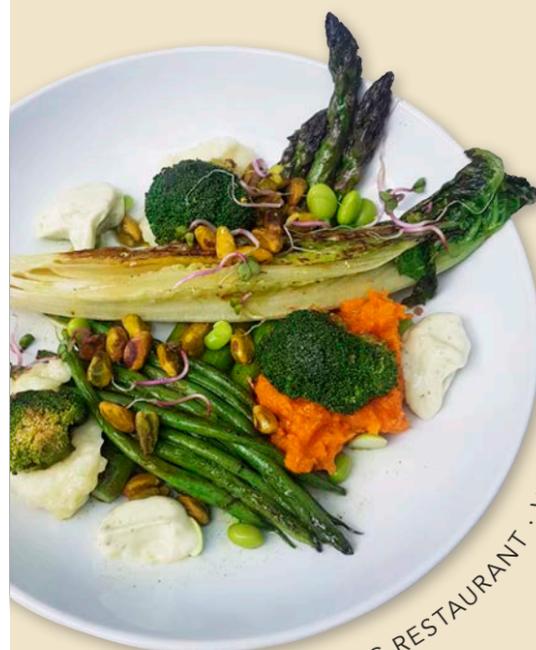
### Predicted group position: 3rd

Stronger on paper than in reality, and unwarranting of their “dark horse” status, Mario Mandžukić is a capable forward threat who could provide a stiff physical test for Iceland's backline. That is, if facing Hannes Þór “Wild Claws” Halldórsson again doesn't trigger his PTSD. ♡



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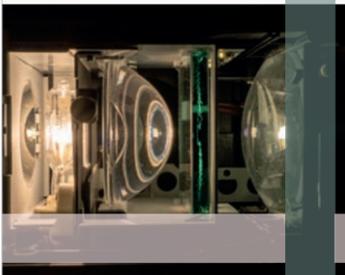
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## Licensing and registration of travel-related services

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

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

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



List of licenced Tour Operators and Travel Agencies on:  
[visiticeland.com](http://visiticeland.com)



The Grapevine football writers, casually enjoying a game

## Momentous Moments

### Where to watch the World Cup in Reykjavík

Words: **Juliana Illuminata Wilczynski & Phil Uwe Widiger**  
Photos: **Mink Viking Portrait**

Iceland has already made history by becoming the smallest country (340,000 people) to participate in the World Cup, while big footballing names like Italy didn't even qualify. You can imagine the anticipation of the country to go out smite the entire world. If you're in Reykjavík and similarly filled with anticipation, here's a list of the best places to watch Iceland triumph and consequently, become the biggest country in the world.

#### Sports bars

If you've dreamed of watching the World Cup on six HD screens while singing along to "Wonderwall" played by your favourite troubadour, the **English Pub** is the place to be. **Bjarni Fel** has an outdoor space and offers at the bar.

If you call football "soccer," watch the games at **American Bar**, with your fingers covered in hot sauce from the sticky chicken wings.



#### Cool bars

**Kex** will be screening the games in two different spots in the hostel and restaurant/bar. Come for the atmosphere, stay for the camaraderie. If you really don't care about the World Cup and just want to hang out with

like-minded Reykjavík cool kid sport protesters, head over to **Húrra** or **Prikið**.



#### Outdoors

As is tradition, **Ingólfstorg** will have a fan area showing all the games on a big screen, along with food wagons and other entertainment. A new outdoor addition for the World Cup, however, is the screening of the Iceland matches in Reykjavík's city centre park **Hljómskálagarður**, which will provide an easily accessible space for large amounts of people, a playground for children, and food, atmosphere, and entertainment.



#### CITY GUIDE

##### In an art installation

Probably the most interesting place to see Iceland's first match against Argentina is the **Reykjavík Arts Festival Hub** in Hafnarhús. The match will be screened live, with live music by audio-visual artist Þórunna Björnsdóttir. She'll improvise in real time, adapting to the progress of the game.

##### Fancy options

Reykjavík's favourite art house cinema, **Bió Paradís**, will be screening all the matches of the World Cup in the various cinemas—snacks allowed! They'll also sell Hugleikur Dagsson's infamous "HÚ!" T-shirts. **Gamla Bió** is selling limited tickets to watch the Iceland matches in the fancy old theatre, including drinks, snacks and a goodie-bag. For those of you who want to enjoy the games in a more private atmosphere, Petersen Svítan offers three rooms with their own screens for 20-30 people.



##### If you're Brazilian

The owner of **Kaldi Bar** is from Brazil, so if you're a Brazil supporter, you'll find many Brazilians there watching the games. Brazilians throw the best parties in the world, right? During the Euro Cup in 2016, there was a Brazilian drumming street party outside Kaldi after the Iceland games; hopefully it will happen again!



##### At home

Have you ever wondered about the best way to foster a good relationship with your Icelandic parents-in-law? The answer: watching Iceland smite the world on RÚV over beers and snacks. If Iceland succeeds, you'll laugh together. If Iceland fails, you'll cry together. Either way, you'll bond. Again: don't forget the beer. Thank us later. ♡

#### BEST OF REYKJAVÍK



##### Gimme All Ur Money

Drag-Súgur: Motherland Realness

June 1 - 21:00 - Iðnó - 2,900 ISK

When your mom jumps into the sea, all the whales sing: "We are-fa-mi-ly!" Even though this joke is not related to this drag show at all, it's gonna be just as funny. Prepare for an explosive, patriotic drag extravaganza with lots of glitter, fabulousness and sassy talent—two days before Iceland's independence day. Pylsur and brennivín are so 1918, all real modern Icelanders go to Drag-Súgur and drink a 'Goth Moss' instead. **JR**



##### A Spirit Propagates

After Party 1

June 16 - 5:00 - Njálsgata 15 - Free!

Imagine you're witnessing a private moment through the window of an apartment, which then transforms into a soliloquy to nature on a sunlight balcony. Imagine then that one of the audience members stands up and yells back. Yes, 'After Party 1' is a fourth wall shattering performance by Ásdís Sif Gunnarsdóttir that explores how the midnight sun creates a spiritual zeitgeist. If you can't attend, it'll be captured by a surveillance drone and live-streamed online. There's also, of course, a bangin' afterparty afterwards. You have no excuse. **HJC**



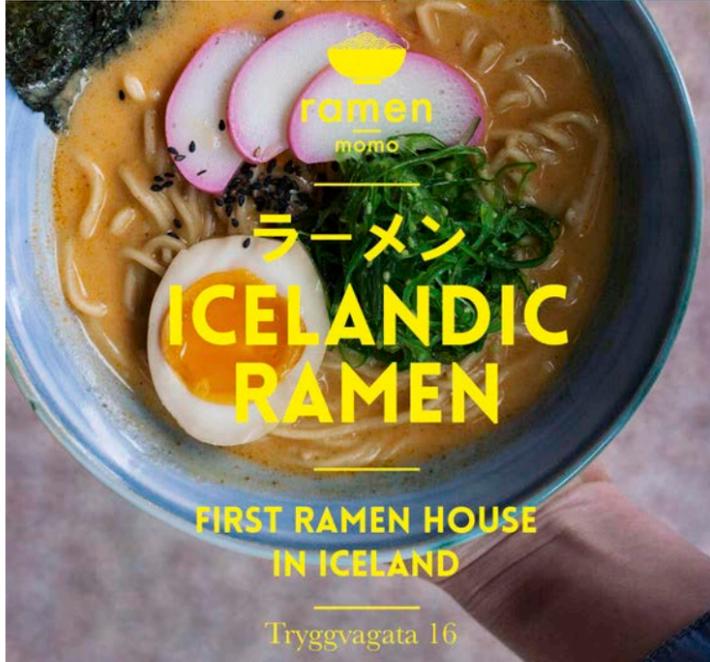
An absolute must-try!

Sægreifinn restaurant (Sea Baron) is like none other in Iceland; a world famous lobster soup and a diverse fish selection. **Open 11:30-22:00**

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# In Your Pocket



Reykjavík Map

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## Perfect Day

A face of the downtown scene tells us how to spend a perfect day in Reykjavík



### Lilja Birgisdóttir

Lilja Birgisdóttir is an Icelandic artist, which means an all around “þúsundþjalasmiður” (“jack of all trades”). She’s part of the Kling & Bang gallery, and a photographer, designer, choir member and, more recently, a store owner at Fischer. Here’s how she’d spend a perfect day in Reykjavík.

#### First thing in the morning

My perfect morning would be to sleep in, with no deadlines. I’d wake up to a breakfast table from Brauð og Co, the best bakery in town. Suddenly my good friend Katla would bang on the door with hot coffee from her lovely café Bismút. She’d give me the good news that it’s the warmest day of summer. I’d step onto my balcony into 25 degrees, and start collecting freckles. Atlas, the family dog, wakes up, and picks me up for a stroll—we’re headed to our favorite place, the Marshall House!

#### Around midday

The Marshall House is a culture space with the most beautiful view in Reykjavík. It has a lovely restaurant, the Living Art Museum, Kling & Bang gallery, and an exhibition

space by Ólafur Eliasson. Atlas is very passionate about art, and we get inspired by all the amazing ideas. After being so cultural, we head to the newly opened Grandi Mathöll for some salmon and champagne at LAX. They have sparkling wine on tap, which feels like a never ending summer. Feeling like a hundred bucks, I head downtown to my favourite store and precious baby, Fischer.

#### In the afternoon

Curious faces greet me when I arrive, and I have a long conversation about the underrated power of smell, and other curiosities. Fischer is a little bit different from other stores—its main purpose is not to sell you stuff. It’s a place where your senses are triggered with music, smell, visuals and taste. It’s a wholesome experience, and everyone’s invited. Because it’s my perfect day, my brother, Jónsi, flies in from LA, and my family gets together for a toast at Hotel Holt, which is like stepping back in time. It has a classic elegance and beauty.

#### Around dinnertime

We’re in our neighbourhood, so we give Snaps a visit. There are so many new restaurants, but I always end

up going there for the good food, good price, and friendly staff. After two glasses of wine me and my creative family come up with some good ideas to prevent pollution, or to open a Fischer in LA. With those lovely thoughts, we head over to Jónsi’s house, open a bottle of wine, and listen to Frank Sinatra, for we are old.

#### In the heat of the night

Talking about being old, I don’t really go out to bars anymore—they’re too loud and I can’t have a decent conversation there. And I found my first gray hair this morning! Maybe now more than ever, I need to forget about life—so I head over to Kaldi for a locally made beer. When the beer isn’t doing it for me anymore, I head to Húrri with my best friends to dance the night away. Before anyone notices, me and my boyfriend sneak out, grab a pizza from The Deli, and head home to Atlas, who has missed us dearly. There’s nothing better than having a dog. If you ever get lonely in Iceland you can borrow him for a walk or a snuggle. 🐕

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## Venue Finder

### Venues

The numbers on the right (i.e. E4) tell you position on the map on the next page

Austur Austurstræti 7	D3	lónó Vonarstræti 3	E3
American Bar Austurstræti 8	D3	Kex Hostel Skúlagata 28	E7
Andrými Bergþorugata 20	G6	Kaffibarinn Bergstaðastræti 1	E4
B5 Bankastræti 5	E4	Kaffi Vinyl Hverfisgatur 76	E6
Bar Ananas Klappastígur 28	E5	Kiki Queer Bar Laugavegur 22	E5
Bió Paradís Hverfisgata 54	E5	Loft Bankastræti 7	E4
Bjarni Fel Austurstræti 20	E4	Mengi Öðinsgata 2	F5
Bravó Laugavegur 22	E5	Nordic House Sturlagata 5	H2
Boston Laugavegur 28b	E5	Paloma Naustin	D3
Dillon Laugavegur 30	E5	Prikjö Bankastræti 12	E4
Dubliner Naustin 1-3	D3	R6013 Ingólfsstræti 20	E4
English Pub Austurstræti 12	D3	Reykjavík Roasters Kárástigur 1	F5
Gaukurinn Tryggvagata 22	D3	Stofan Café Vesturgata 3	D3
Hard Rock Café Lækjargata 2a	D3	Ölsmjáan Lækjargata 10	E3
Hressó Austurstræti 20	D3	Tívoli bar Hafnarstræti 4	D3
Húrra Naustin	D3	Tjarnarbríó Tjarnargata 12	E3

### Museums & Galleries

ART67 Laugavegur 67	F7	The Penis Museum Laugavegur 116	F8	Ásmundarsafn Sigtún	Open daily 10-17
ASÍ Art Gallery Freyjugata 41	G6	Kirsuþjót Vesturgata 4	D3	Reykjavík City Library Tryggvagata 15	Mon-Thu 10-19, Fri 11-18, Sat-Sun 13-17
Aurora Reykjavík Grandagarður 2	B1	Kling & Bang Grandagarður 20	A4	Árbæjarsafn Kistuhyllur 4	Open daily 13-17
Asgrímur Jónsson Museum Bergstaðastr. 74	G4	Listastofan Hringbraut 119	A4	The Settlement Exhibition Aðalstræti 16	Open daily 9-18
Berg Contemporary Klappastígur 16	E5	Living Art Museum Grandagarður 20	A4	Reykjavík Museum of Photography Tryggvagata 15	Mon-Thu 10-18, Fri 11-18, Sat-Sun 13-18
The Culture House Hverfisgata 15	E5	Mokka Kaffi Skólavörðustíg. 3A	E5	Saga Museum Grandagarður 2	Open Mon-Fri 10-16
The Einar Jónsson Museum Eiríksgröta 1	G5	Museum Of Design and Applied Art Garðatorg 1	H2	Sigurjón Ólafsson Museum Laugarnestangi 70	Open Tu-Sun 14-17
Ekkisens Bergstaðast. 25b	F4	The National Gallery of Iceland Frikirkjuvegur 7	F3	SÍM Hafnarstræti 16	Open Mon-Fri 10-16
Galleri List Skiphóll 50A	H10	The National Museum Sudurgata 41	G2	Tveir Hrafnar Baldursgata 12	G4
Hafnarborg Strandgata 34, 220	D3	The Nordic House Sturluggata 5	H2	Wind & Weather Window Gallery Hverfisgata 37	E5
Hitt Húsið Pósthússtræti 3-5	D4	Hafnarhús Tryggvagata 17	D3		
Hverfisgalleri Hverfisgata 4	D4	Kjarvalsstaðir Flókagata 24	H8		
i8 Gallery Tryggvagata 16	D3				
Húrra Naustin	D3				

## Vital Info



### Useful Numbers

Emergency: 112  
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Dental emergency: 575 0505  
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### Post Offices

The downtown post office is at Pósthússtræti 3-5, open Mon-Fri 09:00-18:00.

### Pharmacies

Lyf og heilsa, Egilsgata 3, tel: 563 1020  
Lyfja, Laugavegur 16, tel: 552 4045  
and Lágmulí 5, tel: 533 2300

### Opening Hours - Bars & Clubs

Bars can stay open until 01:00 on weekdays and 04:30 on weekends.

### Opening Hours - Shops & Banks

Most shops: Mon-Fri 10-18, Sat 10-16, Sun closed. Banks: Mon-Fri 09-16

### Swimming Pools

Sundhöllin, the downtown pool at Barónsstígur, is an indoor swimming pool with hot tubs and a diving board. More pools: [gpv.is/swim](http://gpv.is/swim)  
Open: Mon-Thu from 06:30-22. Fri from 06:30-20. Sat from 08-16. Sun from 10-18.

### Public Toilets

Public toilets in the centre can be found inside the green-poster covered towers located 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.

### Public Transport

Most buses run every 20-30 min  
Fare: 460 ISK adults, 220 ISK children.  
Buses run from 07-24:00, and 10-04:30 on weekends. More info at: [www.bus.is](http://www.bus.is).

**A**



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# The Map

Get the bigger, more detailed version of The Reykjavik Grapevine City Map at your nearest hotel or guesthouse, with selections from our Best-Of awards, vital info, downtown bus stops and a wider view of the city.

## Dining

### 1. Sea Baron

Geirsgata 8

Some say the langoustine soup recipe has changed a little since the eponymous “Sea Baron” himself passed away, but this harbourside diner is as popular as ever anyway. Get a warming cup of soup, and a melt-in-the-mouth fresh fish kebab, still smoky from the coals.

### 2. Kumiko

Grandagarður 101

Reykjavik’s first Japanese-focussed tea house is a colourful Harajuku-style café offering fine Japanese and Chinese teas, delicious cakes and desserts, and a killer brunch menu. The brunch presentation is an event in itself, with three layers of fruit, breads, dips, savouries, scones and cakes arriving on a three-tiered serving tray. It’s a perfect weekend treat for two.

### 3. Sæta Svinið

Hafnarstræti 1-3

With big portions and a tasty menu, this hip restaurant offers everything you might desire, from juicy ling and big bowls of mussels to a great leg of lamb and a taste of minke whale. Try and get a seat upstairs: it’ll be like dining under a starry sky in the most romantic, dim-lit set-up.

### 4. Sakebarinn

Laugavegur 2

Housed in a beautiful timber house in the heart of downtown, Sakebarinn’s window seats alone should be reason enough to drop by. They do a variety of sauce-laden sushi rolls—the local favourite—but we recommend sticking to the sushi and sashimi platter. Order the fresh wakame salad while you wait.

### 5. Brauð & Co.

Frakkastígur 16

Brauð & Co. has burst onto the bakery scene in 101 Reykjavík. Regulars swear by their “snúður”—cinnamon bread rolls smothered with a sugary glaze. They take it a step further and stuff the classics with blueberries and whatnot, eliciting inappropriate satisfied moans. Get there early to snatch a warm one.

### 6. Dill

Hverfisgata 12

If you’re a gourmand looking for a

memorable meal when in Reykjavik, Dill has to top the list. Dill showcases the best of Iceland with seasonal menus, paying homage to the island’s bounty, executed with all the tweezer precision of modern cuisine. Don’t even think twice about splurging for the seven-course menu—it’s the only way to do it.

### 7. Austur-Indiafjlagið

Hverfisgata 56

The undisputed monarch of Indian food in Iceland is the pricey-but-worth-it Austur India Fjlagið. They offer a wide selection of richly flavoursome dishes, including tandooris, authentic local delicacies, homemade paneer, and vegetarian options—and unlike most Icelandic places, you can expect some real spiciness.

### 8. Vitabar

Bergþórugata 21

This old-school burger ‘n’ beer joint is right downtown—near Sundhöllin—but feels like a real neighbourhood bar. Its unassuming exterior hides a cosy, no-frills dining room, where you’ll mostly be surrounded by locals. For once.

### 9. Grillmarket

Lækjargata 2a

The tasting menus with produce sourced from local purveyors have been a hit with diners since Grillmarket opened its doors. We suggest choosing one of the set menus and letting the chefs go to town.

### 10. Ali Baba

Veltusund 3b

This spot was awarded Grapevine’s “Best Late Night Bite.” Needless to say, it’s the perfect place to satisfy pregnancy cravings, splitting hangovers and midnight binges. We recommend the lamb kofte wrap: it’s to die for.

## Drinking

### 11. Pedersen Svítan

Ingólfsstræti 7a

This rooftop bar is located on the top of the cavernous Gamla Bió theatre. It has loads of seating with soft furniture to luxuriate on, a view across the harbour, cocktails, and all the sun you could wish for. The regular crowd is mostly loud business types, so find a good niche to escape them.

### 12. Loft Hostel

Bankastræti 7a

Loft stands many heads and shoulders above most of the al fresco drinking spots in Reykjavik, not least because it’s on the roof of the Loft Hostel and has a balcony that looks over downtown. Before the evening-time entertainment begins, it’s the perfect place to catch some late-afternoon sun.

### 13. Mikkeller & Friends

Hverfisgata 12

Mikkeller’s upstairs from popular pizza place Hverfisgata 12, so you get the advantage of good weekend DJs and fancy bar snacks and pizza. The true appeal, however, is the unique selection of beers and beyond, poured by knowledgeable bartenders amongst antique-chic décor.

### 14. Kaffibarinn

Bergstaðastræti 1

With a saloon-like atmosphere in the daytime, when dogs and kids run around amongst the diehard local crowd and groups of confused tourists, Kaffibarinn turns into an all-out party during the small hours of the weekend. Whether you’re holiday day-drinking or getting messy, it never fails to amuse.

### 15. Gaukurinn

Tryggvagata 22

If you prefer your music grungy, raw and weird, then Gaukurinn is your place. With dim lights, leather sofas and a gender neutral bathroom, it’s become the perfect hangout for the unorthodox Reykjavíkingar, so if you’re looking for like-minded peeps to drink with, here you go.

### 16. Bar Ananas

Klapparstígur 38

Reykjavik’s only beach bar is truly a breath of fresh air for the otherwise dreary downtown scene. No sir, this is no dive bar, but a club, with an indoor smoking lounge, stairs, a spacious bar, a tiny dance floor, and a solid line of DJs. It’s run by the same people as Boston, but it has a distinctly younger crowd in its mid to late 20s.

### 17. Kex Hostel

Skúlagata 28

Despite being a hostel bar, KEX Hostel transcends that description, with an amazing sea view over Faxaflói and Mount Esja, beautiful décor and a large wraparound bar. It’s especially fun if they’ve got a live show booked, with the bonus of great food and a good beer selection.

### 18. Slippbarinn

Mýrargata 2

This standard go-to bar for cocktails holds its own as far as the mixing

**Downtown & Harbour District**



**L**

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illy Týsgata 8 • 101 Reykjavík

game goes, with a unique menu and highly skilled bartenders to shake them up. The bar itself is a beautifully designed space with a gorgeous view, right in the Old Harbour. It closes on the early side, but it’s great to start out there.

## Shopping

### 19. Hrí

Laugavegur 25

Hrí is a design store that’s also the go-to for fancy cutlery, crockery, and kitchen items. They offer a selection of international products, with a strong Icelandic presence scattered throughout. Even if you don’t cook much, you’ll want it all.

**E**

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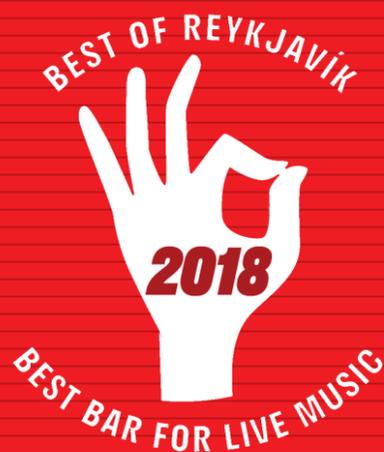
**DADI FREYR & BERNDSEN**

**15.6.2018**

**HJÁLMAR**

**23.6.2018**

**FULL LISTINGS ONLINE & IN-HOUSE**



**TRYGGVAGATA 22 / 101 REYKJAVIK**



The alchemist at work

TRACK BY TRACK

# Kira Kira - Alchemy & Friends

Words: Kira Kira Photo: Art Bienick

Album

Available now at:  
[kirakira.bandcamp.com](http://kirakira.bandcamp.com)

Each piece of music is an alchemical offering; an elixir for courage, a device for distilling faith, a meditation on patience or trust. If not a direct conduit to healing, the music is an act of friendship coiled as an alchemical substrate, offered with the intention of inviting transformation on some level.

Talk To Your Hands

The opening track is an elixir for intuition, you could say. I wrote it for my dear friend Dustin O'Halloran, a pianist who could hardly move his hands for over a year because of a spinal injury. The cause was a mystery for a while; another friend suggested he ask his hands what

they needed. We're our own best healers, but sometimes we don't know the right questions. That's what friends are for.

Alchemy For The Heart

This was a soothing hymn for a friend's wounded heart. It went through all kinds of transformations between Los Angeles and Reykjavik. It features my beautiful friend Sillus, and percussionists Samuli Kosminen and Kristó.

Forsæla

This one started from an improvised recording of Kórus, a choir I founded three years ago. Guitarist Daniel Friðrik spun into that. I sang and played harmonium, and Hermigervill played a 300 year old viola. In essence it has to do with holding an open and free heart space even when there's no apparent reason to do so.

Courage Walks At Night

This is built on organ recordings I made in an old barn in Vatsleysuströnd. I'm dedicating it to a great spiritual luminary I know, writer Þórdís Björnsdóttir. She has been an inspiration in leading a life of integrity, going against norms, and dissolving stagnated energies in our human villages. She's a fearless transformer of spirit; an energy I aspire to.

Logandi Úlfar

I recorded the vocals on top of a dark orchestral soundscape in Hermigervill's studio at 3 AM two summers ago. I had a dream the night before, which felt very real and it came through the improvised lyrics fully formed. We were mixing and producing with no plans to do vocals, but Hermigervill has a way of pressing record before you know it and was able to capture this.

Pioneer of Love

Hermigervill and I fell into a trance while being filmed for a documentary on friendship and musical collaboration. Six hours later, this song had emerged. Previously we'd had one of our deep heart to hearts about love and how every time we fall is like it's the first time. Full on intense intimacy with no discount on absolute romance.

Call it Mystery - Alchemy For Patience

My music family in LA, The Echo Society, commissioned this piece. It's a live recording of a 15 piece orchestra, with Eskmo and I singing. We wound up recording a collab album, to be released later this year.

And When You Fall, You'll Know You Have A Heart

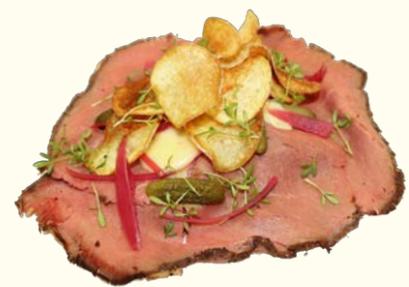
I stayed overnight in Alex Somers' old studio on Laufásvegur and sometime in the wee hours I improvised this to tape, and released it as is. Now the house it was recorded in is my home.

Alchemy For The End

Let this one be a mystery. Suffice to say that endings are also beginnings in their own way, in death there is open space for birth and healing to happen. Feel the feels, all of them, and let them transform you and your loved ones. ♡

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# Music



Meet the Geisha Cartel

## The New Punks

Expecting the unexpected with Geisha Cartel

Words: Hannah Jane Cohen Photo: Art Bicnick

### Concert

[See Geisha Cartel at Secret Solstice](#)

Despite only forming a year and a half ago, Geisha Cartel have already proved themselves to be one of the most inventive acts in Reykjavík. Deftly treading between scenes, the three cousins bump an undefinable sound. You can't label them, and you can't tie them down—you can just watch.

This year, after dropping their debut album, they'll be making their debut appearance at the Secret Solstice festival. And, if it's anything like their prior shows, it'll be one of those talked-about performances you can't afford to miss.

### Walking the line

The cousins arrive to the interview in style. Dark Prince Fendi, aka Jón Múli, wears jeans covered with sharpie drawings. Bleache, real name Eyþór Ingi, is covered in black and white tattoos. Plasticboy, or Kristján Steinn, would round out the trio, but he's currently studying in the Netherlands. They immediately project that DIY confidence you only find in late teenage and early 20s boys with the 'think it, do it' mentality that just makes things happen. It's pure punk of the kind rarely seen in modern day hip hop.

Despite being cousins, the three who formed the Cartel came from wildly different backgrounds. "We'd all been making music, but it was never focused," says Jón. "I was doing dance inspired stuff. Eyþór was into acid-techno, and Kristján was all about hip hop. So it was a focusing of ambitions. It was going to be hip hop, but vocal—an underground type of music that transforms into pop." Their music displays these disparate inspirations. You can't call it trap, or cloudy, or mumble rap. It's a melting pot. "I guess you'd say we stand out," says Eyþór. "We have a weird eccentric vibe, but at the same time, we could belong to the mainstream. We work with both."

[gpv.is/music](http://gpv.is/music)  
Share this + Archives

The name Geisha Cartel exemplifies this juxtaposition. "The name has an opposite meaning, but it doesn't have anything to do with the content," Jón says. "I mean The Cure has nothing to do with a cure." Eyþór nods. "It's a contrast," he adds. "A cartel is a ruthless organisation and a geisha is an entertainer."

### Breaking glass & roses

At their first performance the boys crashed a RÚV interview, landing their first bit of press in the process. "We really had no idea what we were doing but we just did it. We just jumped in," says Jón, laughing. "And on stage, we played twenty minutes non-stop, which we wouldn't do now because we know how to play, but then we just made everything chaotic."

Musically, though, they emphasise that everything is straight from the heart. "We have this song 'Svartar Rósir'; it's emotionally loaded," says Eyþór. "It was created in the midst of the heaviest snowfall in Reykjavík, and we had just been experiencing our friend descending into the criminal scene."

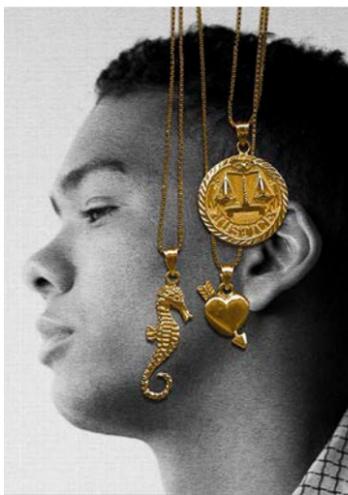
Others are less serious. "My favourite is called 'Alltof létt,' Jón says. "It says, 'Yeah, it's beautiful how you move. 100 grams that I buy and sell.' So you could be talking to a person that's dancing or the product you're moving. Dancing with the way you make your money."

Both these songs are on their new album, 'Illa Meint', which was dropped in early June. "The new album is a timeline of where we started to where we are now. Some of the songs were made a year ago and some are fresh," Eyþór says.

Geisha Cartel are not tied to being weird, though. "We always try to do something new, of course, but we're not going to lose ourselves in the avant garde," Jón says, shrugging. "It's not like just sounds of glass breaking." He laughs. "There are drums and vocals. Our music is eccentric, but it's always fun." 🍷



**MUSIC NEWS** Middle-aged party people of Reykjavík, rejoice! Just at the moment you've gotten your back realigned from gently moshing and throwing up devil hand signs at the Guns 'n' Roses concert on July 24th, it's time for a second helping of 1990s musical nostalgia. This time, it's 90s Big Beat duo **The Chemical Brothers** who are trucking into town to play a show at the 11,000 capacity Laugardalshöllin venue on October 20th. So dig out your Carhartt cargo pants, dust down your 'Screamadelica' t-shirt, power up your glowsticks, neck a few Noccos, and party like it's 1995.



Young Icelandic rapper, producer, performer, former Retro Stefson bassist, and architect of the still-burgeoning local rap scene **Logi Pedro** has dropped his first solo album, "Litlir Svartir Strákar" ("Little Black Boys"). Logi Pedro has produced some of the biggest breakthrough artists in the scene, including Sturla Atlas and Birnir, and you can hear him spreading his wings as a lyricist and artist on this record. If you're into the whole casual AutoTune pop vibe, you'll love it.



The super-fun, sparkly and lively **Lunga Festival**, held annually in the beautiful east Iceland town of Seyðisfjörður, has announced the performers at the 2018 edition. There's a week-long smorgasbord of art openings and happenings starting on July 15th, leading up to two nights of celebration, with concerts by **Páll Óskar, Vök, Sykur, Jóipé x Króli, Alvía Islandía, Svala, Princess Nokia, Reykjavíkurdætur** and **Soleima**. Three bands are still to be announced, and the arts programme is teeming with intriguing stuff, like a brand new performance from artist **Samantha Shay**. On top of all that, the classic party bar **Sirkus** is due to reopen for the festival, so you could be one of the first to check out its new iteration. Point your browser to [lunga.is](http://lunga.is) to find out more. **JR**

## Gaukurinn

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- 16/6 Summer KARAOKE Party
- 20/6 Pétur Eggerz, Kría, Huginn Frár, Dj Yambi
- 21/6 Drag-Súgur DRAG LAB experimental drag show
- 22/6 Keelrider, Atomstation
- 23/6 "Tómið Hungrar": Mannveira, Above Aurora, Örmagna
- 24/6 Singer/Songwriter Night
- 27/6 Open Mic Standup Comedy (EN)
- 28/6 Dance & Culture night

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## HAPPY HOUR

every day

from 14 to 21

## Our Picks



### ★ Song Laboratory Workshop

June 16-17 - 12:00, 17:00 - Skrauthólar 4

Everybody can sing, right? Well Alina Jurczyszyn and Kamila Bigus are here to show you that it's

true. They are the founders of "Laboratorium Pieśni" which is a group of female singers from Poland, performing folk songs from all over the world. This summer you will have the unique chance to take part in their first singing workshop in Iceland. You will learn polyphonic singing techniques, voice projection, and breathing techniques, helping you to articulate your voice in the way you've always wanted to. On each day there'll be two workshops, and only 30 spots are available. So if this tickles your vocal chords, don't wait to get musical. Oh, and make sure to show up barefoot. Don't say we didn't warn you. **PW**



### ★ Sóley

June 27 - 21:00  
Nordic House

Sóley is the Björk of sad indie—she's come a long way from featuring in Seabear to being an internationally famous artist herself. **PW**



### ★ Mozart Marathon

June 24 - 12:15 - Hannesarholt

Guðný Guðmundsdóttir is the former concertmaster of the Iceland Symphony Orchestra. She's also a party animal celebrating her 70th birthday with a marathon of every single piece Mozart ever wrote for violin and piano. At this iteration, she'll be joined by pianist Delana Thomen. Be there or be... Salieri. **HJC**



### ★ Skrattar

June 20 - 22:00  
Húrra

Come bring the sex and violence with the debut of Skrattar's new video. Warning: We've seen it, and you've gotta too. **HJC**



### ★ Mannveira / Above Aurora / Örmagna

June 23 - 21:00 - Gaukurinn

Do you like your music black? Then this will be the perfect evening for you. You will be able to drown in your despair of living in a meaningless void while being surrounded by creatures, completely dressed in black, that look just as desperate as you. Hail the blast beat! **PW**

## June 15th - June 28th

# Concerts & Nightlife

Events listed are all live performances and DJs. Venues are listed by day. For complete listings and detailed information on venues visit [grapevine.is/happening](http://grapevine.is/happening). Send your listings to: [listings@grapevine.is](mailto:listings@grapevine.is).

### Friday June 15th

**New Worlds: Bill Murray & Jan Vogler**  
20:00 Harpa  
**Daði Freyr & Berndsen**  
21:00 Húrra  
**DJ Krystal Carma**  
21:00 Kaffi Vinyl  
**Pink Iceland's Queer Fridays:**  
**Soffia Björg**  
19:00 Pink Iceland  
**DJ Dora**  
21:00 Sæta Svinið  
**DJ Bervit**  
23:00 Prikið  
**DJ Karitas**  
23:00 Bravó  
**DJ Kári**  
23:00 Kaffibarinn  
**Tviund**  
21:00 Mengi  
**DJ Simon Seth Sharp**  
22:00 Pablo Discobar

### Saturday June 16th

**Krossfest II / Norðanpaunk Warmup:**  
**Börn / Grafir / MSEA / Qualia**  
18:00 Crisis Party House  
**Summer Karaoke Party**  
22:00 Gaukurinn  
**★ Song Laboratory Workshop**  
12:00, 17:00 Skrauthólar 4  
**Secret Solstice:**  
**Una Stef & Teitur Magnússon**  
15:30 Kaffi Laugalækur  
**DJ Battlestar**  
23:00 Bravó  
**DJ Karitas**  
23:00 Prikið  
**DJ Intr0beatz**  
23:00 Kaffibarinn  
**DJ Simon FKNHNDMSM**  
22:00 Pablo Discobar  
**Haukur Gröndal Quintet**  
15:00 Jómfrúin  
**DJ Dolphin**  
21:00 Kaffi Vinyl  
**KrBear & Mogesen Solstice Special**  
21:00 Húrra  
**Welten & Óskar Guðjónsson**  
21:00 Mengi  
**Secret Solstice Launch Party: Kilo / Yung Nigo Drrippin / Vala Crunk / Elli Grill**  
20:00 Dillón

### Sunday June 17th

**Sunday Jazz**  
20:00 Bryggjan Brugghús  
**Sarah Munro**  
20:30 Hlemmur Square  
**DJ Kærleikur: Icelandic Vinyl All Day**  
All Day! Kaffi Vinyl  
**DJ Krystal Carma**  
22:00 Kaffibarinn  
**Jazz Jam Session**  
21:00 Hressó



Ari Árelíus, sitting

**Bob Cluness Vinyl Special**  
21:00 Bravó  
**Traditional Music**  
**Beginner's Session**  
16:00 Andrymi  
**Ari Bragi & Eyþór Gunnarsson**  
16:00 Gljúfrasteinn Laxness Museum  
**★ Song Laboratory Workshop**  
12:00, 17:00 Skrauthólar 4

### Monday June 18th

**MonJazz**  
21:00 Húrra  
**DJ Þorsteinn Eyfjörð**  
22:00 Kaffibarinn

### Tuesday June 19th

**Karaoke Party!**  
21:00 Gaukurinn  
**DJ Simon FKNHNDMSM**  
22:00 Kaffibarinn

### Wednesday June 20th

**amiina**  
21:00 Nordic House  
**Rythmatik / Snowed In / k.óla**  
18:00 R6013  
**Ari Árelíus Jazzband**

19:00 Kaffi Vinyl  
**Don Lockwood Band**  
21:00 Slippbarinn  
**Pétur Eggerz Album Release: Kria / Huginn Frár / DJ Yambi**  
21:00 Gaukurinn  
**Party Karaoke With Þórunn Antonía**  
21:00 Sæta Svinið  
**DJ Orang Volante**  
22:00 Prikið  
**DJ Sonur Sæll**  
22:00 Kaffibarinn  
**★ Skrattar Video Screening**  
22:00 Húrra  
**Jazz With A View: Welten**  
21:00 Harpa  
**Beatmakin Troopa / Extreme Chill**  
21:00 Bravó

### Thursday June 21st

**Una Stef & MIMRA**  
21:00 Húrra  
**DJ Fonetik Simbol**  
21:00 Bravó  
**DJ KGB**  
21:00 Pablo Discobar  
**DJ Alfons X**  
22:00 Kaffibarinn  
**DJ Eddie House**  
22:00 Prikið  
**Reykjavík Classics:**  
**Great Guitar Solos**  
12:30 Harpa  
**DJ Psychotic Simon**  
21:00 Kaffi Vinyl  
**Secret Solstice Festival**  
17:00 Laugardalshöll  
**Jazz In The Garden**  
18:00 CenterHotel Miðgarður

### Friday June 22nd

**Jazz With A View:**  
**The Tómas R. Latin Group**  
21:00 Harpa  
**Secret Solstice Festival**  
12:00 Laugardalshöll  
**Magga Stína**  
21:00 Mengi  
**DJ Yamaho**  
23:00 Kaffibarinn  
**DJ Dora**  
21:00 Sæta Svinið  
**DJ KGB**  
23:00 Bravó  
**DJ Atli**  
22:00 Pablo Discobar  
**DJ Egill Spegill**  
23:00 Prikið  
**Reykjavík Classics:**  
**Great Guitar Solos**  
12:30 Harpa  
**Keelrider / Atomstation**  
22:00 Gaukurinn  
**ISSAMWERA (Live Afro Beat)**  
20:00 Kaffi Vinyl  
**DJ Fusion Groove**  
21:00 Húrra

### Saturday June 23rd

**Reykjavík Classics:**

**Great Guitar Solos**  
12:30 Harpa  
**Hjálmar**  
21:00 Húrra  
**DJ Seth Sharp**  
22:00 Pablo Discobar  
**DJ Ester Silex**  
23:00 Kaffibarinn  
**DJ Halaköttur**  
23:00 Bravó  
**Big Baby**  
23:00 Prikið  
**★ Mannveira / Above Aurora / Örmagna**  
21:00 Gaukurinn  
**Secret Solstice Festival**  
12:00 Laugardalshöll  
**DJ Presmach**  
21:00 Kaffi Vinyl

### Sunday June 24th

**Sunday Jazz**  
20:00 Bryggjan Brugghús  
**Secret Solstice Festival**  
12:00 Laugardalshöll  
**★ Mozart Marathon**  
12:15 Hannesarholt  
**DJ Silja Glommi**  
23:00 Kaffibarinn  
**Singer/Songwriter Night**  
20:00 Gaukurinn  
**Krummi Vinyl Special**  
21:00 Bravó  
**Ari Árelíus**  
15:00 Nordic House  
**Umbra Ensemble**  
16:00 Gljúfrasteinn Laxness Museum  
**Traditional Music**  
**Beginner's Session**  
16:00 Andrymi  
**Árni Karlsson**  
21:00 Mengi  
**Jazz Jam Session**  
21:00 Hressó  
**Reykjavík Classics:**  
**Great Guitar Solos**  
12:30 Harpa

### Monday June 25th

**MonJazz**  
21:00 Húrra  
**Árni Karlsson**  
21:00 Mengi  
**Reykjavík Classics:**  
**Great Guitar Solos**  
12:30 Harpa  
**DJ John BRNLV**  
22:00 Kaffibarinn

### Tuesday June 26th

**Karaoke Party!**  
21:00 Gaukurinn  
**Tuesday Techno**  
20:00 Húrra  
**Árni Karlsson**  
21:00 Mengi  
**DJ Alfons X**  
22:00 Kaffibarinn  
**Reykjavík Classics:**  
**Great Guitar Solos**

12:30 Harpa

### Wednesday June 27th

**Jazz With A View:**  
**Ólafur Jónsson Quartet**  
21:00 Harpa  
**★ Sóley**  
21:00 Nordic House  
**Don Lockwood Band**  
21:00 Bryggjan Brugghús  
**Reykjavík Classics:**  
**Great Guitar Solos**  
12:30 Harpa  
**Party Karaoke With Þórunn Antonía**  
21:00 Sæta Svinið  
**Petersen Vinyl Special**  
23:00 Prikið  
**DJ Dolphin**  
21:00 Bravó  
**VASÍ Duo**  
21:00 Boston  
**DJ Gunní Ewok**  
22:00 Kaffibarinn  
**DJ Björn Teitsson**  
21:00 Kaffi Vinyl

### Thursday June 28th

**Music In The Garden**  
18:00 CenterHotel Miðgarður  
**DJ Seth Sharp**  
21:00 Pablo Discobar  
**DJ Fusion Groove**  
21:00 Bravó  
**DJ Fro\$T & Fonetik Symbol**  
23:00 Prikið  
**Clay Chaplin & Kristín Þóra Haraldsdóttir**  
21:00 Mengi  
**DJ Terrordisco**  
22:00 Kaffibarinn



Haukur Gröndal, shredding

**Reykjavík Classics:**  
**Sound The Trumpets**  
12:30 Harpa  
**Dance & Culture Night**  
21:00 Gaukurinn  
**Students From The Music Academy in Rockford, Illinois**  
13:00 Harpa  
**The Southern California Children's Choir**  
20:00 Harpa  
**LungA Warm-Up Party**  
20:00 Húrra  
**DJ Óli Dóri**  
21:00 Kaffi Vinyl  
**Sacha Bernardson / Sunna Friðjóns**  
18:00 R6013

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## Music



Skaði thinks of music as a celebration of existence

## Where Nobody Gives A Fuck & Everybody Cares

Skaði's colourfully goth world

Words: Hannah Jane Cohen Photo: Art Bicnick

artistically and personally. Since then, she's musically blossomed, becoming one of Reykjavik's most promising pop machines. "Musically, I have been told I am the illegitimate child of Peaches and Trent Reznor," Skaði says, laughing, clearly flattered by the comparison. "But myself? I would say my music is colourfully goth. On stage, I'm aggressive but caring. I aggressively care." It's a fitting description. Even off stage, Skaði radiates empathy.

She's aware though of how significant her position is, both as a musician and a role model. "Being a pop artist that gets attention and is playing at Solstice shows I'm just like everyone else," she adds. By that, she's referring to her identity as a trans and bisexual woman. "I get the flu. I work in construction. I have Christmas dinner with my family." She laughs. "But I won't lie, I do love the attention, and, not to be arrogant, but I belong there." Playing live and performing is what's most dear to her. "At a show,

**"On stage, I'm aggressive but caring. I aggressively care."**

we're celebrating being alive," she says. "That's what music is. It creates empathy for us. When we go to a music venue, you are moving, you are existing with other people. You start to feel, I belong." In one breath, Skaði gets peaceful, almost as if remembering the moment she first felt like that. "I know that as long as we have humans, we will create music," she finishes. "We will always celebrate our existence with each other." ♡

### Concert

See Skaði at Secret Solstice Festival

Skaði Þórðardóttir emits a golden aura. She's positive, open, and friendly—the type of girl you want to share secrets with at a sleepover. Her music is equally alluring. Layering goth drum loops with eerie synths and soothing vocal harmonies, Skaði creates music that's both mysterious, and undeniably danceable pop.

Already a legend in the queer and alternative Reykjavik scene, Skaði is finally making the jump to the mainstream with her performance at this year's Secret Solstice.

### Finding authenticity

Skaði is transgender, and very open about how it affected her artistically. "In a way, when I was in the closet—or, I want to say, in the coffin—I wanted to bury it and just wait until I would wake up and not feel that way," she says, with visceral emotion in her voice. "I

thought there would be something in my words or tone that would out me."

Transitioning, she emphasises, gave her the space and energy she needed to focus on art authentically. By becoming comfortable with herself, she could finally put herself out there as the solo artist Skaði. And that's exactly what she did.

This first performance came at Drag-súgur's January 2016 show. "I was so stressed," says Skaði. "But thinking back now, it was one of the first times where I felt like, these are my people. This is where I belong. Like, finally!" She smiles. "No one gives a damn about my gender identity but everyone cares about it. That was Drag-súgur and Gaukurinn. Nobody gives a fuck, but everybody cares."

### Aggressively caring

This welcoming environment gave Skaði a place to grow, both

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SEINT: suspected illuminati

## Underlying Forces

SEINT explores what comes after the apocalypse

Words: Tara Njála Ingvarsdóttir Photo: Timothée Lambrecq

### EP

Album 'The World is not Enough' comes out on Spotify in June, and on vinyl later in 2018.

SEINT is a dreamy electronic act that announced itself as "post-apocalyptic pop" in 2015, with the release 'Post Pop/The Last Day with Us.' The cover of the album shows a nuclear explosion with two figures kissing, enjoying the last moments of their existence in a destroyed world.

Joseph Cosmo Muscat, an English-Icelandic, Reykjavik-based singer, songwriter and producer, is the mastermind behind project. "SEINT is now officially a band," he says. "It used to be a solo effort. Dagný Silva, has been with me the whole time I've been performing live. Then I met Daniel Oddsson, who is our drummer now, he's brilliant human being and brilliant drummer."

### More raw

The idea of post-apocalyptic music came from Joseph's past in the metal, hard-core and punk scenes. "When I started producing electronic music, I actually started making sterile cold pop music," he explains. "I've been influenced by my experiences riffing out and head banging. The material in my first album was in the direction of Nine Inch Nails—very indus-

trial, cold and dirty. It's much more raw than the upcoming album."

Joseph is also a big fan of science fiction, and apocalyptic movies and television shows. "That whole world interests me," he says. "Mad Max: The Road Warrior is probably my favourite movie. The apocalyptic music concept is an accumulation of those things; where I came from musically and what I liked in television."

### Sharing the love

SEINT's newer material has a different feel. "It's more optimistic," says Joseph. "I think that's the word. At some point I just stopped focusing on problems and focused on healing instead. It spread and the music was contaminated by that energy. When I started feeling better mentally and physically the new material started to form. I started creating this album when my life long friend passed away. We used to do a lot of music together and I was making the album at the time of his death. That

transition happened right there."

Joseph was devastated, but became evermore grateful for the people in his life. "Our next album is dedicated to that friend of mine Ingólfur Bjarni," he says. "In my former work I shared my darkest times, when I feel as good as I do now I just want to share the love."

### Human consciousness

And so, SEINT has taken a dark experience, and turned it into something healing. Aside from the music, his visuals seem to be a very important part of experiencing the ideas he's expressing.

"I have a whole concept behind the artwork of the album that I haven't released yet," he says. "I don't want to give it all away, but it's about the human consciousness. It has a lot to do with that eye that people keep seeing in my work. You can see into a person's soul just by looking into their eyes—it says everything."

"My father is very heavy into conspiracy theories, as am I," he finishes. "He's an old punk rocker from the 70's. He said to me once, 'I really like your music but why do you have to dress up like one of these illuminati priests?' Because I was wearing a cape and necklace. When he said that I thought well 'Hey why not? That's what the music is about—the underlying forces in the universe.'" 

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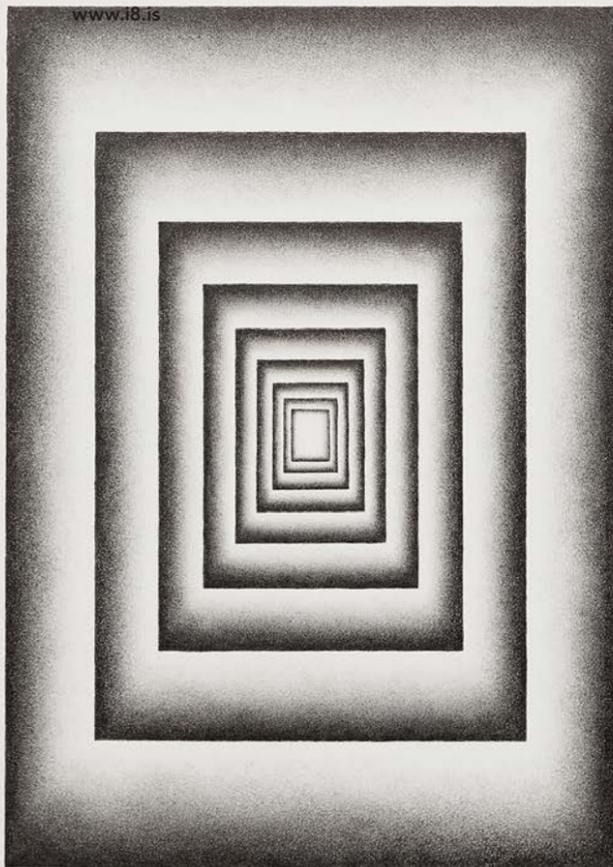
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Arnar Sigurðsson, an unusual kind of banker

## The Blue Bank

A different kind of bank opens in Þingeyri

Words: Aron Ingi Guðmundsson Photo: Haukur Sigurðsson

### Space

Visit Blábankinn in Þingeyri, and check it out online at [blabankinn.is](http://blabankinn.is)

In the small town of Þingeyri, in the Westfjords of Iceland, something very exciting is brewing. There's a new bank in town that's as far from a traditional financial institution as you could imagine. It's a creative bank, with a vault full of ideas instead of currency. It's Blábankinn—The Blue Bank.

Blábankinn was founded by Arnar Sigurðsson—a co-founder of the Karolina Fund crowdfunding platform—and Arnhildur Lilly Karlsdóttir, who also happen to be married. They were living in downtown Reykjavík when they decided to pack their bags and move to Þingeyri, with their young son, in the fall of 2017. The purpose of their move was to start running Blábankinn, which had been founded in the spring. The decision has already proved to be a good one, in Arnar's opinion, and he recommends that people try giving up the city lifestyle to live in a smaller place with more human connection.

### A new institution

"We've been open for a year now," Arnar explains. "We're welcoming entrepreneurs and creative people from everywhere, and at the same time supporting local projects within the town. It is good for people to get away from the chaos of their everyday life and enjoy being close to nature and surrounded by creative people."

Blábankinn has a co-working space, and offers banking services and events on business, arts, and innovation in the community. "It's a mix of many things," Arnar says. "One was to do with the institutions, the idea of having more service in Þingeyri like a bank service, a library and union service. But this project goes much further. Thanks to the creativity and motivation of entrepreneurs in town, like the people behind Simbahöllin, a coffee house and cultural centre in Þingeyri, Blábankinn aims to develop more variety within the local economy, and to help interesting projects to be born."

### Understanding and support

Arnar says the response has been great so far, and that the people of

Þingeyri have welcomed the family and attended Blábankinn's events. They've opened their doors to artists, entrepreneurs, and scientists alike, to help make connections and ease the project into the local society. The approach makes for an interesting dynamic—on one hand, it's a social service that looks inwards, and on the other, an entrepreneurial society that looks outwards, seeing things on an international scale. It's this, in Arnar's opinion, that makes Blábankinn unique.

Nonetheless, it's a challenge to build something new and innovative in a remote area like the Westfjords. "We live with many issues regarding transportation, inclement conditions, and lack of service," says Arnar. "We've felt understanding and support regarding these challenging conditions to try and build up something new. We get support from the Ministry of Transport and Municipality for this trial project."

### The whole package

I wonder out loud of the Blábankinn model could be used elsewhere. "The only way to find out if something has value is to look at yourself, and your village," says Arnar. "If the Blábankinn way can work elsewhere, then great, but it's all about the people at this specific location. It's the energy that builds up, and the atmosphere. You have to look at the whole package."

With these words ringing in my ears and the cold sea breeze of the Westfjords caressing my face during my afternoon walk, I feel convinced that the future of this region is bright, especially with people like Arnar around. 🇮🇸

## Our Picks



### Nonconformity Realised

★ **Daniel Lismore: Be Yourself, Everyone Else Is Already Taken**

Runs until June 30 - Harpa

Daniel's artistic world is one of sensory overload. The exhibition comprises a series of his "looks"—extravagantly maximalist outfits, layered onto mannequin-like sculptures with only a cast of his lipsticked face visible. They're instantly appealing and dizzyingly detailed; a technicolour remix of pop culture, high street clothing, ceremonial garb, high fashion, and lots more besides. From pieces worn by the Queen of Thailand to Nicki Minaj's garb from the 'Freedom' video, it's full of treasures that reveal Daniel's vivid personal aesthetic. If you're still not sold, he's scented the whole exhibit. One piece smells like Joan Collins on acid; another one is like plastic on poppers. **JR**



### Faithful or Unreliable?

★ **HIGHER CONTRAST**

Runs until July 5 - NORR11

Egill Egilsson's paintings are all done from memory. Created in LA, his works portray mountains that don't actually exist, but are rather based on how he remembers Icelandic nature to be. **HJC**



### Routine Dismantled

★ **Divisions and Reflections**

Runs until August 4 - i8

Ignacio Uriarte's drawings are rooted in mundane reality. At any moment, they could be a mathematical formula, musical composition, or fantastic piece of art. **HJC**



### Til Hamingju Hafnarborg!

★ **Hafnarborg 35/30**

Runs until August 26 - Hafnarborg

This year, Hafnarborg celebrates a double anniversary: 35 years since they got the house, 30 since they opened. So come for a special exhibit with some totally new works. **HJC**

## June 15th - June 28th

# Art Listings

Events are listed by venue. For complete listings and detailed information on venues, visit [grapevine.is/happening](http://grapevine.is/happening). Send your listings to: [listings@grapevine.is](mailto:listings@grapevine.is)

## Opening

### MUSEUM OF DESIGN AND APPLIED ART Mannabein

Knitter Torfi Fannar Gunnarsson takes over the entrance of the museum to knit some oversized brightly coloured ponchos right in front of your eyes.

- Opens on June 24, 2018
- Runs until July 24, 2018

### VERKSMÍÐJAN Á HJALTEYRI

#### Archaeology For The Anthropocene

Five photographers explore the population growth, super cities, and environmental impact of the Anthropocene epoch. How has the Earth changed?

- Opens on June 17, 2018
- Runs until July 22, 2018

## Ongoing

### NATIONAL GALLERY OF ICELAND

#### Treasures Of A Nation

A selection of over 80 works chosen from the national gallery's collection display the evolution of art since the 19th century.

- Runs until December 31, 2019

#### Rule Of The Game

Finnish artist Elina Brotherus comes to Iceland with a retrospective. She's known for her arresting self-portraits and landscapes.

- Runs until June 24, 2018

#### Other Hats: Icelandic Printmaking

This exhibit takes printmaking and looks at it in parallel with other means of expression, including writing, composition, and visual arts.

- Runs until September 23, 2018

### EINAR JÓNSSON MUSEUM

#### Permanent Exhibition

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

- On permanent view

### THE ÁSGRIMUR JÓNSSON COLLECTION

#### Korriró And Dillidó

Ásgrímur's art explores the fears and dreams of generations, as mysterious Icelandic elves, trolls and monsters finally take shape and materialise as vivid beings.

- Runs until September 15, 2018

### MUSEUM OF DESIGN AND APPLIED ART

#### Behind The Scenes With

### Einar Þorsteinn

In 2014, architect and mathematician Einar Þorsteinn Ásgeirsson gave all his belongings to the museum. Best described as a renaissance man, the exhibit is full of curiosities.

- Runs until October 7, 2018

#### The Imaginarium Of Kron By KronKron

Magni and Húgrún (aka KronKron) have designed over 2000 fashion items, thereof 1200 shoe designs which make up the core of this exhibition.

- Runs until September 18, 2018

### ÁRBÆR OPEN AIR MUSEUM

#### Daily Guided Tours

Tours are from 13:00 to 14:00 through its open air exhibits.

### REYKJAVÍK CITY MUSEUM

#### Settlement Sagas

As Viking ruins meet digital technology, this exhibition provides insight into Reykjavik's farms at the time of the first settlers.

### REYKJAVÍK ART MUSEUM -

#### ÁSMUNDARSAFN

#### Invasion II: Hrafnhildur Arnardóttir / Shoplifter

The first instalment of a series of exhibitions that encourage artists to engage with the artistic heritage of Ásmundur Sveinsson.

- Runs until August 12, 2018

#### Ásmundur Sveinsson: Art For The People

Ásmundur Sveinsson watched Iceland grow from a poor agrarian society into one of the richest countries in the world. His sculptures reflect this, presenting a conversation between assimilation and innovation.

- Runs until December 31, 2018

### REYKJAVÍK MUSEUM OF PHOTOGRAPHY

#### Olaf Otto Becker: Ice & Land

Here, spectacular documentary photography highlights changes in Iceland and Greenland due to climate change and other human interference.

- Runs until September 16, 2018

#### Black Metal

Hafsteinn Viðar, aka Verði Ljós, documents the elusive Icelandic black metal scene with a series of darkly beautiful photos. The photos will also be available in a book of the same name.

- Runs until August 15, 2018

### NATIONAL MUSEUM OF ICELAND

#### Splendid Saddlery

In the past, beautifully-decorated and ornate saddles were valuable possessions. Here, see a collection of them.

- Runs until October 21, 2018

#### Discovering Iceland's Monasteries

Are you fascinated by really old things? God? This exhibit combines both, based on research by archaeologist Steinunn Kristjánsdóttir.

- Runs until May 26, 2019

#### Pre-Christian Graves In A New Light

In 2017, six pre-Christian burial mounds were found in North Iceland. Swords, spears, and even a boat was unearthed. Come see.

- Runs until May 26, 2019

### SIGURJÓN ÓLAFSSON MUSEUM

#### Two Comrades

Icelandic artists Sigurjón Ólafsson and Asger Jorn were both influential figures in the Danish art scene in the 1930s. Their works are now shown together to hopefully unveil new links and relationships.

- Runs until October 7, 2018

### THE NORDIC HOUSE

#### Inspired by Aalto: Sustainability as an Attitude

Come see some of Alvar Aalto's classic furniture designs and some of the works he inspired including an assortment of Artek furniture.

- Runs until September 2, 2018

#### Street View

A wrecked caravan-like installation symbolises the loss of homes. The materials themselves were shipped directly from Syria. Found art in the most tragic way.

- Runs until June 17, 2018

### GERÐUBERG CULTURE HOUSE

#### Moments From The Life Of Asylum Seekers

Is asylum in Iceland paradise or purgatory? Here, Annie Ling explores the lives of those who arrived in Iceland last year.

- Runs until August 24, 2018

### BERG CONTEMPORARY

#### The Search For Truth

Katrín Elvarsdóttir explores the blurred limits of imagination and how memories tend to gradually come free of reality.

- Runs until August 3, 2018

### LISTASALUR MOSFELLSBÆJAR

#### Kristján og Logi umpotta

Two embroidery artists collaborate in a seamless project that makes you wonder: Which artist stitched what?

- Runs until June 15, 2018

### GERÐARSAFN KÓPAVOGUR ART MUSEUM

#### GERÐUR: Retrospective

This retrospective explores Icelandic sculptor Gerður Helgadóttir, after whom the museum was named.

- Runs until August 12, 2018

### LISTASTOFAN

#### Sig Vicious - Lavastract

Iceland's first Instagram celebrity (@SigVicious) combines his landscape photography with his graphic design origins for a dramatic, futuristic, and yet paradoxical ride.

- Runs until September 2, 2018

### i8

#### ★ Divisions & Reflections

With monochromes and geometrics, Ignacio Uriarte's pieces could at any moment be mathematical formulas, architectural projects, musical compositions, or works of art.

- Runs until August 4, 2018

### DJÚPAVÍK

#### The Factory

This annual multidisciplinary exhibition takes place in an abandoned herring factory in the Westfjords. Haunting setting, beautiful art.

- Runs until August 31, 2018

### WIND & WEATHER WINDOW GALLERY

#### Journey To Home

This exhibit is moving—literally. With a traveling gallery, the nomadic window searches for home. What is home? Can it be plotted and mapped?

- Runs until June 22, 2018

### LIVING ART MUSEUM

#### Pressure Of The Deep

This exhibit celebrates the 40th anniversary of the Living Art Museum. Come for a magnifying glass on current events.

- Runs until August 12, 2018

### REYKJAVÍK ART MUSEUM -

#### KJARVALSSTAÐIR

#### No Man's Land: Where Beauty Alone Reigns?

In this two locale exhibit, experience wilderness and independence as seen through the eyes of the Icelandic psyche. This location holds only historic artists.

- Runs until September 30, 2018

### REYKJAVÍK ART MUSEUM - HAFNARHÚS

#### No Man's Land: Where Beauty Alone Reigns?

In this two locale exhibit, experience wilderness and independence as seen through the eyes of the Icelandic psyche. This location holds only 21st century artists.

- Runs until September 30, 2018

### HAFNARBORG

#### ★ 35/30 Anniversary Exhibit

It's Hafnarborg's anniversary, and to celebrate they'll have a special exhibit of pieces from their collection. Some have never been seen before.

- Runs until August 26, 2018

### ART67

#### Gerður Hannesdóttir

Gerður creates starkly coloured abstract works covered with texture and movement.

- Runs until June 31, 2018

### IÐNÓ

#### meta/morphe

In this installation work, 10 artists get together to disassemble and reconfigure a grand piano. Audience participation is encouraged.

- Runs until June 22, 2018

## MUSEUM OF DESIGN AND APPLIED ART HÖNNUNARSAFN ÍSLANDS

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# Film

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A tale of bow and arrow eco-terrorism

## A Woman Goes to War

Finally, Iceland is ready for eco-terrorism

Words: Valur Gunnarsson Photo: Still from the film

### Film

In the 2014-15 season, a triumvirate of films appeared that set the benchmark for Icelandic cinema in the 2010s. That spring there was Dagur Kári's 4th film, 'Virgin Mountain' ('Fúsi') and Grímur Hákonarson's sophomore breakthrough 'Ram's' ('Hrútar'). The autumn before, the first film by veteran theatre artist Benedikt Erlingsson, 'Of Horses and Men' ('Hross í oss'), won the Nordic Council Film Prize, an Icelandic first, although it had actually been released the year before domestically to little fanfare. All dealt, in different ways, with the loneliness of the Icelandic male in various life phases, and, in some cases, that of the Icelandic horse, too.

This year, another trio has appeared that seems to show the way forward, and this time all the main protagonists are female. There was the first film by Ása Helga Hjörleifsdóttir, 'The Swan' ('Svanurinn'), and then came 'And Breathe Normally' ('Og andið eðlilega'), another first-time feature, this time by Ísold Uggadóttir. And now there is 'A Woman Goes to War' ('Kona fer í stríð'), Benedikt's follow-up to 'Horses.' Unlike the

first triumvirate, each one of these films tackles political issues of the day directly.

### Robin hoodless

Eco-terrorism has had a bad name in Iceland ever since Sea Shepherd sunk whaling boats in Reykjavík harbour in 1986, but times have changed following the campaign

against the damming of the Highlands, and we are now finally ready for heroes who price nature above private property. Benedikt bravely drops us in where most films might be concluding. Halla has been sabotaging power lines with the aid

of a bow, arrow and a mole in a ministry for quite a while to try to prevent the environmental destruction caused by the country's many aluminium smelters, which have been one of the main political bones of contention of this century. Halla is close to capture, and has to call it a day after submitting her manifesto with the aim of changing public opinion.

### Why try?

Cleverly, the stakes are soon raised. Halla is eligible to adopt an orphan girl from war-torn Ukraine, which

will of course become impossible if she has a criminal record. This raises some interesting questions. Is it more worthwhile to try to influence big issues, perhaps to no avail, than to save the life of a single person? And is there any point in self-improvement while our planet is being torn apart? But this is not the Icelandic 'Turk 182.' In the age of fake news, the government is quick to put a spin on things and the heroic Halla is blamed for lowering the country's credit trust in this paranoid post-collapse era. It's hard to save the world with Semtex. There are no easy answers or cheering crowds at the end of it.

### Cutesy postcards

But the film is not without flaws. Whereas 'Horses' was really like nothing seen before, here we find a miscellany of well or lesser known tropes. The live orchestra is reminiscent of 'Kusturica' but is at least consistent. Twins should be used sparingly as a plot device, and bring to mind episodes of 'Arrested Development,' though both sisters are deftly played by the wonderful Halldóra Geirharðsdóttir. And Benedikt, after his previous success, now has more access to foreign funding and probably feels compelled to include cutesy postcards of women on bikes in Reykjavík, or speaking on the phone next to landmarks.

Benedikt is no doubt one of the most interesting filmmakers working in Iceland today and this is a well-above-average picture. But given the noble intentions and the talent involved, it can feel a little underwhelming at times. ♡

gpv.is/film  
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## Various Events



'Icelandic Sagas: The Greatest Hits' will soon see a new smiting...

### Friday June 15th

**Rupaul's Drag Race Viewing Party**  
20:00 Kíki Queer Bar  
**Drag-Súgur: Motherland Realness**  
21:00 Gaukurinn  
**'Titanic' Party Screening!**  
20:00 Bíó Paradís  
**Reykjavík Kabarett**  
21:00 Tjarnarbió  
**Friday Documentaries**  
18:00 Andrymi

### Saturday June 16th

★ **ÍSLAND - ARGENTINA SMITING** ★  
12:00 Various Locations  
**How To Become Icelandic In 60 Minutes**  
19:00 Harpa  
**Vinyl Record Market**  
11:00 Stúdentakjallarinn  
**Icelandic Sagas: The Greatest Hits**  
20:15 Harpa

### Sunday June 17th

**Sunday Yoga**  
12:00 Loft  
**Lipsync Karaoke**  
21:00 Kíki Queer Bar  
**Party Bingo With Sigga Kling**  
21:00 Sæta Svinið  
**Movie Sundays: Radical Movie Club**  
19:00 Andrymi  
**How To Become Icelandic In 60 Minutes**  
19:00 Harpa  
**Icelandic National Day Celebration**  
14:00 Harpa

### Monday June 18th

**Stand-up Comedy (in English!)**  
21:00 Gaukurinn

### Tuesday June 19th

**How To Become Icelandic In 60 Minutes**  
19:00 Harpa  
**Drink & Draw**  
20:00 Húrra

### Wednesday June 20th

**Open-Mic Stand-up Comedy**  
20:00 Gaukurinn  
**Improv Iceland (in English!)**  
20:30 Tjarnarbió

### Thursday June 21st

**Dark Deeds In Reykjavik: A Guided Literary Walking Tour**  
15:00 Reykjavík City Library  
**How To Become Icelandic In 60 Minutes**  
19:00 Harpa  
**Icelandic Sagas: The Greatest Hits**  
20:15 Harpa

### Friday June 22nd

★ **ÍSLAND - NIGERIA SMITING** ★  
14:00 Various Locations  
**Rupaul's Drag Race Viewing Party**  
20:00 Kíki Queer Bar  
**'Blade Runner' Party Screening!**  
20:00 Bíó Paradís  
**Reykjavík Kabarett**  
21:00 Tjarnarbió  
**Friday Documentaries**  
18:00 Andrymi

### Saturday June 23rd

**Reykjavík Kabarett**  
21:00 Tjarnarbió

### Sunday June 24th

**Sunday Yoga**  
12:00 Loft  
**Lipsync Karaoke**  
21:00 Kíki Queer Bar  
**How To Become Icelandic In 60 Minutes**  
19:00 Harpa  
**Party Bingo With Sigga Kling**  
21:00 Sæta Svinið  
**Movie Sundays: Radical Movie Club**  
19:00 Andrymi  
**Icelandic Sagas: The Greatest Hits**  
20:15 Harpa  
**Icelandic Game Night**  
20:00 Andrymi

### Monday June 25th

**Stand-up Comedy (in English!)**  
21:00 Gaukurinn

### Tuesday June 26th

★ **ÍSLAND - CROATIA SMITING** ★  
17:00 Various Locations

### Wednesday June 27th

**Improv Iceland (in English!)**  
20:30 Tjarnarbió  
**Open-Mic Stand-up Comedy**  
20:00 Gaukurinn  
**How To Become Icelandic In 60 Minutes**  
19:00 Harpa  
**Icelandic Sagas: The Greatest Hits**  
20:15 Harpa  
**Football Pub Quiz**  
20:00 Húrra  
**Swap Til You Drop!**  
16:30 Loft

### Thursday June 28th

**Dark Deeds In Reykjavik: A Guided Literary Walking Tour**  
15:00 Reykjavík City Library

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## THIS MONTH'S HIGHLIGHTS



### World Cup 2018 - Free Entrance!

Bíó Paradís, downtown cinema, will screen all the World Cup matches summer 2018 LIVE! Free entrance and everybody is welcome! Incredibly tempting bar specials! Experience Iceland's first time in the World Cup with local Vikings! Free KIDS CINEMA screenings in other rooms during all matches! Local Viking beer and grilled hot dogs!



### Iceland Matches

Group D of the 2018 FIFA World Cup will take place from 16 to 26 June 2018. The group consists of Argentina, Iceland, Croatia, and Nigeria. **Argentina vs Iceland** - June 16th at 13:00 local time. Warm up starts at 12:00! **Nigeria vs Iceland** - June 22nd at 15:00 local time. Warm up starts at 14:00! **Croatia vs Iceland** - June 26th at 18:00. Warm up starts at 17:00! Join us and lets to the local HÚ! together!



### Friday Night Party Screenings

Dancing and singing, disasters and gore! Films everyone needs to see, at least once! Titanic, Blade Runner, Top Gun and The Room (2003) are all waiting for you upcoming Fridays!



### Last Call

Iceland is by far the smallest nation to qualify for the finals of the football World Cup but is the character that drove the team to work miracles also at the root of Icelanders' struggles throughout their history? **A brand new Icelandic documentary** - screened with English subtitles! (Director: Hafsteinn Gunnar Sigurðsson).

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A fine figure of a fellow

# Hip Hop And Homebirths With Curver Thoroddsen

## MAKING OF AN ARTIST

Curver Thoroddsen is an artist, musician, and one half of experimental electric band Ghostigital. These are a few of the formative influences that made him the prolific multidisciplinary he is today.

Words: Curver Thoroddsen

Photo: Timothée Lambrecq



### The Final Countdown and pop culture

I was ten years old and Iceland was rapidly opening up to popular culture. Before 1986 all radio and television was government run, with no TV on Thursdays and during the whole month of July. When the law changed, Bylgjan and Stöð 2 started broadcasting, and music videos started flowing in. I was at my friend Danni's place when Final Countdown came on, and we both immediately knew we wanted to be rock stars. I ran home and told my mom and that I would always wear my new Moonboots while on stage.

### Smekkleysa and Iceland's underground

The energy and the colourful characters

connected to "record label" Smekkleysa had a huge influence on me. Surrealist poet Sjón; the playful Sugarcubes and Risaleðan; time machine rockabilies Langi Seli & Skuggarnir; up-to-no-good book nerds Ham; and Bless, led by Dr. Gunni, who I thought was really some kind of a doctor until I was 14 years old. Smekkleysa was an awesome collective of people and their impact on the whole Icelandic art scene was very positive. It made me super interested in the brewing Icelandic underground scene at the time. I bought every compilation cassette, listened to and taped countless radio interviews, and tried to see as many concerts as my parents let me sneak into. So you can just imagine how happy I was when Smekkleysa released my debut album, 'Haf,' in 1994.

### Reptilicus and industrial noise music

On a Smekkleysa compilation tape, I found a track by industrial cyberpunks Reptilicus. I totally shat myself. Both because of the awesomeness, and because I had never heard such dark and horrifying music before. I became their biggest fan, and would stalk Jóhann Eiríksson taking the bus home from his work at an industrial factory. They opened up the world of noise, darkness and experimental music to me, and to the rest of Iceland at that time. I'm an incredibly lucky fanboy to be currently remastering

the whole Reptilicus catalog for their 30th anniversary.

### Conceptual Art and Relational Aesthetics

I was always interested in making art, but was never good at drawing or painting. So my first art world heroes were those who made art beyond image-making, and used conceptual means for their creations. Andy Warhol and Duchamp were my first obvious influences. During our first months in the Icelandic Art Academy, the teachers whipped us into the moment. It was a real eye (or I should rather say mind) opener. Learning about On Kawara, Roman Opalka, Richard Long and Rirkrit Tiravanija was a game changer for me. I started doing works that fused together my love of popular culture and interaction of the viewer by inserting myself into the everyday media, usually with some kind of a performance. Much later, during my Masters studies, I found out that this way of working had been dubbed Relational Aesthetics.



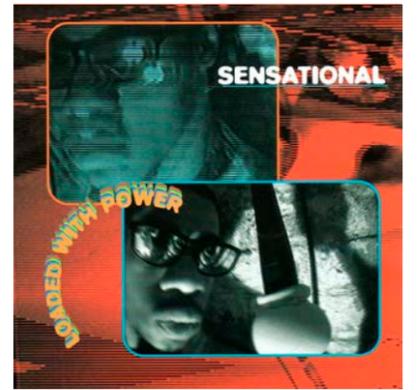
Could you leave me alone now, please?

### Jam and weird dark comedy

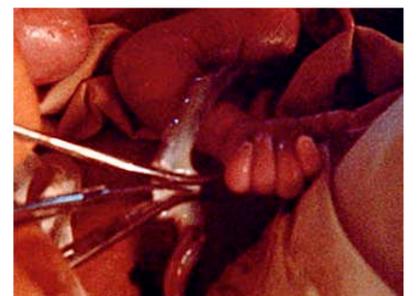
Holy shit! How in the world was Chris Morris even allowed to do Jam? In today's PC environment it would never happen. I was touring with Mínus around the UK in a nightliner with two other metal bands, and they had Jam on VHS. Far above the music, drugs and people, Jam was the most hardcore thing on the bus. It is the best thing I have ever seen! I have always been a fan of weird and absurd comedy like Monty Python, Konfekt, Look Around You, Nighty Night and such, but Jam really takes the cake. It's so dark and fucked up that you can only watch one at a time. When showing it to my students I have to skip every other scene so I will not get fired. There were only six Jam shows made but they are so dense that it's still a goldmine. Nothing comes close— not even Rick and Morty.

### Sensational and abstract Hip Hop

I heard a track once in 12 Tónar record store, and for some reason left the store without asking what it was. I was perplexed by it. I couldn't figure out what it was, but it stayed with me, brewing in the back of my head. For months this weird track would pop up in my mind. It was hinting at some new way of making music—an enigma. Six months later, I couldn't take it any more. I had to know what this was. The guys at 12 Tónar helped me find the perpetrator. It was



NYC rapper Sensational's debut album, "Loaded With Power." Holy mother of god! It's the 3rd best album in the world, with a whole new level of creativity. I ate up the WordSound catalogue, and other abstract hip hop following that, like Cannibal Ox and Dälek. I now have every Sensational release ever made, and even made it into the documentary about him because I love him so much. The first time I went to New York was to record Sensational for the Ghostigital album. He has been a guest on all of our "pop" records and is on our upcoming album.



### Stan Brakhage and experimental Cinema

When doing my Masters degree at The School of Visual Arts in New York I felt that my whole news-media-performance-thingy had played itself out. I had gotten tired of it as a technique and, in a way, I guess I could sense the change that social media would have on everyday culture. I wanted to learn something new, and was interested in video art. I took a course on experimental cinema with Amy Taubin that changed my life. She opened up a whole new world for me, and a different view of filmmaking. Stan Brakhage's 'Window Water Baby Moving' had the deepest impact on me. It's a film piece showing the homebirth of his first daughter. At the time my then-wife was expecting our son, so I was, of course, emotionally vulnerable to the subject. But woah—the beauty is almost unbearable. Like all Brakhage's work, it's silent (so as to not interfere with the film) but it feels incredibly LOUD in itself. The intensity is beyond anything I've seen before or since. At the time it was made, 1959, not even doctor candidates were allowed to witness a birth. So the film is also historically remarkable. I delved into the world of experimental cinema and have not come up since. ♡

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Beer 695 ISK,  
Wine 745 ISK.

**BAR ANANAS**  
Every day from  
16:00 to 20:00.  
Beer 700 ISK,  
Wine 800 ISK,  
Cocktails 1,600  
ISK.

**BAZAAR**  
Every day from  
16:00 to 20:00.  
Beer 800 ISK,  
Wine 850 ISK.

**BRASS KITCHEN  
AND BAR**  
Every day from  
15:00 to 18:00.  
Beer 800 ISK,  
Wine 800 ISK,  
Cocktails 2,000  
ISK.

**BRAVÓ**  
Every day from  
11:00 to 20:00.  
Beer 700 ISK,  
Wine 900 ISK.

**BRYGGJAN  
BRUGGHÚS**  
Every day from  
16:00 to 19:00.  
Beer 500 ISK,  
Wine 950 ISK.

**FORRÉTTABARINN**  
Every day from  
16:00 to 19:00.  
Beer 750 ISK,  
Wine 750 ISK.

**GAUKURINN**  
Every day from  
14:00 to 21:00.  
Beer 600 ISK,  
Wine 750 ISK,  
Shots 750 ISK.

**HLEMMUR  
SQUARE**  
Every day from  
16:00 to 20:00.  
Beer 750 ISK,  
Wine 750 ISK,  
Cocktails 1,250  
ISK.

**HÚRRA**  
Mon-Sat from  
18:00 to 21:00,

Sunday from  
19:00 to 21:00.  
Beer 700 ISK,  
Wine 700 ISK.

**ÍSLENSKI BARINN**  
Every day from  
16:00 to 18:00.  
Beer 700 ISK,  
Wine 700 ISK.

**ÍSAFOLD**  
Every day from  
16:00 to 18:00.  
Beer 600 ISK,  
Wine 900 ISK.

**KAFFIBARINN**  
Every day from  
15:00 to 20:00.  
Beer 700 ISK,  
Wine (On Wed.)  
700 ISK.

**KEX HOSTEL**  
Every day from  
15:00 to 19:00.  
Beer 650 ISK,  
Wine 650 ISK.

**KUMIKO**  
Every day from  
17:00 to 19:00.  
Beer 850 ISK,  
Cocktails 1,700  
ISK.

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

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

**PABLO DISCOBAR**  
Every day from  
16:00 to 18:00.  
Beer 800 ISK,  
Wine 800 ISK,  
Cocktails 1,500  
ISK.

**PRIKID**  
Weekdays from  
16:00 to 20:00.  
Beer 600 ISK.

**PUBLIC HOUSE**  
Every day from  
15:00 to 18:00,  
23:00 to 1:00.  
Beer 890 ISK,  
Wine 890 ISK.

**RED CHILI**  
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to 18:00.  
Fri-Sat 16:00 to

18:00 and 21:00  
to 23:00  
Beer 650 ISK,  
Wine 650 ISK.

**SÆTA SVÍNID**  
Every day from  
15:00 to 18:00.  
Beer 645 ISK,  
Wine 745 ISK.

**SKY**  
Every day from  
16:00 to 18:00.  
Beer 600 ISK,  
Wine 900 ISK.

**SKÚLI CRAFT BAR**  
Every day from  
16:00 to 19:00.  
Beer 850 ISK,  
Wine 750 ISK.

**SÓLON BISTRO**  
Every day from  
15:00 to 18:00.  
Beer 800 ISK,  
Wine 800 ISK,  
Cocktails 2 for 1  
2,500 ISK.

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

**SUSHI SOCIAL**  
Every day from  
17:00 to 18:00.  
Beer 645 ISK,  
Wine 745 ISK,  
Half-priced  
cocktails.

**EL SANTO**  
Week days from  
17:00 to 19:00,

weekends from  
22:00 to 1:00  
Beer 750 ISK,  
Wine 900 ISK,  
Cocktails 1,745  
ISK.

**TAPAS BARINN**  
Every day from  
17:00 to 18:00.  
Beer 645 ISK,  
Wine 745 ISK.

**STÚDENTA-  
KJALLARINN**  
Every day from  
16:00 to 19:00.  
Beer 650 ISK,  
Wine 750 ISK.

**UPPSALIR**  
Every day from  
17:00 to 19:00.  
2 for 1:  
Beer 900 ISK,  
Wine 1,400 ISK,  
Cocktails 2,090  
ISK.

**VEÐUR**  
Every day from  
12:00 to 19:35.  
Beer 800 ISK,  
Wine 800 ISK.

**ÖLSTOFAN**  
Every day from  
15:00 to 20:00.  
Beer 750 ISK,  
Wine 800 ISK.

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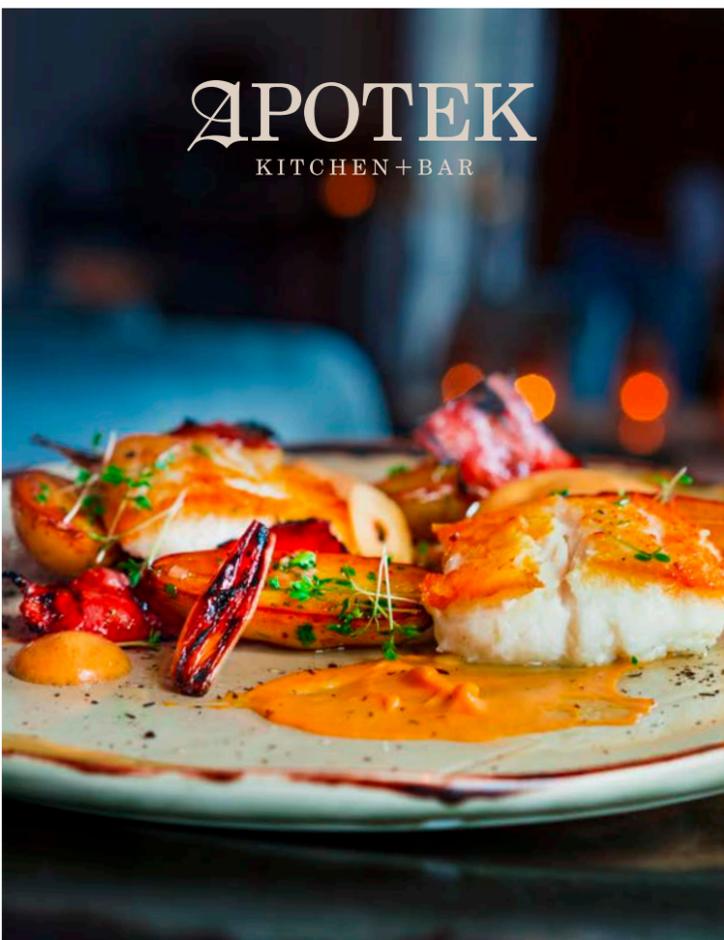
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Bringing Icelandic literature to the world

## Language Is A Weapon

Elías Knörr on poetry and prejudice

Words: Björn Halldórsson Photo: Gulli Már

If you have attended a Reykjavík poetry reading in recent years, chances are you have been lucky enough to catch Elías Knörr performing his poetry with his signature flair. While other performers tend to hide their eyes in notebooks and printouts, he addresses the crowd with an intense sincerity, at times lapsing into closed-eyed song if the structure of the poem and the traditions surrounding it calls for such. Certainly, any reader choosing to take the printed versions home with them at the end of the show will have found Elías's voice echoing in their head through further readings. "I have a fetishistic attachment to printed paper, but I have texts which I only convey live or in a private service," he explains. "Orality and theatre can be very important in surviving. You need to step on stage if you want your work to be read, understood and taken seriously – even if that's pure anorgasmia for you."

### Fighting labels and assumptions

Elías has been writing, performing and publishing poetry on the Icelandic scene for close to a decade now, but when put on the spot he is rather vague about his origins, stating simply: "I come from a vagina—as most poets do." Such flippancy is his means of disarming the island-mentality common to the insular Icelandic community, where immigrants find themselves faced daily with the question 'where are you from?' "I still have to fight against the fact that people assume that my texts are translations," he laments. "Some people will actually ask who wrote my texts for me. First time it happened I cried like a baby, but nowadays I take it as part of my fiction. I try to recycle

prejudice as opportunity. The more stupid assumptions people make, the deeper my alter-egos get."

### An interloper on the scene

In fact, the last name 'Knörr' is a pseudonym (or a heteronym, according to Elías), rather fittingly derived from an old Icelandic word for a ship. The name helped inform his poetry, but it was also a means of fighting the prejudice that accompanied his taking possession of as cherished a cultural artefact as the Icelandic language.

"My plan was always to use my name to hide within the local scene, allowing my texts to attain objective success regardless of my face or my persona," he explains. "You can ask Polish-heritage Icelanders how their surnames have helped them find jobs that corresponds to their university education; it's hard! Instead of going down that road, I decided to twist Icelandic prejudices, and it worked perfectly. It was like a Trojan horse that opened a new way into a locked system. People should do it more often—foreigners as well as natives!"

### A forthcoming English translation

This summer will see the forging of yet another incarnation of Elías's identity, with the publication of an English translation of a selection of his poetry by Reykjavík/Manchester publisher Partus. The translator is Icelandic writer and poet Kári Tulinius, who has previously worked with Elías through Partus' 'Meðgönguljóð' poetry series. "I can be very perverse when it comes to language, so I was really lucky to get somebody like him to

translate me," Elías admits. "We're of the same generation and have a similar cultural background, and he also has a good knowledge of medieval Icelandic concepts, which I sometimes misuse and abuse in my poetry. He's very creative and always eager to get out of his comfort zone. There really is nobody better suited than him to solve the riddles of my translation."

### Culture is everybody's responsibility

Being a man of many languages, Elías has himself worked as a translator. He makes no qualms about the importance of such work, especially within the modern Icelandic literary scene, which is seen by some old-guards as the final stronghold of the Icelandic language; a haven in need of constant defence against outside influences.

"A good counter-example to the anal-retentive besserwissers who purport to be protecting our pristine Icelandic tongue would be translators," he points out. "Nobody has to be more strict and know-it-all when it comes to language than translators, and yet they're the most creative and open-minded people you can find! Culture does not come from romanticisms about blood or nature; it's a matter of sharing and cultivating knowledge, and it's everybody's responsibility." He shrugs.

"The Icelandic idea of 'foreignness' will probably change drastically in the next 25 years, when newer generations of Icelanders will be used to a different human reality, but the problem goes deeper."

### A tool for change

Elías is adamant about the power of the written word as a harbinger of such changes: "Real literature always breaks preconceptions, that's why we have to make use of it. Language is a weapon for change, and it belongs to us. I hope younger Icelandic writers are aware of that and are not afraid to use that weapon." 🐦

[gpv.is/lit](http://gpv.is/lit)  
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**FANCIES** is where we talk to Reykjavík's most fashion-forward figures think about style

# Böðvar Guðjónsson

Böðvar Guðjónsson (48) is omnipresent in downtown Reykjavík. You probably know him best as the former figurehead of the KEX empire

Words: Hannah Jane Cohen Photo: Art Bicnick

## Böðvar is wearing:

- ▶ Red Wings
- ▶ Jeans from Universal
- ▶ Jacket from Universal
- ▶ Sweater from Bahns Reykjavík
- ▶ Watch from Chopard
- ▶ Bracelets made by my son, can't be bought
- ▶ Pocket-square bought somewhere in Germany

## Favourite Piece:

A tweed suit from Kormákur og Skjöldur.

## Favourite Stores In Reykjavik:

Kormákur og Skjöldur. That's the only store I do business with. They have their own design and also brands like Universal and such. There's a lot of good stuff there.

## Least Favourite Trend:

I don't have one. Everyone has their individual style and the most important thing is that you feel relaxed in the clothes you are wearing. No judgements from me. Just individuality. That's what is important.

## Lusting After:

Nothing really. I realised a few years ago that 70-80% of the clothes you have, you don't wear them. I decided to give a lot of stuff away and right now there is nothing that I feel like I need or want, but that could change tomorrow.

## Describe Your Style In 5 Words:

I can't really. It's nothing organised. Casual, streetwear, I don't know!





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#### PLAICE

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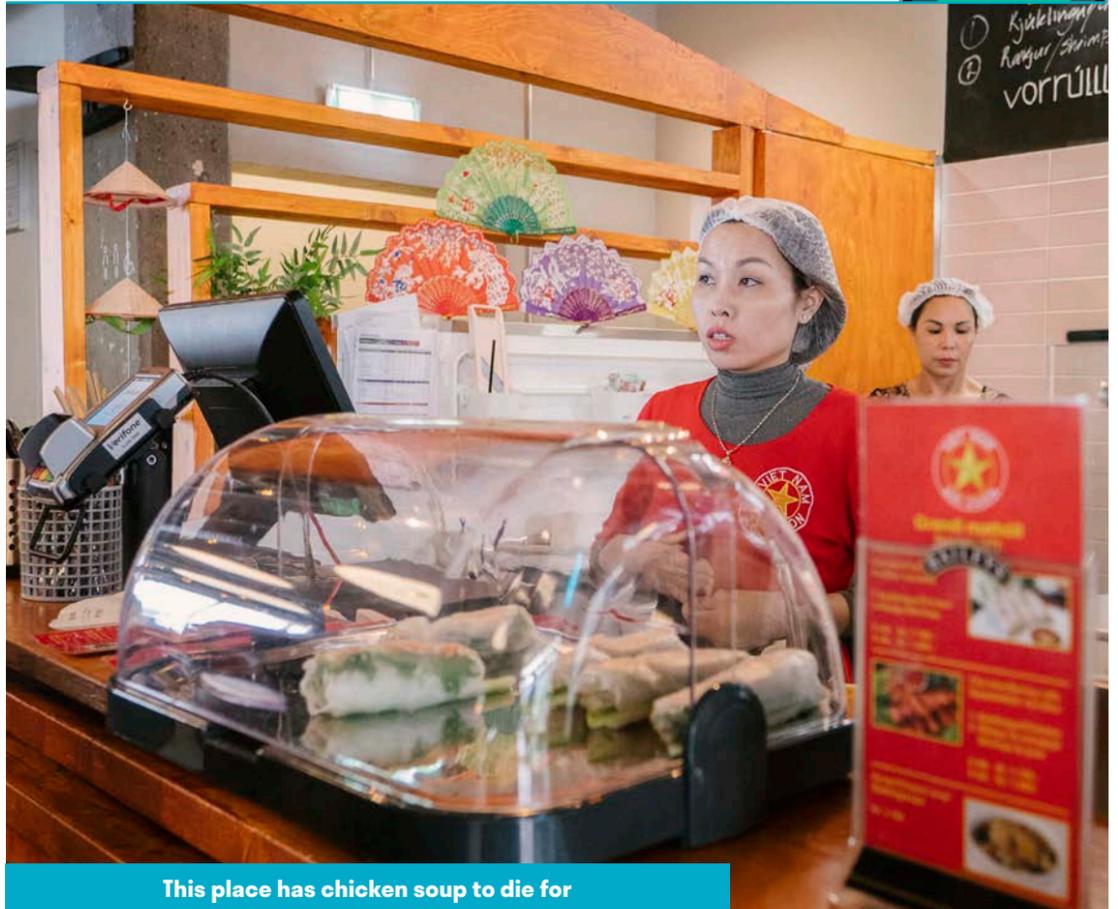
Parsnip, broccoli, cashews, coconut oil, chili and lemon  
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# Food

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This place has chicken soup to die for

## The Street Food Olympics

A Grapevine guide to Grandi Mathöll

Words: Björn Teitsson, John Rogers & Shruthi Basappa  
Photos: Timothée Lambrecq

Reykjavík food halls are, as it turns out, just like London buses: you wait around for one, and then two come along at once. Just as we're getting used to the presence of the resoundingly successful Hlemmur Mathöll, up pops the city's second street food palace—this time in the spacious ground floor of Grandagarður 16 in the Grandi harbour area.

Grandi Mathöll has an immediately comfortable feel, with various stools, benches and couches scattered through the spaces. The nine concessions are housed in a combination of contemporary bars, metal food trucks and wooden stands, and there's a bustling, social feel as people meander between the vendors, who shout out names as their orders are ready. We went for an epic tasting session to find

out what delights lie inside this exciting new restaurant development.



Kore

J: I made a beeline for this place right away, with high hopes for Korean staples that are missing in Reykjavík, like bibimbap and soondubu. It turned out that Kore is a Korean fast food place serving spicy fried chicken, tacos, and decadent "filthy" fries.

It all tasted good, but the menu feels like a missed opportunity. B: Agreed. It also feels like they are still mastering their menu. When I had some kimchi-tacos there wasn't anything else there—they were a bit minimalist, even for a taco. That said, the huge line in front of Kore is really a testament to the demand for a good Korean place. Iceland is craving one.

### Fusion Fish 'n' Chips

J: As an Englishman, I'm a sucker for a classic fish 'n' chips, but I have to say the addition of wakame here is inspired. It gives it a really fresh flavour... it's a massive improvement on a dollop of sugary ketchup. The batter was light, and the chunks of fish were hefty and fresh.

B: The kataifi (stringy Middle-Eastern pastry) on the shrimps was a nice touch—these could really soak up some sauce. The chili-mayo could have done with a more kick, or perhaps they could keep some "crazy" sauce by the counter as an optional condiment. I really liked the fish, and the portion was generous.



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**Goi Cuon / Vietnam**

J: The chicken soup was my stand-out of the night. The serving is generous, and the broth is slow-cooked for that deep, rich comfort-food flavour. I'll be coming back for this one.

S: I like that their small menu reflects the Icelandic weather—comforting chicken soup for most cold, windy days, and fresh summer rolls for the sunny ones. Although the lack of fresh herbs in the rolls was a glaring omission for me. The dipping sauce is great though.

B: I was expecting more veggie options on the menu, but c'est la vie, I guess.



**Rabar Barinn**

J: One of my pet hates is “finger food” formats like sandwiches and burgers that are too wet to handle. So I was a little put off to pick up the sandwiches and immediately have sticky mayo oozing out everywhere. I was into the soup though: it wasn't too creamy, and would be perfect on a cold day.

S: I didn't mind the saucy sandwiches, in fact, I prefer it over the lobster soup. The portobello sandwich is so satisfying—well grilled bread, fresh veggies and the earthy shrooms. I can see it being a not-a-sad-desk-lunch staple.

B: I will definitely go for the

portobello sandwich again. Really hearty, good ingredients and good for value. The soup will be a warm embrace in the cold summer days ahead.



**Gastro Truck**

J: Gastro truck's house special is a hearty chicken burger with coleslaw and chili aioli right there in the bun. It's a tasty, substantial burger with a glistening, bright-red batter on the hunk of chicken, and a tingle of spice. This place seems to be an early front-runner in the Grandi Mathöll popularity contest—there's always a little queue, and they've been the first to sell out and shut up shop in the evening.

**Micro Roast Vínbar**

B: This was such a treat. The natural wines served at Micro Roast are something people will be coming to look for. The service was excellent—the sommelier was confident in his knowledge about what he was serving. The prices are also fair in my mind, considering the quality. Really loved this one.

J: I'm late to the natural wines trend, so it was interesting to find out what it's all about. It was eye-opening: these wines had unusual colours, earthy, unfamiliar flavours, and a fermented tang. The Flambadou sparkling red, served chilled, was a stand-out.

**Fjánhúsið**

J: Everyone knows that Icelandic lamb is a top quality ingredient, and Fjánhúsið do the right thing,

presenting sharing plates heaped with perfectly cooked cuts that have a home-cooked vibe, and no unnecessary accoutrements. The flavour was smokey, the portions generous, and the meat first class. If you fancy a barbecue without the hassle of firing it up yourself, go here.



**Lax**

B: Lax was my standout place for this fantastic evening. I just love the concept: everything salmon and champagne. Or sparkling

wine on tap. The grilled wolffish was a perfectly cooked delight, and had a surprising kick from the horseradish and garlic. All the salty cured and smoked salmon

was a perfect match for a glass of sparkling wine. It's all about the balance, and Lax nailed it.

J: This was a definite stand out: citrusy, zesty flavours with a variety of cured, grilled and smoked fish, and a fresh-tasting bubbly to wash it down. It was like a plate full of summer.



**Ísey**

J: All Ísey are saying is give Skyr a chance. And we tried, we really did, but the no-frills juices and dairy pots seemed very basic after such a varied and colourful meal. This was the weakest link in the chain—if I have room for dessert next time, I'll head over to Valdís.

B: It was also the only place that didn't offer anything made from scratch. Premade skyr in a glass jar was not what I was looking for. And I don't find it especially appealing that nothing there has sugar.

**“All Ísey are saying is give Skyr a chance. And we tried, we really did.”**

[gpu.is/food](http://gpu.is/food)

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# Travel

## The Big Earth

Exploring the giant stones of Stóruð

Words: John Rogers Photos: Timothée Lambrecq



**Distance from Reykjavik:**  
677 km

**Car provided by:**  
[hertz.is](http://hertz.is)

**Accommodation provided by:**  
[lakehotel.is](http://lakehotel.is)

**Fly to Egilsstaðir:**  
[airicelandconnect.is](http://airicelandconnect.is)

**How to get there:**  
Fly from Reykjavik, or drive Route One North towards Egilsstaðir, then take Route 925

“Stóruð” is a tricky word to translate. The “Stór” part is easy enough, meaning “big.” “Urð,” at first glance, seems to mean “earth”—but that’s the similar-sounding “jörð.” It turns out that “urð” is a word specific to Icelandic, with no direct translation—it means a long slope littered with loose stones.

Although it’s a less poetic translation of Stóruð than “big earth,” you can’t fault the name for accuracy. Stóruð is a remote valley near Borgarfjörður Eystri in east Iceland, only accessible on foot. It lies beneath the huge Dyrfjöll mountain range, where hiking paths converge on this famously wild and beautiful spot from four directions. One path comes over the mountains from the coastal town of Bakkagerði. Another two descend from the direction of the Vatnskarðsheiði mountain pass. The fourth route, and the one we choose to take on a cloudy May morning, is a gentle 7.5km hike that begins in the grassy lowlands of the Rjúpnafell valley.

### Familiar reverie

We start the hike in good spirits. The morning rain has stopped, and tiny windows of blue sky are visible

through the smudgy clouds. It’s a relatively warm day, and butterflies flit between the yellow flowers, and purple shrubbery growing on the grassy heathland of Rjúpnafell. To the right lies the distant Jökulsá river, the main tributary of Lake Lagarfljót, winding through the valley and glittering silver in the morning light. To the left, waterfalls trickle down from high in the mountains, becoming streams and sometimes torrents that we have to pick our way across. Within half an hour of walking, I’m sinking into a familiar reverie: the thud of my boots on the dirt, the smell of flora and fresh air, and the bright colours of nature take over my senses, and my mind starts to slowly relax.

The path meanders through shallow valleys and up into the hillside before, after about an hour, it turns left into the valley leading to Stóruð. The road and river of the valley drift out of sight, and the mountains rear up around us. Finally, it feels like we’re being swallowed completely by the nature, and, other than the well-worn wooden hiking poles, there’s no sign of any man-made intrusion at all.

### Drama and revelations

The first boulders of Stóruð start to appear in the distance. They look out of place, somehow, a series of car-sized grey rocks that lie strewn across the floor of the gradually narrowing valley. The path winds ever upwards into a wall of grey mist. Larger shapes start to appear in the murk, silhouetted against the whitening fog—a chunk of rock the size of a cabin, and then, the size of a house. We veer off the trail and take a little time climbing the rocks and looking at the view back towards the river.

We cross burbling streams and bands of old snow, treading carefully to test if there’s running water beneath. Sometimes, we see old footprints showing that the way is safe. The rocks grow bigger and bigger until we’re suddenly surrounded by huge chunks of grey, mossy stone. Ahead, the mist starts to thin suddenly before the wind, with an immaculate sense of theatre, blows the curtain of clouds away.

What’s revealed is the towering, vast, jagged Dyrfjöll mountains that lurk behind Stóruð, complete with a huge horseshoe-shaped gouge where a glacier pulled down the rocks that lie scattered around us. My breath catches in my throat, and my heart skips a

“With an immaculate sense of theatre, the wind blows the curtain of clouds away, revealing the vast, jagged Dyrfjöll mountains.”

beat—it’s an unforgettable moment in an almost bewilderingly beautiful landscape.

### Centre of the maze

There’s a circular hiking path leading around the Stóruð area, but it runs into suspiciously snowed in ruts with the sound of running water beneath. We decide to play it safe and deviate from the path, climbing through clus-

### Glacier Walks & Ice Caves



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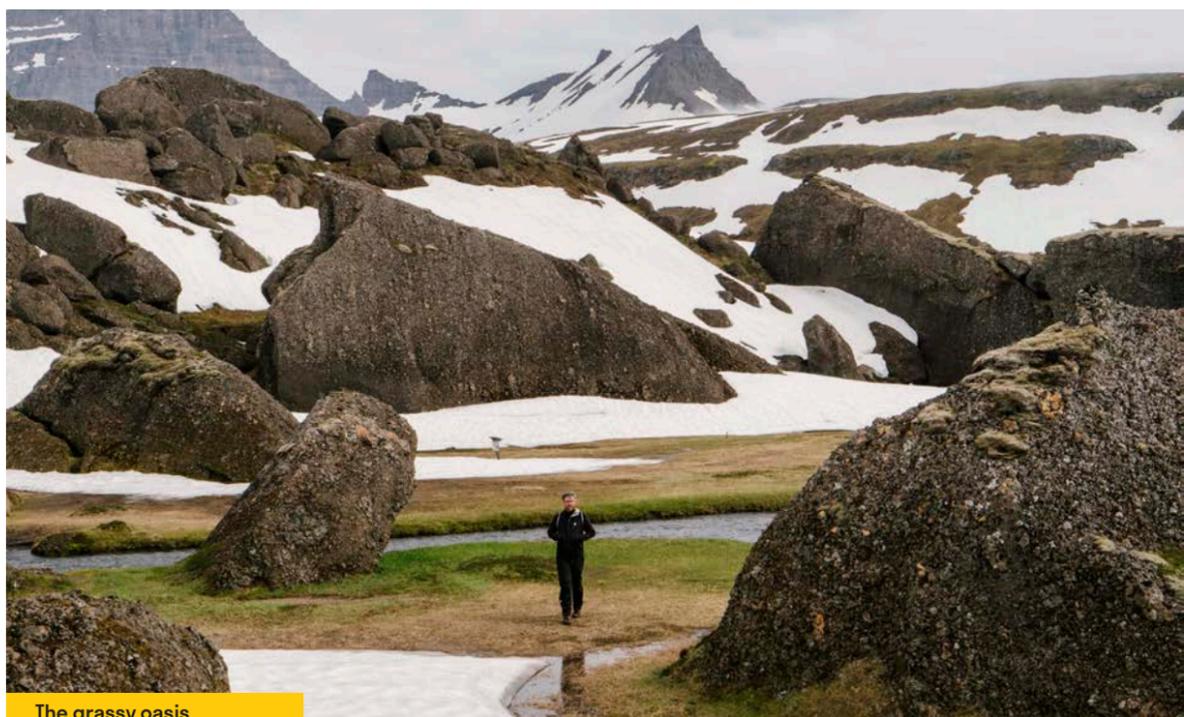
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The grassy oasis



It begins



Signing the guestbook



Blue meltwater

ters of high rocks, scrambling up scree slopes, squeezing through small passages, and tiptoeing along huge boulders to various viewpoints over the area.

After a while, we arrive in a grassy clearing with a crystal clear river meandering through it. Surrounded by rocks that shelter it from the breeze, it feels almost fantastically perfect, like reaching the centre of a labyrinth. The sun breaks through the clouds, illuminating a bright green lagoon at the far end, and a shallow pool of bright blue water, slowly defrosting from the long winter. We take off our shoes and socks, hang them on a boulder to dry, and walk over the warm grass to an information sign with a map of the various

routes to Stóruð.

There's a small plastic box there containing a weathered guestbook. I leaf through the warped pages, noticing comments and signatures from Iceland, France, Greece, Spain, China and Japan. The last entry was made in August 2017, and I realise that this route is only open for a short window each year, much like the Highlands, so I'm probably the first person to open the book this year. I add my name, and put the book back in its spot, feeling privileged to be among the lucky few who made it to the rugged natural wonderland of Stóruð. 🐾

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# Alice in Beerland

One girl's adventures at the Icelandic Beer Baths

Words: Alice Demurtas Photos: Art Bicnick



**Distance from Reykjavik:**  
402 km

**Soak provided by:**  
bjorbodin.is

**How to get there:**  
Route One North to Akureyri, thens Routes 82 & 808

When word got out that a new beer spa had opened in the North of Iceland, people had very strong opinions about it.

We mostly had questions. Do you get drunk if you lie in it long enough? Does it have any visible benefits for your skin? When someone finally asked “can you get a yeast infection from it,” we decided to put an end to the speculation and check the spa out in person.

It's been raining for 30 days in Reykjavík when we travel up to Björböðin, located a half hour drive from Akureyri. I desperately need to be pampered, and as I put on my soft white robe I'm ready for anything.

## Down the rabbit hole

Beer heaven, I gather, lies behind a se-

ries of opaque glass doors, each one leading to a different private tub whose bizarre contents you can enjoy alone or in company and, preferably, naked.

“You will stay in the bath for 25 minutes,” the lady explains. “And don't worry, you won't get drunk,” she adds, anticipating my question. “The beer is so young that it's not alcoholic yet.”

But I've already stopped listening. A cloud of sparkly foam has bloomed in the wooden bathtub, and it's so lush that the only thing I can do is slip out of my robe and dive in at once.

## “Drink me”

The tub welcomes me like a warm hug. It takes a while for the sizzling foam to dissipate, unveiling a nebulous, amber liquid infused with all sorts of herbs. An empty glass sits suggestively under

a tap, there to remind me that a river of beer is at hand to quench my thirst—free of charge, of course.

Sliding back and forth in the beer, I can feel a coarse residue resembling clay gathering at the bottom of the tub. I slather it all over my legs, and as I plunge my hair into the water for an impromptu mask. I feel lightheaded already. I lay back and finally relax.

## In a warm cocoon

The 25 minutes pass too quickly. I slide back into my robe and I follow the lady upstairs to a dimly lit lounge lined with reclining chairs.

I pick one in a far, hidden corner, and the lady follows me to tuck me in. In this warm cocoon, under the soft haze of a single lightbulb, my muscles are relaxed and my head feels cloudy. I

hear droplets of water running slowly above me, but they get further and further away as I slip down into the soft embrace of Morpheus.

## Au revoir, beer baths

It's a different kind of inebriation, this intoxicated feeling. After the nap, my pores sizzle with pleasure under the Northern sun, and while my skin feels smooth and soft, the biggest surprise is my hair: my usually coarse Southern frizz has become beautiful, bouncy waves.

As we leave, I look back longingly at the outdoor pool at the edge of the cliff, and the chain of snowy mountains stretching away peacefully on the other side of the sparkly sea. Au revoir, Björböðin: I shall miss you indeed. ☺

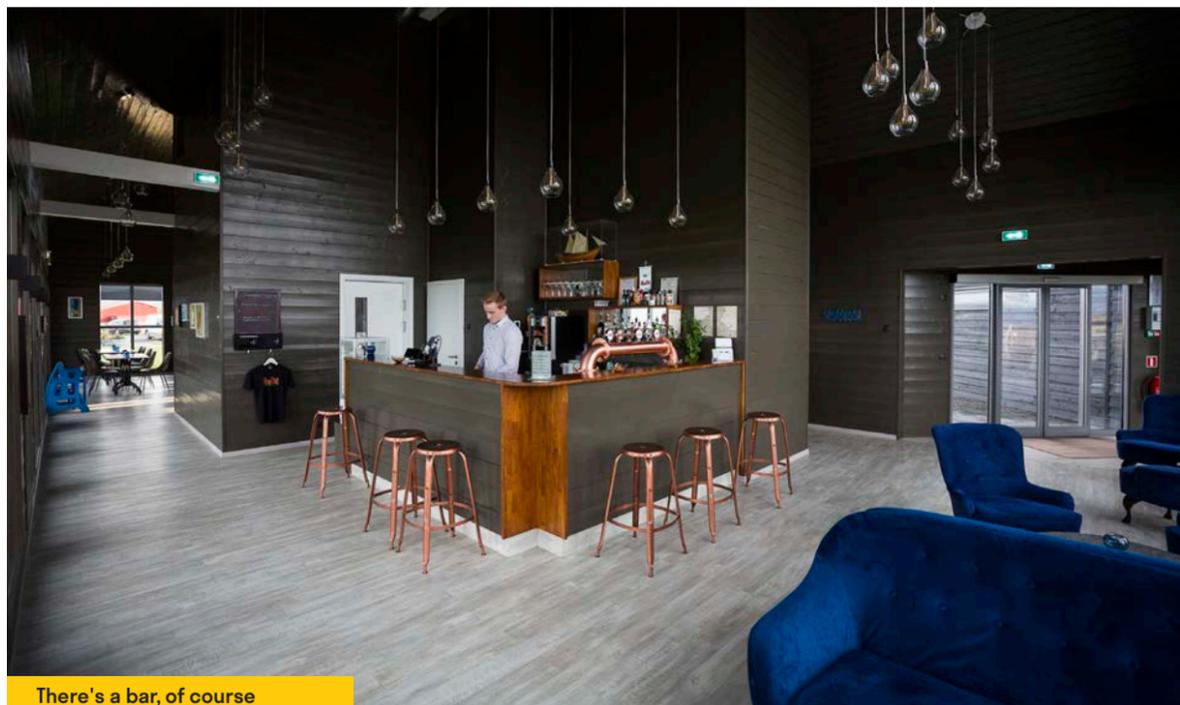
## The House at Eyrarbakki



Árnessýsla folk museum is located in Húsið, the House, historical home of the Danish merchants built in 1765. Húsið is one of the oldest houses in Iceland and a beautiful monument of Eyrarbakki's time as the biggest trading place on the south coast.

Today one can enjoy exhibitions about the story and culture of the region, famous piano, shawl made out of human hair and the kings pot, are among items. Húsið prides itself with warm and homelike atmosphere.

**Opening hours:**  
May 1st - September 30th  
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There's a bar, of course



Looks cosy

“An empty glass sits suggestively under a tap, there to remind me that a river of beer is at hand to quench my thirst.”



The hot pots have water



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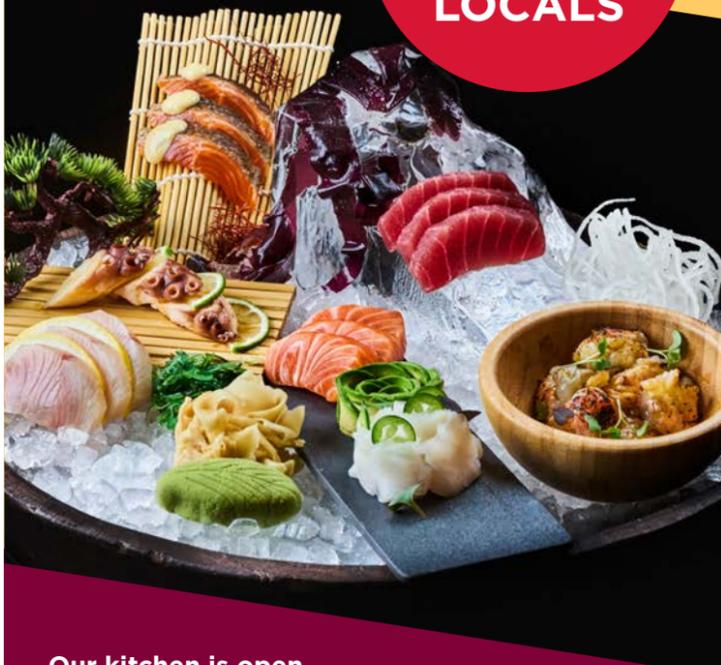
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Distance from Reykjavík: 188 km  
How to get there: Route One North, then Route 54;  
turn onto Útnesvegur then Hellnavegur  
Car provided by: [gocarrental.is](http://gocarrental.is)  
Accommodation provided by: [hotelbudir.is](http://hotelbudir.is)



# Hellnar

A tranquil sanctuary on the coast of Snæfellsnes

Words: **Hannah Jane Cohen** Photos: **Art Bicnick**



The little village of Hellnar used to be a major port of call and the busiest centre of fishing in Snæfellsnes. While it is less industrious nowadays, it has since grown into a mecca of peaceful picturesque beauty. With perhaps the best views on the southern coast of Snæfellsnes, Hellnar shines humbly under the shadow of Snæfellsjökull. Go for an afternoon or a quiet weekend, you'll leave rejuvenated and inspired.



### Stay: **Fosshotel Hellnar**

Fosshotel Hellnar was the runner-up this year in the best accommodation category of our Best Of West Iceland awards. The retreat wowed our panel with its tranquil aura, gorgeous patio, and stunning seaside views. Part of the acclaimed Fosshotel chain, it also has a fantastic restaurant if you're hungry for dinner and an impressive breakfast buffet.



### Walk: **Arnarstapi to Hellnar**

The one hour trek between Arnarstapi and Hellnar often makes those lists of must-do activities in Iceland and for good reason. The leisurely coastal path will have you serenely meandering through bulging lava fields and past stunning ocean outlooks. Make sure to keep your eyes peeled for kitti-

wake, the Arctic tern, and fulmar as you rejoice in the fisherman relics and bird nests that freckle the basalt columns, ravines, and grottos. It's a truly unforgettable locale.



### Eat: **Fjörhúsið**

When the sun is out and the clouds are hiding, there is no better seaside view in the country than from the patio of this iconic seaside spot. Facing the Baðstofa rock formation and soundtracked by the echo of nesting birds and the swell of the tide, Fjörhúsið is a tiny old-timey café that serves up great coffee, cakes, waffles, and seafood soup. Cuddle up with a blanket and treat on the terrace and watch the sunset. Now, aren't you relaxed?



### Visit: **Djúpalónssandur**

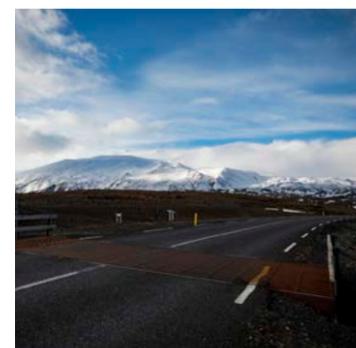
Only 15 minutes drive from Hellnar lies Djúpalónssandur, a notorious black pebble beach which is supposedly both haunted and the location of an elf church. It was the site of a shipwreck that took the lives of fourteen British sailors in 1948, and you'll still come across rusted metal fragments of the accident dotting the rocks. Feel free to explore the history of the region up close, but make

sure not to mess with the wreckage, or with any elves. They're known for being temperamental.



### Pray: **Hellnar Church**

With a year-round population of fewer than ten people, it's difficult to say how many people use Hellnar's church. It's a somewhat spooky building—the type of small-town church you usually see in horror movies. That said, the strangeness of it only adds to its beauty. Inside, you'll be met by a bright blue ceiling and chandelier. Make sure to take a stroll around the lumpy cemetery before you sit in the bright red pews. Now say Amen.



### Road trip: **Snæfellsnes**

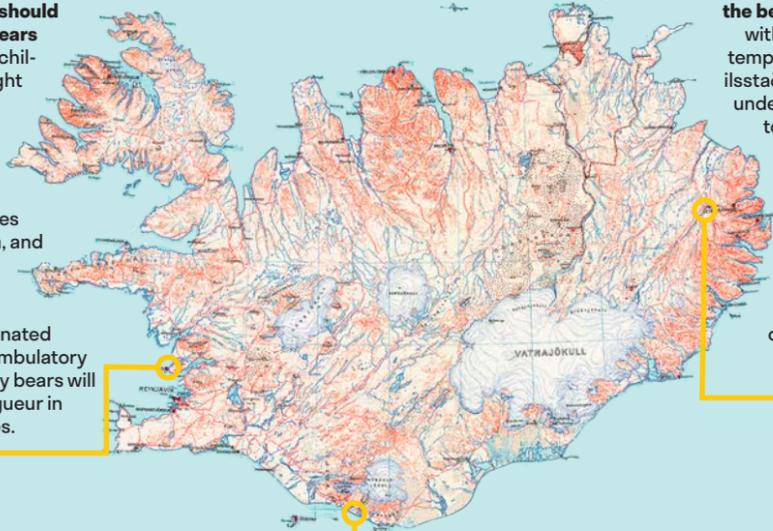
A one-day road trip around the Snæfellsnes peninsula, a.k.a. "Iceland In Miniature," grants you access to essentially every notorious Icelandic topography you'd dream of: think geothermal areas, lava fields, canyons, cliffs, black sand beaches, and, of course, the Snæfellsjökull glacier. Follow Route 54 to circle around the area, and make sure to check out Stykishólmur—it's a gem of a coastal fishing village. 🍷

# Island Life

Hot news from the cold Icelandic countryside

Words: Paul Fontaine

In what is likely the most adorable story of the year, 5th grader Ástrún Björnsdóttir of **Borgarnes** came up with the idea that **ambulances should have teddy bears on board** for children who might be scared or anxious as they're transported to hospital. Her classmates liked the idea, and sewed their own teddy bears, which were then donated to the local ambulatory service. Teddy bears will now be de rigueur in these vehicles.



The warmest, sunniest summers in Iceland take place in **Egilsstaðir**, and locals literally cannot shut up about it. East Iceland news service Austurfrétt reports that **last May was amongst the best on record**, with the average temperature in Egilsstaðir sitting just under 8°C. Visitors to Iceland may get a chill reading that, but such temperatures are actually pretty great for that time of year. Lucky ducks.

Meanwhile in South Iceland, **police seized 200 Arctic tern eggs** that one fearless woman had been harvesting from local nesting grounds. These birds are protected, and their nesting areas clearly marked, but when questioned the woman said she'd been doing this for years. How no one noticed someone being swarmed by angry terns year after year is a mystery.

# Best Of Iceland

A selection of winners from our Best Of Iceland travel magazine



**South: Best Museum**  
**The Lava Centre**

This interactive museum is an immersive volcanic experience in Hvolsvöllur. Combining scientific research, bold design and incredible artistry, its interactive displays provide some truly unique insights into the volcanic history of Iceland. "I walked in and I felt like I was in a Doctor Who episode," said one panellist. It's a genuinely unique and unexpected attraction.



**West: Must-See Spot**  
**Snæfellsjökull**

On a clear day, you can spot the majestic Snæfellsjökull glacier sparkling from your balcony. Drive three hours and you can see it in person. "The hike up to Snæfellsjökull is beautiful, and a good way to see the glacier," one panel member noted. "It might be difficult for beginners, but it's worth it." If hiking isn't your thing, snowmobiling is another popular option.



**East: Best Hotel**  
**The Wilderness Centre**

The Wilderness Centre in Fljótsdalur is like stepping back in time. "It has wonderful communal sleeping quarters that are set up like they used to be for hundreds of years," said the panel, "only with electricity, soft mattresses and access to hot showers." You'll get a warm welcome, and there are lots of activities on offer: an exhibition, horse riding, highland hikes, and stargazing.



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Gunnar Freyr is an astronaut, sort of

## From Creative People For Creative People

The Space is a new co-working environment that opens on June 16th

Words: Phil Uwe Widiger Photos: Art Bicnick

There is fresh air in Reykjavík's ex-industrial area, Grandi. Right next to the celebrated Omnom chocolate factory, there's a space that's aiming to pioneer a new kind of creative environment that's been missing in Reykjavík. Inside, you will find a table made of upcycled wood, small decorations that give the impression of being in a vintage shop, and the wonderful smell of freshly brewed coffee.

### Surround yourself with creativity

Opening on June 16th, this new co-working space aims to connect coffeehouse vibes with a professional work environment. For the price of two to three cups of coffee, you will be able to get down to business at a desk, use the on-site printing facilities and meeting room, and hang around other creatives in the cozy and communal areas—all with the (probably) fastest internet in town.

"We're only beaten by the Chinese embassy," laughs Gunnar Freyr Gunnarsson, one of the three founders. Gunnar has a huge smile on his face as he shows me around The Space. "All of us are very firm believers in the philosophy that you need to surround yourself with people who give you positive enforcement and who inspire you," he says. "We wanted to bring that idea to The Space."

The team—consisting of the social media and project manager

Katarzyna Dygul, and the two professional photographers Joseph M-Hall and Gunnar—felt the need for more flexibility in co-working spaces.

"As a photographer, you don't want to commit yourself to a desk for a month," Gunnar explains. "You need somewhere where you can go once in a while and sit in a professional environment." At The Space, you will be able to pay for each day separately. "There are so many creatives who are coming here just for a short period of time," he continues. "They need somewhere to go to. At The Space, they can find a place away from home where they have a base—good coffee and internet, and plenty of food around. And—most important of all—likeminded people to connect with."

### Chocolate and beer

The Grandi area was the perfect fit for establishing a cluster of partnerships. There is a printing house, a chocolate factory, a photography school, the soon-to-open tool library, the new Grandi Mathöll food hall, and much more. The Space's goal is to build up a creative eco-system and offer, for example, a tour through the Om-

nom chocolate factory with a day at the new co-working space. "We also plan to partner up with some cool Icelandic beverage and food providers to share their products for special events," Gunnar says.

### A space for photography

The Space is currently crowdfunding the cost of implementing a photography studio, which will be available to those working at the co-working space, and to book outside of opening hours. So far, the team has been taking The Space's development in their own hands by scavenging cheap stuff at the Good Shepherd.

"To take it to the next level we do need some money as well," Gunnar says. "We want The Space to be a living prop house. If you're doing a shoot, you can just pick some stuff from The Space and go into the studio and take some pictures."

**"All of us are very firm believers in the philosophy that you need to surround yourself with people who give you positive enforcement."**

### Creative cross-fertilization

The Space will also be a site for workshops, exhibitions, film screenings and more. At the Grand Opening on June 16th, visitors will be able to meet the team,

chat, and have some beer and food. Gunnar is practically exploding with excitement. "The interest has been really overwhelming," he says. "Everyday there are people dropping in who are following us on social media, who really want to come and see it. Already now, different connections between creatives have formed—completely independent from us. It all comes back to surrounding yourself with people who have a positive influence on you. The Space is not supposed to be about us, it's supposed to live its own life." 🍷

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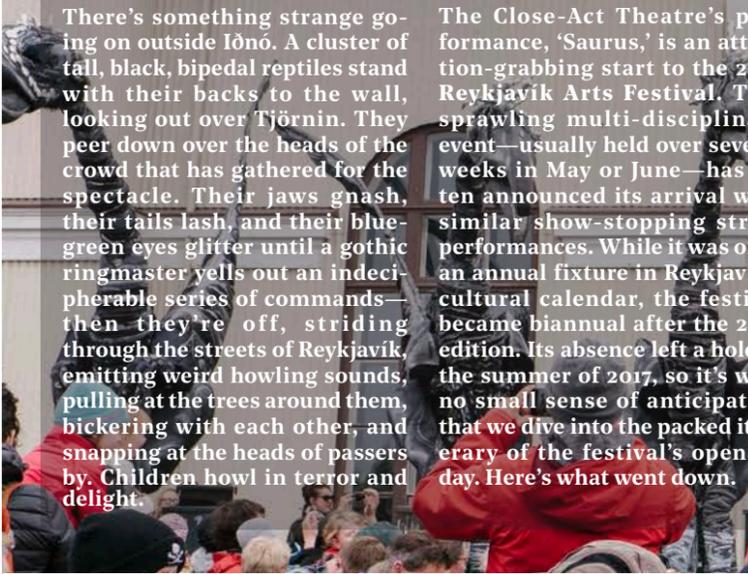


# Dragons, Deities, Morphoclogs

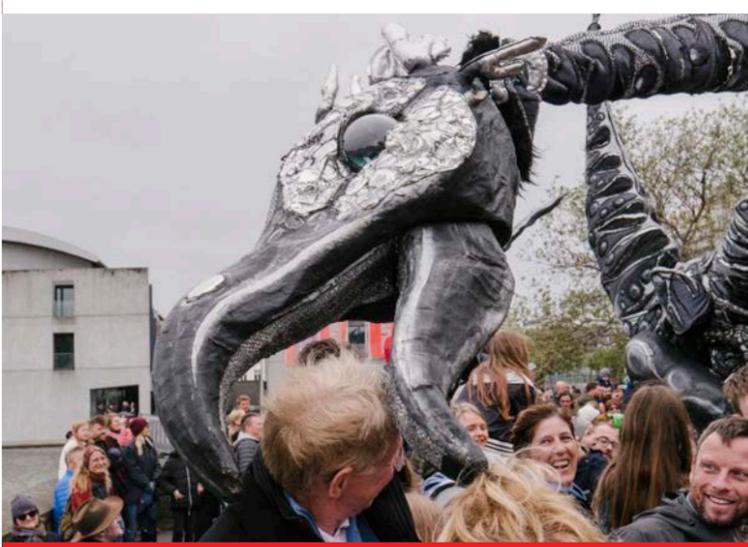
Text: John Rogers Photos: Timothée Lambrecq

There's something strange going on outside Iðnó. A cluster of tall, black, bipedal reptiles stand with their backs to the wall, looking out over Tjörnin. They peer down over the heads of the crowd that has gathered for the spectacle. Their jaws gnash, their tails lash, and their blue-green eyes glitter until a gothic ringmaster yells out an indecipherable series of commands—then they're off, striding through the streets of Reykjavík, emitting weird howling sounds, pulling at the trees around them, bickering with each other, and snapping at the heads of passers by. Children howl in terror and delight.

The Close-Act Theatre's performance, 'Saurus,' is an attention-grabbing start to the 2018 Reykjavík Arts Festival. This sprawling multi-disciplinary event—usually held over several weeks in May or June—has often announced its arrival with similar show-stopping street performances. While it was once an annual fixture in Reykjavík's cultural calendar, the festival became biannual after the 2016 edition. Its absence left a hole in the summer of 2017, so it's with no small sense of anticipation that we dive into the packed itinerary of the festival's opening day. Here's what went down.



Close-Act Theatre's "Saurus" gets things underway



When dragons attack....



A beautiful performance at the opening ceremony



Gaelyn Lea performing for the throng



Party-goers Daniel and Hunter at the festival hub

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What the heck? It's Gilbert & George



Next up, it's a spaced out sci-fi performance from Ásta Fanney, who is battling the Morphoclogs at Kling & Bang...



... will she escape? We'll never know. It's already time for the next exhibition, an opening down at Harpa.



Daniel Lismore opens his beautiful exhibition of "looks," entitled "Be Yourself, Everyone Else Is Already Taken." It's showing at Harpa throughout June. Check it out!



Finally, it's back to the festival hub for DJ Dominatricks, who round out the night with a stellar set of mashed up electronic music with visuals like the internet puking out its subconscious.



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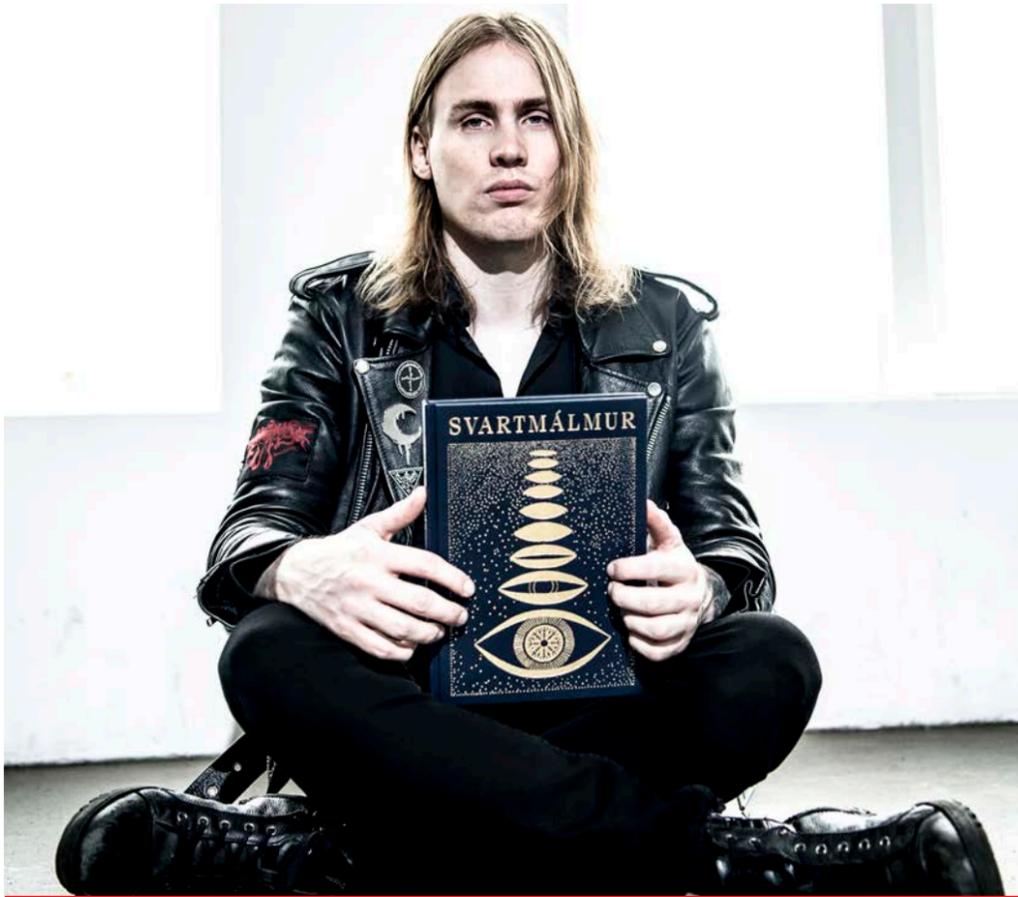
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The man behind Wormlust reveals his face

## Documenting Inner Fantasy

Hafsteinn Viðar Ársælsson's 'Svartmálmur' turns Grapevine photography into a ritual exhibition and photobook

Words:  
**Hannah Jane  
Cohen**

Photos:  
**Hafsteinn Viðar  
Ársælsson &  
Steinunn Lilja  
Draumland**

In February 2016, the Grapevine profiled the burgeoning Icelandic black metal scene in a feature entitled, "Welcome To The Circle." The piece documented the birth of Icelandic black metal and the newfound domination of the scene worldwide through the efforts of acts like Svartíðauði, Misþyrming, Sinmara, Naðra, Wormlust, Auðn, and Mannveira.

The photos accompanying the feature, taken by Hafsteinn Viðar Ársælsson—who is also the founder of Wormlust—form the basis of a new photo book and exhibit at the Reykjavík Museum of Photography called 'Svartmálmur' ('Black Metal').

### Popcorn

Hafsteinn talks in a soft mumble, spouting thoughts so fully formulated and enthralling that you focus all your attention on him. In one sentence, he'll often weave a thread connecting archaic philosophies to, say, a modern photog-

rapher, all ending with a joke delivered in a shockingly deadpan manner. He's incredibly introverted, so much so that even in an interview, you feel like you're impinging on him.

While he's been involved in the Icelandic black metal scene in some capacity since the early 2000s, Hafsteinn's interest in photography emerged only years ago. "It was actually in this building," he says, motioning to the museum. "I saw a photo book called 'Popcorn', it was about the Icelandic 60s scene. I knew all these bands but I had never seen these images, and it was like they were being brought to life before me."

The book deeply inspired him. "I thought there is nobody doing that for this scene, so I decided, I might as well do it," he says. Going off of the 'Popcorn' model, he started casually snapping photos of bands. Once the Grapevine

feature dropped, and he saw his work in print, he kicked the project into high gear.

### A new Norway

Loosely, black metal can be defined as an extreme type of metal characterised by shrieking vocals, fast tremolo riffs, blast beats, and low-production recording. The genre was most prominently defined in Norway in the early 90s, where bands like Mayhem and Darkthrone started creating raw, brutal music with misanthropic and anti-Christian themes. On stage they wore corpse paint and used satanic imagery. The music first came into the public eye when these guys burned fifty churches around Norway. But arson was only the beginning—eventually more extreme acts, like suicide and murder, followed.

In the 20 years since, black metal has continued to hone an extreme reputation, from pro-suicide messages, to ideological radicalism, to arrests for grave desecration and murder. At the same time, the scene has also continued a legacy of anonymity. Black metal musicians are notoriously faceless, using pseudonyms and obscuring their appearances in photographs.

The Icelandic scene was born from this legacy, but has since pushed it to apotheosis. From the carnal fury of Misþyrming, to the slow melancholy of Auðn, to the grandiosity of Sinmara, to the raw anger from Mannveira—it's a clear golden age for the genre. In the past years, the eyes of the world have turned to Iceland as the hotbed of the genre—a new Norway.

**"I've been asked, is it fantasy or documentary? Well, I am documenting their inner fantasy."**

### Primal respect

For Hafsteinn though, the genre ascends pure aurality. "Black metal is more of an internal feeling," he says. "I'd liken it to getting into Hinduism [sic], when you attain enlightenment." He pauses, delicately searching for words. "It's like when you get into a hot tub, you acclimatise. [Black metal] is really harsh and atonal, but after a while you see that it isn't, that there's melody."

He took to documenting the Icelan-

dic scene with this same comprehensive attitude. "You have an inner world, and music is so ephemeral, you can't capture it," he says. "I treat it holy. I studied it. Lyrics. This is a sacred truth that these musicians have for themselves." He motions to a photo. It's the band Carpe Noctem, with a reproduction of their album art. "I've been asked, is it fantasy or documentary?" he continues. "Well, I am documenting their inner fantasy."

### Inner fantasies

Much of Hafsteinn's success with this book and exhibit is due to his position in the scene. Black metal musicians are notoriously standoffish to outsiders,

but Hafsteinn is one of them and was thus, as he explained, allowed into their inner fantasies. That said, Hafsteinn still views himself as separate from the others. "When I joined the scene, I was the youngest one and now I am the oldest one by far. I am the elder," he says. "So maybe I'm documenting everything because I am the one aware of age and time creeping."

Above all else, Hafsteinn wanted to approach the photos with respect. He contrasts his book with the famous "True Norwegian Black Metal" by Peter Beste. Hafsteinn admires Beste's aesthetics, but finds his works derivative. "I didn't want to be humorous, and what he did was humorous," he says. "That devalues it and makes it less important and it undermines the whole point of black metal. I wasn't going to put them next to their mom in corpse paint. Of course, those photos are visual catchy, but I think the philosophy was thrown out. There should be nothing humorous about it."

### Always a ritual

Hafsteinn does, however, have a small laugh about one part of the exhibition—but not at its expense. In the corner of the exhibition lies a mural painted in human blood by NYIP. It's covered in runes. Across from that is an altar with two goblets: one holds wine, the other human blood.

"They were offering people the cups to see who would drink," he says, before softly smiling. "It'll smell amazing by the end of the summer, I'm sure." ❧



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WELL, YOU ASKED

# A World Cup Advice Special

Words: Valur Grettisson

**What alcoholic beverage should I be partaking in at Ingólfstorg whilst watching the game? (From @theboy-blair)**

Well, my first choice is always Landi, the traditional Icelandic moonshine. At least that's what I reach for when I watch the agonisingly boring sport of football. There are not many drinks that can just rob you of your mental health in such an extraordinary short amount of time, but Landi really does the trick.

**How is it that so many Icelandic people signed a petition to boycott the Eurovision in Israel and no one signed a petition to boycott the world cup in Russia after its occupation of Crimea, involvement in bombing Syria and great human rights agenda? Hypocrisy or sheer stupidity? (From @RodNimrod)**

Our government is boycotting the biggest sports event in Icelandic history for these very reasons, so there is no need for a petition. Still feel smart on your high horse, Mr. Nimrod!?

**I'm going to Reykjavík to watch the Argentina vs. Iceland match with the Icelandic people. I have a problem though. My husband insists he'll wear his England shirt on the day of the match. What should I do? I'm thinking of pretending I don't know him. (From @AdoptaIslanda)**

Just divorce him now. You'll thank me later.

**Send your unsolvable (UNTIL NOW) problems to [editor@grapevine.is](mailto:editor@grapevine.is)**

WAR OF THE NERDS

# Hugleikur's HÚ-riffic Tale

Don't mess with intellectual property, bruh

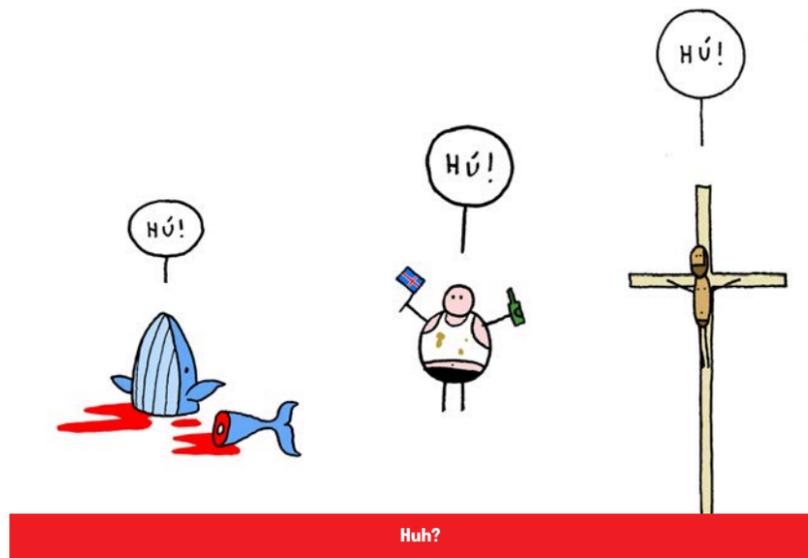
**Words:** Syphilis. The Spanish Inquisition. Ariana Grande's 'No Tears Left To Cry'—there are some things you just can't joke about. But these trinkets are zilch in comparison to the bad boy of the courtroom. That's right, we're talking about the decidedly not funny Mr. Copyright Law. C'mon, if season two of "Westworld" has taught you anything, it's that you don't fuck with IP unless you're cruisin' for a bruisin'.

**Photo:** Hugleikur Dagsson

## The opening argument

Cartoonist and notorious funny man Hugleikur Dagsson learned this unfortunate lesson first hand last December, when he was unceremoniously awoken from his slumber by an ominous letter. Okay, it was an email.

The dire directive informed our fair artist that his famous t-shirt, which features an Icelandic stick figure—you know he's Icelandic because he's wearing a Icelandic football costume—yelling "HÚ", was infringing on his patent. Apparently, this sneaky entrepreneur had



Huh?

managed to copyright a sound: HÚH. He can only assume he was part American.

"He said that we should either back down or pay him," Hugleikur writes to me over Facebook chat. You can almost feel the teary emojis coming through his keyboard. Hugleikur immediately consulted his lawyer. "We felt like we had a moral high ground so we kept printing those shirts," he says. Unfortunately, our impressive aural tycoon had come to the table with legal backing too. Drama!

## DOXX HIM

Hugleikur then did what any self-respecting modern Renaissance man would do and took the problem straight to Facebook, retelling his tale of attempted extortion alongside a sales pitch for

the contentious tee, with a cut of the profit going to the Icelandic Cancer Society. It went viral, with millions—ok maybe thousands—horrified. "Facebook buried him," Hugleikur admits. "I admit it was kind of a dick move to throw the guy under the social media bus." He virtually shrugs. "But sometimes you have to fight a dick move with a dick move." The internet army came through, and the HÚH-magnate backed down.

While Hugleikur still sells the tee, he's put the past in the past and is moving on to bigger and brighter shirt pastures. "I felt I was becoming a sell-out with the old shirt and wanted to take the concept to a darker and dirtier place," he says. "So now you can buy a HÚ shirt with a slaughtered whale saying 'HÚ' and a man who is fucking a sheep saying 'HÚ'." 🍷



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**LAST WORDS**

# Football Infection

Words & illustration: **Lóa Hlín Hjalmtýsdóttir**

I have more than ninety-nine problems, but the worst one is a severe case of defiance disorder. It's a common side-effect of having been a teenager in the nineties. This disorder makes it extremely difficult to enjoy popular things like sports, new flavours of soda, and well-received movies, to name but a few.

That said, the Eurovision song contest season is easy to enjoy, because it offers a lovely platform for sarcasm and snide remarks. Football is not as ripe for the picking. There is not much to say about the young, mostly handsome men running around with their huge thighs glistening in the sun. The football rolls this way, the football rolls that way and sometimes it ends up in the little tent occupied by a mostly handsome young man with watchful eyes and gloved hands. Some people cheer, others boo.

I don't know why I'm explaining this to you, but you can probably imagine how odd it was for me when one day I found myself standing on a hill in the middle of Reykjavík, doing the god-awful "Viking clap," blissfully "húh-ing" with thousands of people as our little football men returned home after a successful run at one of these important tournaments they go to. Even my mother was there on the hill beside me. I had never even heard her use the word "football" before. I felt a little bit ashamed of myself a few days later, and vowed to never again fall for this cult-like plague.

Disappointingly enough, several months later I was standing on my balcony scratching my head over an IKEA floor-puzzle when I heard a sound in the distance. I listened closely and realised it was coming from the neighborhood football stadium. It was hundreds of voices singing the sappy-cheesy song they sing when the Icelandic football team plays foreign teams. The lyrics are about coming home, and some goddamn glacier aflame with the colors of the sunset. I finished laying the IKEA floor with blobby tears in my pathetic eyes. It was beautiful. I'm worried I might be in danger of infection once again. If you see me "húh-ing," please don't judge—like a virus, it'll pass soon enough. ☹

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