



# The REYKJAVÍK GRAPEVINE

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THE ESSENTIAL GUIDE TO LIFE, TRAVEL & ENTERTAINMENT IN ICELAND

IN THE ISSUE Issue 1 • 2012 • January 6 - February 2

+ **COMPLETE CITY LISTINGS - INSIDE!**

**SPECIAL FANCY YEAR-IN-REVIEW ISSUE!**



**LET'S STICK TO  
THE LADDERS IN 2012**

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Illustration:  
Lóa Hjálmtýsdóttir and  
Hugleikur Dagsson

# HAUKUR'S LAST EDITORIAL!

Dearest readers, friends, collaborators and contributors,

I would like to start this little letter by sending you some well wishes. Happy coming 2012! Happy leaving behind 2011! Happy happy, joy joy.

Happy New Year!

That out of the way, I want to tell you a bit about some changes we are making at the paper you're reading.

Change is fun. Everyone loves change. Some people fear change, but there's no reason to. When you think about it real hard, you'll realise that. And I believe the changes we're currently making will serve to make Grapevine a stronger publication, with funner, informativer articles and betterer grammer, english and speling (not to mention; punctuation!!!!!!)

But before these changes are brought up, I want to tell you a little about what went on this past year. 2011. For the most part, it was Business As Usual (which is one of the reasons change is welcome, STAGNANT STASIS is no state for any self-respecting publication. If you read Deleuze and Guattari's Milles Plateaux, you'll definitely agree. What a book! What a book!).

January came and went. And so did rest of the months. In May, our lovely half-journalist Anna Andersen turned into a full-time journalist, a post she has retained since (and done a great job of!). Our trusty designer Páll Hilmarsson went from being freelance to full-time in August I believe, and he has since been hard at work making our new website (it will launch in 2012, and I do believe it will be pretty goddamn awesome, at least if his work on [www.airwaves.grapevine.is](http://www.airwaves.grapevine.is) is anything to judge by) when not laying out our articles and pictures and illustrations.

We had a bunch of interns and they were all pretty much awesome. And then, of course, there are all our wonderful contributors, that make sure we can feature stuff worth reading in every issue. They've been diligently writing, drawing, photographing and making whatever else it is we print every other week (every month in wintertime).

When I think of all the people that contribute to making Grapevine and I've had the pleasure to work with I get all wet eyed and embarrassing to look at. What fun it is to get to collaborate, create and disrespect musician's babies with such people. What wonderful fun!

Now. Here's what's coming up:  
As of sometime in January, I will be moving to a different country so I can hang out with all the wonderful people there. I will return every now and again, hell I might move back in June or something (I might not even get permission to live there—I had to get my lungs photographed for a visa and god knows how those suckers look by now).

I will stop being Grapevine's Editor. Instead, I will assume a part-time position that's called 'Editor-in-Chief' (I've always wondered what that meant btw—I plan on explaining what it will mean at GV in a couple paragraphs) that I will be doing from abroad using my fancy computer and telephone.

Meanwhile, the lovely and aforementioned Anna Andersen will be assuming the newly creat-



ed post of 'Managing Editor.' What is a 'Managing Editor'? Well, it's basically an editor that makes a magazine, much like I have been doing, except some of the responsibilities and duties of the job 'Editor' will shift towards the other-newly-created-post of 'Editor-in-Chief.' Are you confused yet? Good.

Anna will manage the paper from day to day. She will work with our writers on their stories and provide feedback and counter-ideas and pester them with deadlines and whatnot. She will in all effect run Grapevine, and she'll do a fine job of it! Welcome Anna!

As for myself, I will try to make sure Grapevine gets more awesome; I will collaborate with Anna on making it, and I will try and find ways of executing some of the great ideas all of y'all keep coming up with. I'll also collaborate with our art director and designer in making some much-needed changes to the layout and structure of this thing. Etc.

I will be formally responsible for whatever we print. Basically, you will be able to thank Anna for the stuff you like and hate on me for whatever you're miffed about (also: spelling errors and typos!).

OK I hope this about explains it. If it doesn't, I'll be happy to answer any questions via email or at the bar or whatever. Also if you've any ideas on how to make the paper better, I'll pass them on to Anna.

Now, in my first editorial, fifty editorials ago, I wrote something of a mission statement. It went like this:

"As editor of the Reykjavík Grapevine, I promise you reader types out there to do my very best to keep it an honest, truthful, empathetic, vigilant, insightful, humorous, tumultuous, alert, informative, dumb, punk-rock, reflective, DIY, understanding, gimmicky, unprejudiced, rebellious, senior, scathing, agile, dumb, multi-layered, rocking, witty, reliable, informative, snarky, defensive, political, cultured, kick-ass, clever, trite, true, corrosive, insubordinate, shameful, reliable, youth-



## TRACK OF THE ISSUE

### Legend: City

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

LEGEND knocked veteran Grapevine music scribe Rebecca Louder off her feet at last year's Iceland Airwaves. Here's what she wrote:

"LEGEND is a band whose name is not only apt but a multifold description of the complexities of their music and bandmembers. These are veteran local musicians and incredibly talented people who can accomplish the musical style of their picking on a whim based on sheer knowledge alone. The sound they produce together is indeed the stuff of legends – think Depeche Mode, Nine Inch Nails. That kind of legend. It is passionate and danceable, meant for closing your eyes, throwing your hands up in despair and feeling it down to your core.

What's more, frontman Krummi Björgvins-son is himself, whichever way you look at it, an affirmed local legend, synonymous with the bands Mínus, Esja and his own electronic act. It is in this incarnation however that it feels like Krummi is bearing his opening the gates, baring his soul, cutting out his heart and sewing it on his sleeve for the world to see."

Now guess what! LEGEND's début is finally seeing the light of day! Scheduled for a February drop, it's called 'FEARLESS' and we hear it's quite good! Check it out for yourself by sampling the sweet 'City' off [www.grapevine.is](http://www.grapevine.is). Surely, you'll agree.

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

ful, sXe, HxC and THC read. At the very least an honest one, one that strives to reflect the community it springs from and the multitude of perspectives that make it. This is a goal."

I am fairly satisfied with how that all went. If nothing else, I'm certain it's been dumb and honest. Thank you for the last three years. It's been a blast. Sniff.

Love,

Haukur SM

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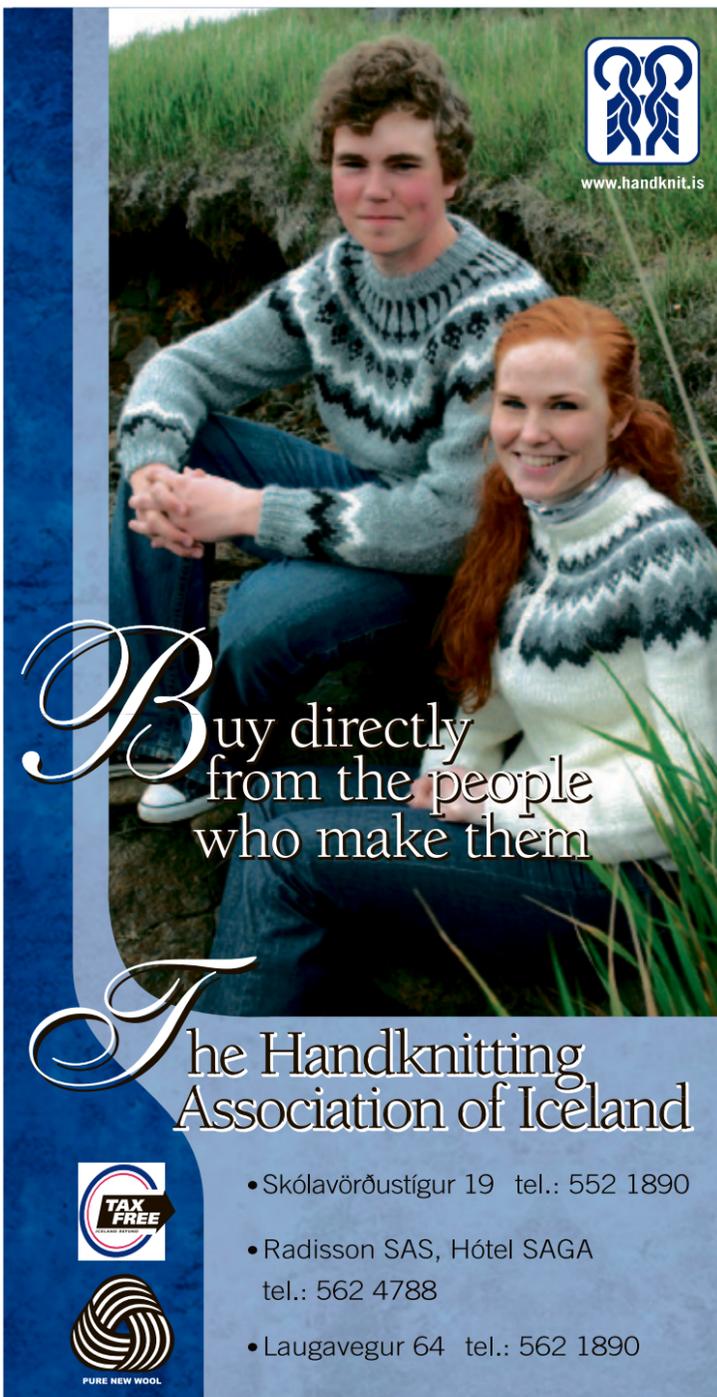
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## Sour grapes & stuff

### MOST AWESOME LETTER:

Dear Grapevine, my name is Fabio, I'm from Italy.

A few days ago I was in Reykjavik with Alina and Elena, two colleagues of mine. We are librarians and we were at the University of Reykjavik, attending a workshop.

Before coming to Iceland I had several prejudices about. Will I find trees? (Not a forest but I saw several) How many meters of snow? (none!) Have I to buy snow clothes? (it doesn't matter) So, I filled my luggage with gloves, wool scarf and cap. But I didn't use it. The weather was not so bad and the only problem was my lips broken by a cold wind. Lip balm was the right solution.

Another question was about the light. At the end of October, how many hours (or minutes...?) of natural light? Ok, it was nice. Volcanoes were quiet and we had magnificent days of sunlight we used to have daily trips around Reykjavik.

The city is incredibly peaceful. In Italy, what a mess!

### MOST AWESOME LETTER FREE ICELANDIC GOURMET FEAST

There's prize for all your **MOST AWESOME LETTERS**. And it's a scorcher! No, really! It's a goddamn scorcher is what it is! Whoever sends us **THE MOST AWESOME LETTER** this issue will receive **A FRIGGIN GOURMET FEAST FOR TWO** at **TAPAS BARINN**.

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

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

Now, if you're in the market for free goodies next month, write us some sort of letter. Give us your worst: [letters@grapevine.is](mailto:letters@grapevine.is)



People is really polite and we, tourists, were not so many.

Elena and I stayed at the same hotel, so we were together a lot of time. At the end of our stay I called her my "fake wife". We joked a lot and we had a wonderful impression of our workshop and stay in Reykjavik. What could we desire more?

Well, on Friday morning, the 22nd of October, may be 9.45, as usual, we went to the University library on foot. It was raining slightly so we had an umbrella. We were at the cross between Egilsgata and Barónsstígur, near the big church. Suddenly, while we were talking, a young girl asked us for permission and took a picture of us.

The road was almost deserted and it was so unexpected that we didn't leave her our email addresses.

Elena and I live in different towns so we thought this picture would be a nice postcard from Iceland to hang next our desks. But how to retrieve that?

Could Grapevine help us?

Thanks anyway. Iceland is so beautiful.

My best Fabio Zauli Italy

A second letter:

I committed an error. That Friday was 21st of October, not 22nd. Secondly, ok, \*people ARE really polite\*.

Dear young girl on the street who took a photo of Fabio and Elena on that rainy Friday morning on October 21 a little after 9:45 as they crossed Egilsgata and Barónsstígur, near the big church,

if you're reading this... please get in touch with us so that we can send that photo to Fabio and his "fake wife" who attended a workshop at Reykjavik University.

Best of luck to you, Fabio and Elena!

Dear The Reykjavik Grapevine.

At first, I am sorry for bothering you with this sudden e-mail. My name is Yuu Noyama, an university student in Tokyo, Japan.

I want to explain about the circumstances of Japanese the mass media at this E-mail.

There was the practice of demonstration against Fuji-TV, 21 August, Tokyo. Today, I tell the practice of demonstrations in Tokyo, Nagoya, Osaka from 16 Sep. to 18 Sep.

In Tokyo, We did the demonstration against Fuji-TV and the major sponsor of him, Kao.

Participants ordered quitting the sponsor quickly to kao,

The assertions of participants of demonstrations against Fuji-TV at three cities are below.

"Apologize for doing indiscretion behavior to victims of the 2011 Tohoku earthquake."

"Shorten televised hours of Korean drama shows."

"Make more Japanese musician's booking to music program."

"Broadcast about this demonstrations at TV news."

And, demonstration in Nagoya, where's hometown of Miki Andou, Mao Asada, there was such assertions.

"Quit malicious editing at sports news programs and play-by-play broadcasting of skating events"

"Reform an denial behavior of program against Japanese skater, especially Mao Asada."

But, Fuji-TV hasn't remarks the statement to show the apology so far.

This company's making the drama show forward October,

An Korean actress Kim Tae-hee, whose behavior have many diplomatic problems, will play the leading part at this drama show.

And there is an indefinite plan to the third demonstration in Tokyo at October.

To know deeply about this question, You should search the information period.

Dear Yuu Noyama,

Thank you for your sudden letter! We strongly support your desire to have a fair and balanced media. As journalists

for this magazine we strive to maintain that standard of excellence. We're not sure that we can make it to the demonstration in Tokyo, but perhaps our Tokyo-based readers will go. And best of luck to Mao Asada in the upcoming blading championships!

Hello,

The difficulty to learn Icelandic language for foreigners is as known as The Northern Lights.

One of the cause for that is a shortage of good quality learning materials, like easy reading online texts of current news, similar to [www.8sidor.se](http://www.8sidor.se) in easy Swedish.

One page of Grapevine, sacrificed for short articles (50-100 words) written in

easy Icelandic will be a huge help for those trying to learn this language.

My personal experience is as follow - with 8sidor I have learnt more Swedish in 3 months (to be able to read regular books) what is more than I can do with Icelandic after 5 years of learning.

Best regards Chris

Dear Chris,

The non-native speakers of this office couldn't agree with you more. Learning Icelandic is no walk in the park. We'll keep this mind in for our summer issues when we have more space and tourists and stuff!

Dear Line and Queue -

It was so surprising to see you both so frequently at Airwaves this year that I thought I would send you a letter to express my true feelings. Where to begin...

Line, I think you are a bitch. The best you can do is stick figures. You are endless. The only pleasure you brought me was thinking about how I was continuously stepping on your face night after night. One could only hope I confused your face with your nut bag.

And Queue, you're just a "p" that got bitch slapped so badly you did a 180. Somehow you make European sayings uncool.

Maybe next year your handlers can

keep you in places you belong, like super rad bottle service clubs. You have no place at Airwaves.

Your NYC Friend of Airwaves

Dear NYC Friend of Airwaves,

thank you for your letter. Unfortunately Line and Queue aren't around to answer you in person (we haven't seen those fuckers since October—although we hear they occasionally drop in at Kaffibarinn), so we'll have to say something on their behalf.

Now, we're sorry you're frustrated with our good friends Line and Queue (especially coming from a city where folks willingly stand in line for up to six hours just to buy a burger!), and we feel your pain. However, Line and Queue have been mainstays on the Airwaves line-up for almost a decade now and it seems they'll continue to get booked to play the festival for the foreseeable future (understandably so: they are really popular! Everytime they appear, a huge crowd gathers!).

You'll thus likely have to learn to live with those guys if you want to continue your friendship with Airwaves.

Now, a good trick to avoid them would be to steer clear of the hyped-up bands playing the hyped-up venues, opting instead to attend lesser-hyped bands playing lesser-hyped venues. A lot of those bands are really, really good (some of them suck, of course, but then that's life).

You could also try coming a month early to Iceland and making friends with all the doormen at the popular clubs. Those guys are really nice, and they'll probably let you slip past Line and Queue if you develop a real friendship with them.

Alternatively, you could pretend you're some sort of music journalist or record industry executive person (do either of those still exist?). That has worked for people in the past (it also helps you score free records from unsuspecting Icelandic bands).

In any case, we're already looking forward to seeing you at Airwaves 2k12! You could even drop by our office—there's never a queue here.



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New Year | Jón Gnarr, Mayor of Reykjavík

## New Year's Address



**Now we bid farewell to the year 2011. It is expired. It is useless to contemplate it any more. It is gone. Memories. We leave it to the historians of the future to examine that year. Perhaps they will discover something important that we do not recognise at the moment. To me, the year 1967 is very important. This is because I was born in that year. Before 1967, the world did not exist. Everything that happened before 1967 is not real. Then, everything changed.**

I don't remember what is most memorable to me in 2011. Probably it was something that my youngest son said. He is very clever. Is it not right, what scientists have been claiming for a long time, that humanity is constantly progressing? We can see it in our children.

They are usually their parents betters in most things. Children are a little more perfect than their parents. This is not something all parents admit. It can be painful. It is dreadful to lose to one's children in a game of Trivial Pursuit, or at armwrestling. I have experienced this. Enough about that.

The start of a new year is a perfect time to look to the future. What will happen in the coming years? There will be an election in the United States and Obama will continue being president, or he will not and someone else will replace him. If Republicans make it to power, this will strengthen the entertainment industry. This is certain.

I could well envision becoming eternal. But is that a realistic option? I think so. We are constantly becoming more like our machines, and our machines are constantly becoming more like us. One day, machines and humans

will fuse into a single entity. It will be called The Singularity. This will happen in around 25 years. Then, we will biologically connect to the internet. We will be able to get a nano-router grafted into our brains. We will be able to google in our brains. We will become omniscient and connected to one international consciousness. And we will be able to upload our brains to the internet when our bodies die. Dead people will for the first time be able to maintain an active presence on Facebook. We will be able to live there for all eternity, or even download ourselves into an avatar or robot. Not having a conventional body will still have its shortcomings. If we show forethought, plan ahead and store samples of our DNA samples in a freezer we will be able to clone ourselves later and be reborn in our own bodies, go swimming, enjoy sex, drink good wine and eat good food. You can

also do that as an avatar (I think). It will be similar to The Matrix, except not as negative.

What I most look forward to in the coming year is acquiring an Obi Wan Kenobi costume and wearing it around and practicing Jedi-tricks. I also hope I will be permitted to marry people. I also would very much like to see more tourists in Reykjavík. I am mostly interested in getting people that are rich, interested in swimming and like to spend a lot of money on nonsense. Others are also welcome, though.

I would like to extend Reykjavík's tourist season. Now, most of our tourists come in the summer and around New Year's Eve. I would like to see more tourists in horrible months, like October and November. A lot of tourists spend Christmas and New Years Eve in Reykjavík. That is good. But I would like to see more tourists here during Easter.

Icelanders celebrate Easter by eating giant eggs made from light milk chocolate. The eggs are filled with candy. I once read how this is relevant to the crucifixion of Jesus Christ, but have since forgotten. Anyway, it isn't important, because these eggs are very tasty! And each egg comes with an Icelandic proverb. If I were a foreigner, I would spend my Easter in Reykjavík and buy a lot of Easter eggs.

While I hope I am not jumping the gun, I wish to use this opportunity to wish all the readers of Grapevine a happy Easter in Reykjavík. 🍷

JÓN GNARR  
FABRIZIO FRASCAROLI AND ARI MAGG

Opinion | Mehdi Kavyanpoor

## A Thank You, And A Plea For Change



**My name is Mehdi Kavyanpoor and I came to Iceland looking for shelter. Recently, after a long struggle, I received Icelandic citizenship. First of all, I would like to thank god, who provided me with her angle of justice—namely Helga Vala Helgadóttir—who has stood by me for the past ten months and helped me through it all wholeheartedly. Secondly, I would like to thank my dear friends without whom I would have not been able to last as long as I have.**

I would also like to thank the parliament members who finally gave me a second chance to live a peaceful life here in your wonderful country. I can't wait to go and see my family, whom I have been missing for almost eight years. My wife, whom I love and miss, who has been suffering along with me during this whole time, and my daughter, who was only ten years old when I left and is now a grown young lady that I cannot wait to hold in my arms. I have a lot of catching up to do, and a whole lot more making up as a father and a husband.

I hope that no one will ever have to go through this nightmare that I have gone through, and that the people in charge review my case and make sure it does not happen to anyone else ever again. There are still some people here who still after many, many years still haven't received any answers, whose lives are still in limbo. My plea to the Directorate of Immigration and the Ministry of the Interior is to please conclude these peoples' cases and give them a chance to live a normal happy life, which is the right of all humans on god's green earth. 🍷

MEHDI KAVYANPOOR  
SIGTRYGGUR ARI JÓHANSSON

Emil

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## Small, odd and extremely cold

In a small fishing village called Sandgerði we found this 80 year old freezing room. It is almost as old as 66°NORTH for this year marks our 85th anniversary. According to modern standards of quality the freezing room is too humid to store food in so now it is used to store bait for fishing. The temperature in the room is close to -20° celsius or -4° fahrenheit. We thought it would be an ideal location for a photoshoot featuring our clothing for it reminded us of Iceland, small, cold and dark but with a quirky attraction to it.

» See more on [magazine.66north.is](http://magazine.66north.is)



2011 | Gone!

# 2011: The Year In News



This was a pretty big year in the news for a number of reasons, and while we don't have the space to cover everything we found cool or interesting, there were a number of important stories that deserve mentioning.

## ICESAVE

The year started off optimistically enough on the Icesave front. In January, most Icelanders supported the third Icesave deal. The blogging world, while still grumbling, appeared to grudgingly concede that it wasn't half bad. Even Independence Party chair Bjarni Benediktsson came out in favour of it. In the end, a parliamentary majority passed the Icesave deal. Finally, we thought, we can get this baby put to bed.

How wrong we were. We had made the mistake of overlooking the president, who ended up vetoing the law—referring it to referendum—as he had done with the previous Icesave agreement. While the government stalled in trying to convince the public to vote 'Yes,' bloggers and special interest groups switched into high gear in trying to convince the public to vote 'No.' In the end, the public didn't need much convincing, as an overwhelming majority voted against the deal.

Things slumped along until November, when the Supreme Court ruled that the 'emergency law' of 2008 would be upheld, and that funds from the Old Landsbanki should pay up the Icesave debt, and in fact the first payment was made to the UK and Holland.

## Words

Paul Fontaine

## Illustration

Reykjavík Grapevine covers of 2011 and selected tweets from @rvkgrapevine

We breathed a sigh of relief—payments have started! Surely, this time, we can safely say that the Icesave matter is finally over, yes?

No. The European Free Trade Association (EFTA) summoned the country to court, on account of waiting three years to begin returning bank deposits to people wanting to withdraw their money from their accounts, which is sort of probably against international law (don't worry, though—their governments covered their deposits in the meantime). And so the Icesave issue left 2011 with the prospect that Iceland would have to appear in court, and might very well incur penalties for these delays. Rats.

## DIOXIN!

Most of Iceland's non-recycled refuse is incinerated. While not in itself especially green, it also never occurred to anyone that it would be especially dangerous, either. All that changed when milk in the Westfjords was measured as having 20 times the acceptable amount of dioxin—a toxin that was used to make the notorious Vietnam War-era herbicide Agent Orange. After further investigation, it was discovered that the source of the toxin was emissions from a nearby garbage incinerator. This got the ball rolling for further investigations, with high dioxin levels also found near incinerators in the Westman Island and in Kirkjubæjarklaustur.

It was also reported that there were traces of dioxin in lamb meat, some of it already sold domestically and for export. As the public demanded answers, the Ministry for the Environment closed or limited the hours of the incinerators, and later found that dioxin levels—while certainly higher than originally thought—were not high enough to cause permanent damage to people.

## USDOJ VS. BIRGITTA

Icelandic member of parliament for The

Movement ended up making international news when the US Department of Justice filed an injunction against Twitter, demanding they hand over the private messages of a few people linked to Wikileaks, among them Birgitta Jónsdóttir. Twitter was kind enough to let Birgitta know what was up and, true to form, she did not take the matter sitting down. Refusing to hand over her private exchanges, she got in touch with an American legal team.

Minister for Foreign Affairs Ösur Skarphéðinsson told RÚV that he intended to fight "tooth and nail" for Birgitta, and considered Birgitta's treatment by US authorities "unacceptable." The matter has since been hit with two rulings in federal court in favour of the DoJ, but at the time of writing, it is uncertain if an appeal will be made to the US Supreme Court.

## THE REYKJAVÍK NINE TRIAL

One of the more farcical legal proceedings to happen in Iceland this year was the trial of the so-called Reykjavík Nine: nine protesters who attempted to enter parliament in December 2008, but ended up in a scuffle with police. The nine were charged with trying to force their way into parliament and with assaulting police officers, although video footage seemed to contradict police testimony of events. Reykjavík District Court was often packed with supporters and press alike. It came to light that while security guards gave conflicting testimony of events, they had accidentally taped over much of the footage of the altercation.

In the end, Andri Leó Lemarquis was sentenced to a four-month suspended sentence, Þór Sigurðsson was sentenced to a 60-day suspended sentence, and Sólveig Anna Jónsdóttir and Steinunn Gunnlaugsdóttir were each sentenced to pay 100.000 ISK in

CONTINUES OVER

## Reykjavík Grapevine

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Birgitta (@birgitta) Jónsdóttir's Twitter secrets EXPOSED // #Iceland #WikiLeaks #IMMI <http://fb.me/XEXJ3KI>  
03/14/2011

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DOOMSDAY ERUPTION ALERT! Harold Camping may have miscalculated doomsday... but there IS a VOLCANO ERUPTING near..  
05/21/2011

**rvkgrapevine** Reykjavík Grapevine

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06/08/2011

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**Name:**  
Hrafnkell Flóki  
Kaktus Einarsson  
**Age:**  
19  
**Occupation:**  
Musician  
*During the weekends i...*  
...do the same as every other  
day, have fun with my friends  
and listen to some nice  
techno music

# Sputnik

Winter 2011



Laugavegur 28b  
Kringlan

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finer. The remaining five were found not guilty. Andri received his sentence for allegedly biting a police officer and pushing a security guard, while Þór's sentence was for holding the door of parliament open.

#### THE FORMER-PM TRIAL

Equally farcical as the Reykjavík Nine trial, albeit in a different way, former Prime Minister Geir H. Haarde was officially charged with negligence and mismanagement for his part in contributing to the collapse of the Icelandic economy. The parliamentary vote to charge Geir was close—33 votes to 30—and Geir professed his innocence many times, stating that he was the victim of both a global recession and being kept deliberately in the dark by the Central Bank. Going on the offensive, he called the trial "political persecution" and a "vendetta" initiated by former political opponents.

While the latest Gallup poll on the matter shows most Icelanders are against the trial, it continues to wear on. However, a proposal from the Independence Party—from which Geir hails—that has called for the trial to end has seen support from members of the ruling coalition. At the time of writing, it is still uncertain if the trial even has a future, let alone if a conviction will result.

#### CONSTITUTIONAL COMMITTEE FORMED

One of the more exciting consequences of the Pots and Pans Revolution was the notion that we should re-write our constitution—probably a good idea, as the one we have now is more or less a copy/paste job of the Danish one from nearly a century ago. The idea was that the people in charge of writing the new constitution would be regular folks like you and me, who were not in office.

A lot of well-known Icelanders were voted in, but then complaints were filed which challenged the legality of the elections. The Supreme Court found the numerous election laws were broken, and so the election itself was ruled invalid. The office of the Prime

Minister wasn't daunted, and last February, decided that they would simply appoint those who won the election to the position of being on the committee. While the committee has been toying with a number of proposed changes to the constitution, soliciting suggestions from the general public, an actual brand new constitution is still a ways away.

#### GEOTHERMAL ACTIVITY

Where Eyjafjallajökull was the star of 2010, two volcanic events marked this year—Grímsvötn and Vatnajökull, within about two months of each other. Last May, Grímsvötn erupted, sending heavy plumes of ash across south Iceland, a great deal of it even making its way west to Reykjavík, with the plume reaching a maximum height of about 20km and reaching as far afield as central Russia. No deaths, injuries, or severe destruction of property and livestock were reported, although the ash did take a long time to clean up.

Two months later, a minor volcanic disturbance under the Vatnajökull glacier caused a flash flood, which wiped out a bridge in south Iceland. As this happened during the height of the tourist season, there were worries that we would see a repeat of 2010, when the Eyjafjallajökull eruption put a dent in the tourist industry, one of Iceland's more lucrative sources of revenue. However, quick-working civil engineers managed to get the bridge repaired in an astonishing two weeks. Again, no deaths or injuries were reported. In your face, Earth!

#### HUANG NUBO

If Magma Energy was the shady foreign investor of 2010, Huang Nubo must surely define 2011. A Chinese investor who has worked in the tourist industry both at home and abroad, he also has a reputed love of Iceland. And plenty of well-connected links to the country, too: he's good friends with Hjörleifur Sveinbjörnsson, the husband of former Foreign Minister Ingibjörg Sólrún Gísladóttir. Huang Nubo and Hjörleifur have apparently been friends for a long

time, and it has been reported that during a visit to Iceland last year, Foreign Minister Össur Skarphéðinsson lent him a ministry car to be shown around the country.

Last August, Huang said he was interested in buying the northeast Icelandic farm Grímsstaðir á Fjöllum, for the purpose of building a luxury hotel and golf course there. This resulted in a great public backlash, with plenty of people sceptical of his intentions and business practices. In the end, the Minister of the Interior denied his request to be granted an exception to Icelandic law, which forbids non-Scandinavians from buying land. It is reported that Huang could be looking for other ways to invest in Iceland's tourist industry, but for now it seems his interest in the country has waned.

#### LAST MONTH, LEADERSHIP CHANGES

December was a big month for changes in Icelandic leadership. First off, Bishop of Iceland Karl Sigurbjörnsson announced that he would not run again for the position of bishop, and that early elections for the post would be held. Throughout the year, there had been calls for him to step down in light of the church investigation findings that he hid evidence implicating a previous bishop who had committed sexual abuse against, among other people, his own daughter. Karl refused to step down and maintained that he was innocent of any wrongdoing, but his decision to not run again and hold early elections may indicate a change of heart.

Government ministries once again combined, this time forming nine in total, most of them run by women—an Icelandic first. The ministries of Fisheries, Agriculture, Business and the Economy—as well as parts of the Ministry of Industry—combined into a new ministry, the Ministry of Employment, which is headed by Leftist-Green chair Steingrímur J. Sigfússon. Oddný Harðardóttir took over as Minister of Finance, and the Ministry for the Environment and the Ministry of Industry

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Former PM Geir Haarde claims he 'saved' Iceland's economy. Is this plausible  
07/04/2011

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09/01/2011

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Bishop of Iceland to step down, sort of: "I am not quitting, but will definitely resign at peace with God and.."  
11/14/2011

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Is fisheries minister Jón Bjarnason on his way out  
11/30/2011

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Oh great. ICESAVE IS BACK. Whooo!  
22 days ago

combined to form the Ministry of the Environment and Natural Resources. However, this meant that now-former Minister of Economics and Business Árni Páll Árnason and Minister of Fisheries and Agriculture Jón Bjarnason lost their posts.

On the very first day of 2012—capping off 2011 in classic style—President Ólafur Ragnar Grímsson addressed the nation, saying that he did not believe he would run for another term, saying that to leave would give him the free-

dom to speak more freely and focus more on issues dear to his heart. This would bring to an end 16 years in office, and would certainly be a fine time to depart: much of 2011 has involved the president in one way or the other, so perhaps he wants to end his career on a high note. But as his statement has been considered open-ended, he might end up running for office after all. Only 2012 will tell for sure. 🍇

Opinion | Paul Fontaine

## On To Greener Pastures, Hopefully



If 2011 taught me anything about politics in this country, it's to take nothing for granted, and that it's not easy being green—but it's super easy to say you are.

Take Icesave for example. When the Landsbanki resolution committee made their first payment to the UK and Holland, I breathed a sigh of relief. Finally, I thought, we can at last stop hearing about Icesave, people can stop arguing about Icesave, and I can stop writing about Icesave. We've done our

bit now, right?

Nope! We may have wanted to move on, but the European Free Trade Association (EFTA) certainly didn't forget the whole reason this thing started in the first place—former Minister of Finance Árni Mathiesen letting Icelanders, but not foreigners, withdraw their money from Landsbanki. Apparently it's against international law and violates our treaty with EFTA or something to discriminate so blatantly like that, and still makes people upset even three years after the fact. Touché!

At the same time, I honestly believed that the dioxin scare was going to snowball into something greater. I hoped that discovering that burning our trash puts toxins in our soil and food, would lead to our government taking environmentalism more seriously. I mean, one of the parties in the coalition government is called the Leftist-Greens. Environmentalism is sort of a major part of their whole raison d'être, and they're in charge of the Ministry for the Environment. So what was the response? Temporary incinerator closings, some

scaled back trash-burning hours, and that's pretty much it.

Should I be surprised though? These are the same "environmentalists" who don't seem to be in a hurry to end whaling, who have few qualms with another silicon dioxide processing plant being built in this country, and who don't seem to be particularly concerned about repeated reports of the appalling state of factory farming in this country.

I agree our government is leftist, and I'm one of few people who think

their economic policies are doing our country good. But where's the green, exactly?

If I could have one wish for the political landscape of this country in 2012, it would be to see environmentalism made a real priority, instead of resting on our geothermal laurels while we brag about how green we are—as we've usually done in previous years. 🍇

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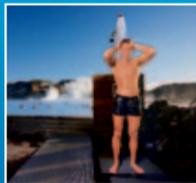
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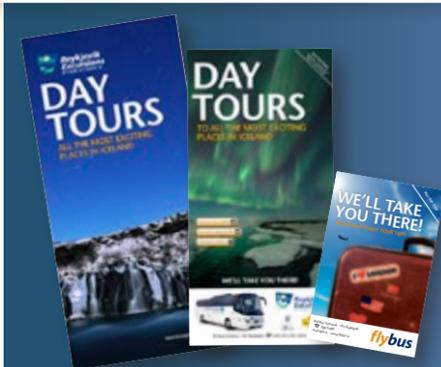
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# E-Democracy Takes Off In Reykjavík

Founders Gunnar Grímsson and Róbert Bjarnason interviewed



In the midst of heated protests following Iceland's economic collapse in October 2008, two Icelandic programmers started dreaming about a more democratic Iceland. Their idea was to create a website called Shadow Parliament, which would enable citizens to play a greater role in their own governance.

## Words

Anna Andersen

## Photo

Alisa Kalyanova

Founders Gunnar Grímsson and Róbert Bjarnason tell me that Shadow Parliament never gained the critical mass of users required for it to work effectively, but it served them well as a pilot project for their second and more successful iteration of the idea: Better Reykjavík.

They launched Better Reykjavík just before the 2010 municipal elections, which saw comedian Jón Gnarr crowned mayor and The Best Party win a majority of city council seats.

"It was entirely a grassroots initiative," Gunnar says. "We weren't working with any political parties or the city or anybody. We just launched the Better Reykjavík website and gave every party that was running access to use as they saw fit."

This meant that each political party could interact with their supporters via the website. People posted their ideas on the site backed by supporting arguments. Other people then endorsed those ideas, opposed them with a counter argument or simply ignored them. In this manner, voters debated ideas and political parties could address the ideas that mattered most to the public.

## THE BEST PARTY BECOME EARLY ADOPTERS

Though it was open to all parties, The Best Party latched onto it with the greatest force. Some people even believed that The Best Party was behind the initiative though it was actually the non-profit Citizens Foundation run by Gunnar and Robert.

"It's not anything I lose sleep over," Gunnar says, "but it's really important to us that people know that we are non-partisan and that we work with everyone that wants to further democracy."

Róbert, who calculates that 40 percent of voters visited the site before the 2010 election, believes that The Best Party was wise to use the site so heavily. "I heard from quite a few people who had been thinking about whether The Best Party was just all a big joke and they went to the website and saw that they were doing something," he says. "I think it definitely helped them in terms of solidifying votes."

Notably lacking in politicians, The Best Party ran an unprecedented campaign in Reykjavík whose seriousness was often difficult to determine. Citing their promise to bring a polar bear to the zoo has perhaps grown stale, but it is telling all the same.

"There were quite a few joke priorities on The Best Party's Better Reykjavík page," Gunnar says. "Still, most of the priorities were things that people were serious about, while maybe ten to fifteen percent were in the vein of Best Party jokes."

Now, one and half years later, I ask them if the jokes had disappeared.

"Yeah, there are no joke priorities anymore," Gunnar says. "Well... the occasional one," Róbert interjects, and we laugh.

"There is at least one," I say, having just perused the priorities and seen an idea to have the city hire someone to

dress up in a bear suit and walk around giving people hugs. But who am I to say that this is a joke, and more hugs to go around is certainly not a bad idea.

"Well, yeah, occasionally there are jokes, but the website works in such a way that when people don't find something important, they don't endorse it and it just disappears," Gunnar says. "It's the people themselves that police it," Róbert continues. "If it's a bad or a silly idea then it drops like a stone to the bottom of the list."

With six endorsement and six opposition votes, the bear hugger priority has fallen into the 'Controversial' category along with ideas to move the Reykjavík airport out of the Vatnsmýri area and to allow right hand turns on red.

## THE CITY SIGNS AN OFFICIAL PARTNERSHIP

A number of ideas implemented by the city over the last year may very well have taken shape on the Better Reykjavík site. For instance, Róbert mentions the idea of making Laugavegur a pedestrian-only street this summer, as well as requiring residents to roll their garbage bins to the curb for trash pickup.

However, ideas on the site had been voluntarily considered by City Council until October 19 when an official partnership between the Citizens Foundation and the city was formed. The City Council is now committed to discuss in meeting each month the five most popular ideas across the board as well as the most popular ideas in each of thirteen categories on the website.

The first idea to be implemented under the new system is an idea that Róbert's nine-year-old niece posted. "My nine-year-old niece was very excited when I told her we were launching the site and she said she had a lot of ideas. When we opened it in October, she suggested that kids in elementary school be able to go on more field trips."

Another idea that originated on the site, but has yet to go through the final bureaucratic hoop, has already secured funding of forty million ISK to improve the life for the homeless during the winter.

"This idea and other ideas in progress are having a real influence on the city," Gunnar says. "People are putting in the time to debate ideas and something

is coming out of it."

And judging by the top priorities on the site, it is evident that people want improvements to the public bus system in Reykjavík, which has undergone a series of cutbacks since the economic crash.

## THE PUBLIC IS TRUSTED TO CALL THE SHOTS

Gunnar pulls up the site's analytics and shows me that since this official partnership was established the site has received 22.800 unique visitors and has 2.900 active users who have signed up and supported at least one priority.

This brings us to the topic of representation because surely technology can, for instance, exclude participation from the old and more computer illiterate populace.

"One of the issues is how to make sure—or does it even matter—that the people using it are representative of everyone," Róbert says. "As it is now, until everyone uses it, there is no way of knowing, so our site is effectively an addition to representative democracy. There is still this filter, which are the elected representatives, and one of their main functions is to protect minorities and human rights."

But should the masses be trusted with this responsibility? Winston Churchill once said, "The best argument against democracy is a five minute conversation with the average voter."

Gunnar says it's simple: "If people aren't able to govern themselves then they aren't able to vote for someone to govern them. We probably need a mixture of representative and direct democracy. The current system we have been living with hasn't really worked that well. Politicians, at least here in Iceland, need to be watched and there needs to be more communication between the ivory tower and the people."

He continues: "This site enables citizens to communicate with their rulers and also provides real meaningful data to make better decisions. I don't see any chances of that exploding into nihilism like some are predicting."

Next year, however, citizens will be given the greater responsibility of making budget decisions for their neighbourhoods.

CONTINUES ON PAGE 25



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Iceland | New and improved?

# Thirty-Three Percent Of 2009's Thirty-Three Look Back, And Forward

Compiled by Haukur S. Magnússon

January of 2009 was an interesting month for Icelanders. The nation's economy had just **TOTALLY COLLAPSED** along with its worldview, trust, confidence and self-image. The government that presided over said **TOTAL COLLAPSE** was still in power, while the protests that would lead to its ultimate resignation were gaining momentum by the day. It was a time of unrest, and of uncertainty. **"WTF JUST HAPPENED?!"** was a popular sentiment, as was **"WTF IS HAPPENING?!"** (lest we forget **"WTF WILL HAPPEN?!"**).

For our first issue of 2009—'the annals issue'—we decided to try and capture the atmosphere of the moment by posing two simple, open-ended questions to a lot of people. Here is the introduction from that piece:

## What We Had // What We Can Expect: 33 Icelanders Have Their Say

The Grapevine posed a question to dozens of Icelanders, old and new. MPs from every single political party (for some reason, only the Left-Greens cared to respond), ministers, mayors and machinists alike. We asked them to tell us—in their own unique ways, from their own unique perspectives—what summed up the year 2008, and what they expected of the coming one. 2009. We asked them to tell us "What we had," and to follow with "What we can expect." Or not. There were no restrictions, our correspondents were free to answer in any way, language and format. From their hearts or from their minds.

Spread over the following pages are the replies we received. Every last one of them. We hope that when read together, in the context of one another, they may give a broad and even enlightening view of how Icelanders as a nation perceived the events of the last twelve months, and how they envision the next twelve turning out. Each and every one speaks for itself, and each one tells a story. Enjoy.

We contacted something like a hundred people for that feature, and thirty-three of them got back to us. Now, three years later, reading over what they had to say is quite revealing, and fun (try it for yourself! Download issue 1, 2009 from [www.grapevine.is](http://www.grapevine.is))!

The combined sentiment paints a portrait of a nation at a crossroads, one that is in the throes of reassessing its values; confused, fearful and hopeful for the future in equal measures. It was a time of great disappointment and uncertainty for sure, but also a time of optimism and hope—one where the local population seemed to be actively involving itself with how its society was being run, where people voiced their concerns and ideas in writing and on the street, participated in think-tanks and generally seemed to be trying their best to not let history repeat itself.

So where are we now?

Frankly, we have no idea. So we thought we'd turn to those thirty-three again and see what they thought? We sent them their old contributions along with the following question:

**"What, if anything, has changed since January 2009, when we published your thoughts on 'What we had // What we can expect'? And what can we expect now?"**

Of course, not everyone got back to us. People are busy. Thirty-three percent of them did, however, and some of those replies are pretty powerful stuff.

Again we hope that when read together, in the context of one another, they offer a broad and even enlightening view of how Icelanders as a nation perceive our three post-kreppa years, and how they envision our future. If nothing else, it makes for a fun, thoughtful read (one that's sure to be even more fun in three years). Enjoy.

## DR. GUNNI, MUSICIAN, JOURNALIST



In 2009, many were clinging to the hope of some kind of utopian "New Iceland" to emerge. I was one of them. I read everything I could about current affairs and had opinions and stuff. The old shit that led to the collapse was obviously dead wrong and no way were we going to repeat the mistakes again.

I guess we were being blue eyed fools. Now very few have this hope of "New Iceland" anymore, and certainly not me. The general feel is like nobody at all will even be held responsible for the collapse of 2008, and that the old masters are about to return and not even in a different guise.

I'm so fed up with current affairs and politics that I rarely bother to watch Silfur Egils anymore. Instead of being bothered by the lot, I have turned inwards and just focus on my micro-environment. I like it cosy. I like buying nice stuff and eating nice stuff and having the annual opportunity to leave the country to buy and eat nice stuff on foreign soil. Iceland starts to look quite alright after you have been somewhere else for awhile. Hurray for (old) Iceland!

## BERGUR EBBI BENEDIKTSSON, COMEDIAN, WRITER



Even though people experienced the financial collapse as a sudden event, it was rather a culmination of a series of bad events that had taken place the previous years. In that view, I think that hopes for a quick and sudden recovery were bound not to come true. The society has needed to undergo a thorough scrutiny in all fields, and yes, a lot of things have changed. The traditional political party system was ridiculed during the last local government election, ex-bank managers have been escorted to custody and as of lately the hedonist-proletarian culture (hnakki culture) seems to be collapsing. The pessimists say that things will quickly go back to normal but they are wrong. Things have permanently changed in our young society, it has matured and it now has the chance to pass its adolescent years.

## HANNES H. GISSURARSON, POLITICAL SCIENCE PROFESSOR, UNIVERSITY OF ICELAND



Iceland has slowly been recovering from the fall of the Icelandic banks in the autumn of 2008. What has changed is that we now see more clearly that the fall of the banks was a result of external factors working on a vulnerable domestic situation. The difference is that the mistakes or miscalculations of the Icelandic banks have been brought to light whereas the shocking recklessness of many foreign banks, and other financial institutions, is being systematically hidden or obscured by massive public subsidies, by central banks in their countries simply pumping money into them. The unwillingness of the international community to help Iceland in her hour of desperate need may therefore have been a blessing in disguise. As a result, the banks fell, so we are not overburdened by public debt, like Greece and Ireland, and possibly some other European countries. Instead of subsidising and continuing our mistakes, we corrected them, at least to some extent.

We also see much more clearly now that the history of Iceland since

2007 Jóhanna Sigurðardóttir who was responsible for some of the worst mistakes that government made in finance (such as underfunded government mortgage loans which contributed to the Icelandic credit bubble).

In their thirst for vengeance, the present government ministers have gravely neglected Icelandic interests, as could be clearly seen from their soft position in the Icesave-dispute with the British and the Dutch governments. Those two governments had taken it upon themselves to pay out deposits in the Icelandic branches of the Icelandic Landsbanki, with full interest. The deposits were insured under EEA regulations by the Icelandic Insurance Fund for depositors and investors, an independent agency. When it became apparent that the Fund was not able to cover the outlays of the British and the Dutch governments, they demanded that the Icelandic government paid them what they had themselves voluntarily contributed, on their own initiative, to the balance sheet in the trade between two private groups, the depositors on the one hand and the failed Icelandic bank on the other hand. At the same time, the British government refused to acknowledge, let alone compensate, for the enormous damage

*"The Davíð Oddsson governments of 1991–2004 promoted fiscal and monetary stability, paying the public debt, liberalising the economy, privatising badly run companies, strengthening the pension funds, and creating a feasible way of utilising our fish stocks."*

1991 can be divided into three periods, first of stability, then of drift and lastly of vengeance. The Davíð Oddsson governments of 1991–2004 promoted fiscal and monetary stability, paying the public debt, liberalising the economy, privatising badly run companies, strengthening the pension funds, and creating a feasible way of utilising our fish stocks. The Geir Haarde governments of 2006–2009 just drifted, without sail or anchor. The ministers in the Jóhanna Sigurðardóttir governments since 2009 seem to be bent on just one issue, vengeance against their old political enemies who won most of the battles of the past and all of the arguments. This was shown by their 2009 assault on the independence of the Central Bank, just in order to get rid of Davíð Oddsson, then governor, and the only person of authority who had issued warnings against the vulnerability of the banks in a possible crisis. This was also shown by their extraordinary attempt to impeach Geir H. Haarde, who, inept and weak as he may have been, is as far from being a criminal as any person can be; and who incidentally included in his government since

it did when it brought down two Icelandic banks in England and for some time put the Icelandic Central Bank and the Icelandic Ministry of Finance on a list of terrorist organisations, alongside the Al Qaida and the Afghan Talibans, briefly stopping in the process almost all communication from Iceland, transfers and trade with the external world.

It was the Icelandic population, led by President Ólafur Ragnar Grímsson and former Prime Minister Davíð Oddsson, who said it loud and clear in two national referenda: We are not going to pay for the recklessness of either Icelandic bankers or of wealthy foreigners in pursuit of high interest rates. We bear no responsibility for these privately created obligations. We should not be worried, either, about international institutions trying to rally to the British and Dutch cause. Every day, the French or the Germans or the Italians break some EU regulation and are being reprimanded for it, without any consequences. Moreover, the Icesave-dispute will probably eventually disappear, as it seems that the failed Landsbanki has enough assets to cover liabilities such as deposits. It is also



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# Our (mostly) 2011-themed game of

# SNAKES & LADDERS!

By Hugleikur Dagsson & Lóa Hjálmtýsdóttir

## Snakes:

### 98 Don't be a priest...

### 78 That leads to perversion.

A number of sexual abuse cases within the national church surfaced this year, leading many to call for the Bishop's resignation due to his poor handling of these cases.

### 95 Don't be a dictator...

### 75 That leads to a knife in the rectum.

The world bid farewell to five dictators this year: Libyan dictator Muammar Gaddafi was murdered by his people, North Korea's Kim Jong-il died of a heart attack, Egypt's Hosni Mubarak and Yemen's Ali Abdullah Saleh resigned, and Tunisia's Zine al-Abidine Ben Ali fled amidst protest.

### 93 Don't count on the end of the world...

### 73 Monday will happen no matter what.

Harold Camping predicted that the world would end on October 21. It didn't.

### 87 Don't be a misogynistic narcissistic douchebag...

### 24 Sooner or later you'll get a rape charge.

Fitness trainer Egill 'Gillz' Einarsson—who graces Iceland's phonebook and has a TV show about manners—was charged with rape at the end of November. The investigation is pending.

### 64 Don't smoke "the dope"...

### 60 That leads to bad poetry.

Unless you're Allen Ginsberg, or another brilliant, dope-smoking poet.

### 62 Don't worry your pretty little head about IceSave...

### 19 IceSave will always be there. Always.

Just when we thought the never-ending IceSave saga was over, EFTA decided on December 15 to take Iceland to court for failing to pay the Brits and Dutch for three years.

### 56 Don't risk your life planking...

### 53 Because if you die in the process, you deserve it.

The act of 'planking' reached its peak in 2011. Remember planking? Neither do we.

### 49 Don't try to make it as a girlie band in America...

### 11 You'll turn into superfreaky slutbots.

The Charlies, formerly Nylon, moved to Los Angeles to make it big. They've been releasing some interesting videos...

### 47 If you're gonna make an Icelandic film...

### 26 Don't expect people to show up in the cinema. Damn philistines.

Bummer...

### 16 Don't get your hopes up for that polar bear zoo just yet...

### 6 Icelanders still haven't quenched their blood thirst.

In May, the fourth polar bear in three years swam ashore to Iceland. Much like its predecessors, the bear was promptly shot and killed.

## Ladders:

### 1 Greek economy collapses, threatening to take all of Europe with it...

### 38 Which is nice, since the focus isn't on us anymore!

Who's laughing now, Europe?

### 4 Move to Norway...

### 14 They have free jobs, ice cream and unicorn rides!

In the first six months of 2011, 700 Icelanders moved to Norway. In 2009 and 2010, they were 3,000.

### 9 Shit on other people's art...

### 31 Because that's how you make real art!

In May, controversy erupted over an art exhibition, 'Koddu', containing a piece called 'The World's Most Beautiful Book'.

### 21 Game of Thrones filming in Iceland? You know what that means...

### 42 Nerdgasm!

The show's crew was in Iceland this November filming scenes for a bunch for the Game of Thrones series. They hired a bunch of local extras.

### 28 Be kind to old people...

### 84 They have sweets!

This is hardly news!

### 36 Gay Pride is fun for everyone...

### 44 Except for straight middle aged men in suits. Fuck'em!

This August, Iceland put on its thirteenth annual Gay Pride festival attended by tens of thousands of people from all over the world.

### 51 Remember, if you don't charge for your concerts...

### 67 You will be king!

On December 22, Mugison—Iceland's biggest selling musical artist of 2011—held three free fantastic concerts at Harpa, which became the talk of the town.

### 71 Icelandic public television, like, totally sucks...

### 91 So why not spend your day outside in this glorious weather we're

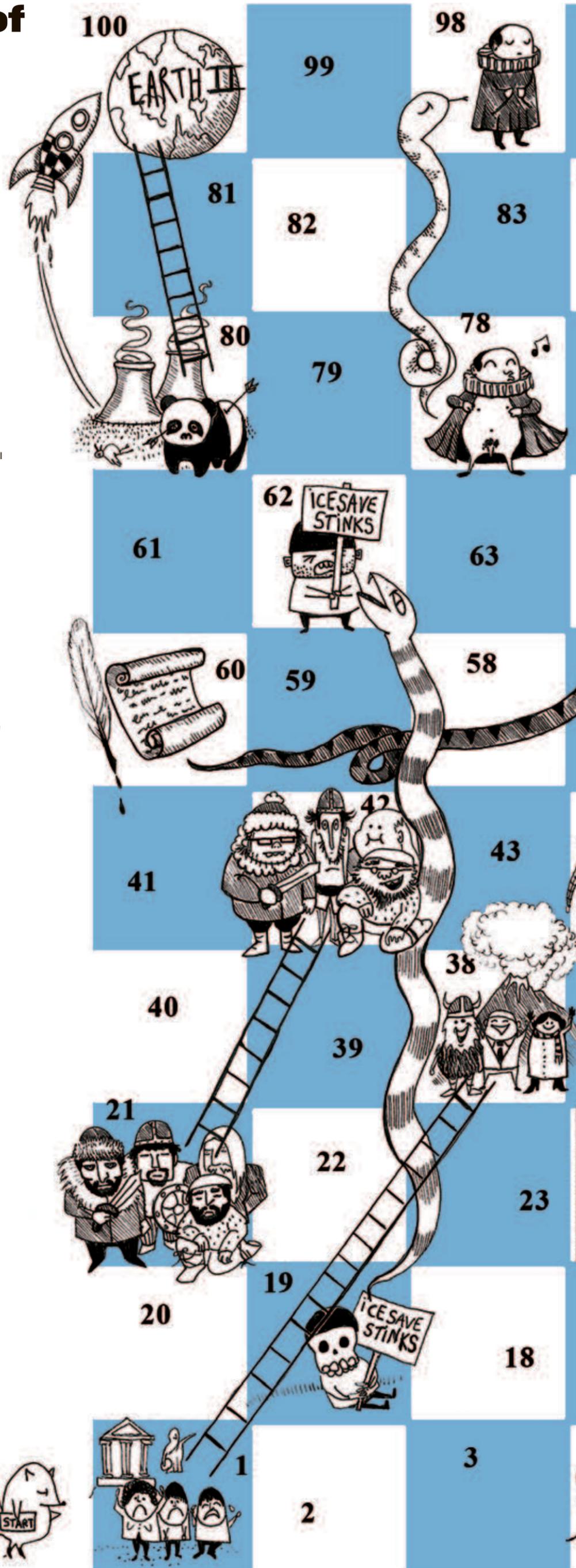
### having (twice a year or so)!

The króna is still pretty weak, which makes buying halfway decent shows and movies an expensive endeavour.

### 80 Who cares if we're destroying our planet...

### 100 We can always move to Kepler-22b!

NASA discovered an extrasolar planet dubbed Kepler-22b. They think it might be a Super-Earth.





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			10:00	10:00	10:00		
13:00	13:00	13:00	13:00	13:00	13:00	13:00	13:00
			14:00	14:00	14:00		
		17:00*	17:00	17:00	17:00	17:00*	
			20:30**	20:30	20:30**		

\* From 15 May to 15 September  
\*\* From 15 June to 15 August

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## Iceland | New and improved?

interesting that probably the assets of the three failed main Icelandic banks will be able to cover about 50% of their total liabilities, which is a much higher ratio than you see with failed banks in North America and Western Europe. This suggests that there is something more to the story than that the Icelandic bankers were only knaves and fools (probably they were no worse and no better than bankers elsewhere).

Iceland's recovery has been slow, and it has taken place despite the present left-wing government, not because it. The government has tried to dismantle two very efficient systems which were put in place in the 1990s: the tax regime, with relatively low, easily collectible and efficient taxes, and the system of managing the fisheries with individual transferable quotas. There is little awareness within the present government that wealth has to be created, not only redistributed. Iceland, with its good location, accessibility, skilled population and ample natural resources, still has many opportunities to become one of the most affluent countries in the world. Alas, at the moment it is ruled by petty, vengeful characters who put obstacles in the nation's way instead of removing them.

parently nobody knows, least of all 'our' so-called political leaders. NOTHING, because the system's still there, unchanging, apparently unchangeable—and for the ruling classes, it's business as usual, reckless voluptuousness based on the mirthless toil of the 99%.

What can we expect? Still more unrest, more police brutality, more states of exception, more rule-bending to serve the ruling few—and, hopefully, a growing, unstoppable counterforce against the powers that be, unsettling them, breaking up their ranks, reclaiming power, putting the demos back in democracy. On a global scale. Here, there and everywhere, from the first world to the third and vice versa.

Real democracy. For its time has come. The means are here, we know them, we have used them to great effect (think: Arab Spring)—and for the rulers, time is getting short: you better watch out...

## KATRÍN JAKOBSDÓTTIR, MINISTER OF EDUCATION, SCIENCE AND CULTURE



The thoughts I am now reflecting on appeared in this publication shortly after The Collapse (capital-

ised, nowadays) and are indicative of that—I foresaw a difficult 2009, but was hopeful for a shift in values and a changed society. Three years later I can say: The last three years have been difficult. We have not come as far as I had hoped, but we have made some headway. The SIC Report is in my opinion an important testimony of the fact that we investigated the collapse, and will hopefully result in us not repeating the same mistakes that lead us down this path.

I know various changes have been made in Icelandic governance and administration and am optimistic that those will bear positive results. I also believe our society is quickly headed out of the recession, equality has increased and we can see that our infrastructure—for instance our schools and our cultural institutions—stands firm.

I am not as convinced that our values have changed—perhaps they have to some extent, but not at all in as radical a way as I envisioned in the last days of 2008. Perhaps it takes more than three years for an entire society to reconcile with as hard a blow as The Collapse proved to be.

## HOPE KNÚTSSON, PSYCHIATRIC OCCUPATIONAL THERAPIST, PRESIDENT OF SÍMENN, THE ICELANDIC ETHICAL HUMANIST ASSOCIATION



I think we haven't gotten the whole story yet about what went wrong with Icelandic society although we have some more parts of it than we had two years ago. Until we do, I am reluctant to draw too many specific conclusions other than that I don't trust most politicians, economists, or any bankers. I am still not too optimistic about the ability of any leaders here to solve the complex, long-running problems this nation faces. Solutions to the massive screw-ups created by the governing parties over the past two decades require that people be very well organized, disciplined, have excellent communication skills, and work in an open and transparent manner.

Unfortunately none of these skills are very common in Icelanders.

## SIGGI PÖNK, MUSICIAN, ACTIVIST, NURSE



After the optimism of the 'pots and pans' uprising, which was my first experience of massive unity, the public now shares a general state of disappointment. This is a democratic disappointment, as nothing has changed, except that the outlines of the power pyramid that dominates our lives have become clearer while at the same time appearing more unchangeable. I could optimistically quote the British philosopher Simon Critchley, who maintains that all philosophy and possibility of change has its roots in disappointment. But I myself am disappointed and tired and at the moment concerned with saving my own life from the surrealistic distortion of reality that capitalistic representative democracy, peppered with nationalism, offers and too few seem to see anything wrong with. Goodbye.

## BJÖRN ÞORSTEINSSON, PHILOSOPHER



Everything and nothing has changed. EVERYTHING, because in January 2009, Iceland was in turmoil, but we were already being told that this particular country was only 'the canary in the coal mine', and that the rest of the world would follow. Which is just what happened, or, rather, is happening: unbelievable. But true. And we don't know how it will end, ap-

## AFTAKA.ORG, ANARCHIST ORCHESTRA



From agriculture to nanotechnology, through the Enlightenment, Industrial Revolution and an alleged End of History, the history of mankind has been a history of repression of the individual. Under the yoke of church and state, economical systems and property rights, technological development, society and morality, individuals' dreams and desires for freedom have been crushed in the name of the so-called interests of the masses.

But the history of human kind is also a history of the rebellion of individuals who have struggled their way from under the rules of their oppressors and attacked them, alone or in union with others, expanded their deepest longings far beyond the framework of the permissible, blamelessly followed their own sense of justice albeit at odds with the bourgeois justice, refused to confess to the idea of a better society after a revolution, and instead created and lived in accordance with their own ideas, here and now.

During the last three years, considerable changes may well have occurred in many people's minds. But essentially, these years have operated as a well oiled machine in the metronomic rhythm of history. If anything, the repression seems to have proliferated. Wilderness decreases and Caesar Au-

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## Iceland | New and improved?

gustus' registration of the entire world is still taking place, increasingly accurate and effective as history repeats itself more frequently.

Therefore, precisely, individuals should learn from their rebellious predecessors: how they have consistently nosed out exits, not hesitated in creating these exits if they don't already exist; and not in the least if, and then how and why, they have failed. All of this, not in order to follow their exact footsteps, but to be inspired, to diligently choose weapons and create one's own path while walking.

### HAUKUR V. ALFREDSSON MUSICIAN, JOURNALIST



The people in charge sure have turned completely gray in colour. And so many people are just so angry. It's like an addiction. The angry people are now able to get their fix wherever and whenever they want.

*"I think we haven't gotten the whole story yet about what went wrong with Icelandic society although we have some more parts of it than we had two years ago."*

I've had it with anger and bad attitude. The kreppa is dead to me. Now I'm just waiting for the new James Bond film. Let's all just do that.

### KRISTÍN BJÖRK KRISTJÁNSDÓTTIR, MUSICIAN



As satisfying as it could be to blast out something that I feel has drastically changed between now and then, it really is a bit obscure to me. Except that lately I feel like there's a new sense of raw and wild, something pure and untamed splattering about in visual art especially but also in music. Less focus on shiny polished, more on guts, intuition and energy.

Actually I spend a lot of time abroad, but this is my experience from the lay of the art and music land when I'm in town.

Speaking of which, the best piece of new music I saw played live last year is by composer Hlynur Aðils Vilmarsson, performed live at the Dark Music Days Festival in Listasafn Íslands. Not that I ever heard anything but wonder coming from this secretive, unassuming genius boy.

The most memorable concert I saw last year was Ben Frost, solo at the Berghain club in Berlin. It's a great inspiration to see a solo artist channel his music in a live situation with as much confidence—a perfect example of how engaging electronic music can be live with some guts and sparkle.

One of the most fun musical discoveries of the year for me was a girl from Ghana called Oy, who I saw play during Iceland Airwaves. Her set totally blew my mind! I'm sure it was her that conjured the lightning that struck Iðnó while she was playing. Her new record, 'First Box Then Walk' is a very exciting, witty piece of work. I could go on forever about all kinds of crazy amazing music that moved me last year, but you'd need a special issue for that.



### ÞORVALDUR GYLFASSON, ECONOMICS PROFESSOR, UNIVERSITY OF ICELAND

Oh, lots of things have changed. For starters, the IMF has now left the stage, having helped Iceland to weather the crisis with money and, more importantly, as always, advice.

Like it or not, the technical know-how necessary to navigate the treacherous waters engulfing Iceland as the banks collapsed in 2008 did not exist in the country's civil service, and so foreign assistance was absolutely essential. Had the authorities—to avoid losing face—asked the Nordic coun-

tries for help rather than the Fund, the Nordics would almost surely have directed Iceland to the Fund, the world's chief source of expertise in dealing with deep banking crises. So, the IMF was the only game in town, with significant input from the Nordics. Not even the political opposition in parliament, let alone civic society, proposed serious alternatives to the Fund-supported rescue operation.

And now, three years after the crash, the economy is beginning to grow again, partly because the exchange rate of the króna appears at long last to be roughly correct, which is good for exports as well as for domestic firms competing with imports. It follows that unemployment is remarkably low. Even so, inflation remains too high and too many households find it difficult to make ends meet. Eurostat reports that 13 percent of Icelandic households find it very difficult to make ends meet compared with 2 percent to 4 percent in Denmark, Finland, Norway, and Swe-

den. In our part of Europe, only Spain (14 percent), Portugal (20 percent), Greece (24 percent), and Latvia (24 percent) have relatively more households in such dire straits. Where it counts, Iceland has clearly parted company with the Nordics.

So, Iceland still has miles to go.

Besides, it remains to be seen how the IceSave twist will play out in court. It appears quite possible that Iceland will be required to pay a significantly higher amount of money than was stipulated in the agreement between the Icelandic, British, and Dutch governments that was defeated in the second IceSave referendum of 2011. It also remains to be seen how the cases expected to be brought by the Special Prosecutor against those suspected of having robbed the banks from within and others will fare in court.

As I see it, the cleanup after the crash must rest on two pillars to achieve its purpose: first, the economic reform and reconstruction now underway, and, second, court cases against those suspected of having broken the law. The nine-volume, 2,300-page report of the Special Investigation Committee of the parliament paved the way. The Financial Supervisory Authority has referred to the Special Prosecutor almost 80 cases of suspected violations of the law in connection with the crash. The total number of cases is expected to exceed 100 when all is said and done. Attempts to unseat the post-crash director of the FSA have thus far failed.

How long will it take for Iceland to regain economic and social parity with the Nordics? This is impossible to know. For one thing, no one knows how long the rather stringent capital controls will remain in force, controls that were originally intended to last only two to three years and should, therefore, have been out of the way by now. Also, no one knows whether the political class will revert to its nasty old habits now that the IMF is no longer calling the shots from short distance. Further, no one knows how the cases against those who pushed Iceland off the cliff will fare in court.

A failure by the authorities to produce convictions—to make the culprits behind the crash face justice—may have a demoralising effect on the population to the point of triggering significant exodus from the country, to Norway and other places. This must not happen. The country cannot afford it. Economics and law, efficiency and fairness, must go hand in hand. ☘

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2011 | Music

Bored of year-end lists that usually don't even manage to tell half the story, we decided to attempt a different approach at summing up 2011 in music.

Firstly, we got some of our most ardent music writers to pick just ONE Icelandic album from 2011 that they felt was somehow significant or meaningful and then write a short article about it; why they felt it mattered, why it is important. Do note that their instructions explicitly noted: "You don't have to pick THE BEST album of 2011, just one you feel is particularly significant for some reason. You might even hate the album you're writing about."

Then, we called up a bunch of musicians we know and asked them to tell us about an album that played a big part in their year for whatever reason. We told them the albums didn't need to have been released in 2011 or anything—just to name an album that was important to them, and tell us why.

You can read the results in the next few pages.

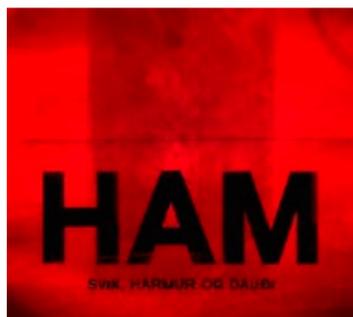
## SIGNIFICANT MUSIC OF 2011

### A VERY UNKOSHER COMEBACK

**HAM** get all significant on our grills in 2011

By Rebecca Louder

I spent the better part of the autumn titts-deep in local music, sifting through the good, the bad and the barftastically ugly new albums on the market. But out of the many, many Icelandic records that were released this past year none have stood out as more distinctive and notable to me than that great old meaty band HAM's 'Svik, harmur og dauði.' Let's be honest, very few artists of any genre or status level can pull off even a half-decent comeback album after twenty years out of the studio, but HAM are not just any band.



I had never even heard of them before July, when word came to me from fellow writer Bob Cluness of their performance at the last Eistnaflug festival—a degenerate, debauchorous, giant den of iniquity presided over by Sigurjón Kjartansson's doomy sermons and Óttar Proppé's wretched, crackling voice. By the time their album was released at the end of August, their first full-length studio album in 22 years, this band's historical mystique had been so strongly impressed on me that I was afraid it was all just a crack-up.

But holy shit. This music has its own aura. Having started out in the late '80s as a group of slapdash, underdog rockers, they were basically the most hated band in the country when they put out their first record. Reviled by critics and music-lovers alike, they pretty much went ahead without giving a shit and managed to put out an album which would enter the canon of local heavy music and put them as the musical centrepiece of one of Iceland's most famous movies, 'Sódóma Reykjavík.' They went as quickly as they came though, leaving the faint smell of the smokehouse in the air and dangling threats of select reunion shows (which they made good on to open for Rammstein and such). They turned into some kind of fatty, crispy unicorn.

So it seemed like no one really believed this album would ever happen

### BRIDGING THE GAP

#### Björk - Biophilia

By Berggrún Anna Hallsteinsdóttir

In all honesty, I haven't listened very consistently to 'Biophilia,' the latest piece of aural artwork by Björk. It is without a doubt a good album, but to me it has an intensity to it that means I have to be in a certain mood to hear it, and therefore it hasn't been on high rotation in my music collection. In saying this, it may seem strange that I feel it has been one of the most important albums produced this year. Presumably, albums of importance are albums you listen to a lot. Albums that speak to you on a deeper level. Albums that move you. That kinda thing. 'Biophilia' does none of these things for me. However, 'Biophilia' is important on a different level. All music aside, and to make a rather grand statement, it is a watershed album of our time.

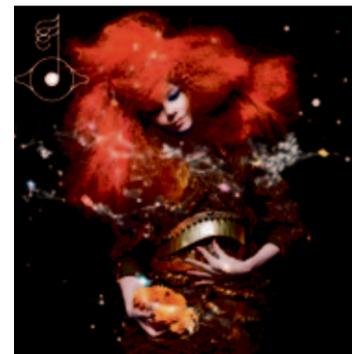
For those not in the know, as well as being a standard CD release, Biophilia consists of a series of ten apps, all housed in one 'main' app, which correlate to the tracks of the album, giving listeners the opportunity to interact with, expand on and essentially 'play' with the album. It is not just an album, but an evolving creation, in a symbiotic relationship with its listeners. What Björk has created is not just the usual collection of tracks which form

an album, it is a multimedia experience. While she may not be the first artist to create this kind of app-album combo, she is certainly the first to combine the mediums of art and science on this level.

Whilst I sing the praises of this techno-triumph, I must say that musically, I have mixed feelings about certain aspects of the digital age. It often seems like despite all of technology's positive possibilities, we are heading down a path of technological gluttony, ignoring what is to be gained from the progress we've made in favour of instant gratification. Sometimes I miss the simple pleasure found in the rhythm of taking a vinyl LP out of its sleeve, putting it on the turntable and hearing its satisfying crackle and hiss as it begins to turn. Am bored by the... easiness of things? Sometimes.

However, with this album, I (gulp) put my prejudices aside. We live in an age of choice and opportunity, and with 'Biophilia,' Björk is embracing the positive possibilities of technology and offering up a whole new musical experience, in a sense getting us to interact with music again, but in a new way. The strands of this digital era that Björk grasps in her crafting of 'Biophilia'—interaction, innovation, creativity (to name a few)—are things this generation can be grateful for and are therefore well worth employing in the creation of an album.

What appeals to me so much with



'Biophilia' is this interactive nature of it. It's not just about plugging yourself in and sitting there zoned out, drooling slightly. There is something more to it. A new path, a new direction. That alone, without any musical genius involved, is enough to make it an important album. But further to this, it is also one of those rare things which bridges the gap between different worlds, connecting science, art and technology in one fell swoop. And that is not to be sneezed at. ☺

#### Anna Margrét Björnsson - Two Step Horror

*Dirty Beaches - Badlands (2011)*



Roy Orbison. A true diamond that appeals to me strongly.

'Badlands' is the biggest hands-down genius in the world as of late. As Dirty Beaches, Alex Zhang Hungtai has created a masterpiece, a very special album and certainly one of the more important releases of the last few years. This is in part due to the fact that it circumvents all the indie-clichés that have been rampant for the past decade—it feels like David Lynch crossed with Alan Vega and

#### Lára Rúnarsdóttir - Lára

*PJ Harvey - Let England Shake (2011)*



My album of 2011 is without doubt PJ Harvey's 'Let England Shake.' PJ Harvey is my biggest musical influence and role model. She is true to herself, provocative and fierce. The best thing about her is that she dares, and is willing to make mistakes. Seamus Murphy's documentary on the album, which was shown at RIFF, further deepened my love for this album.

The most wonderful things about it are how well orchestrated and effortless it is. PJ Harvey writes about tough subjects on this album, and she does it without pretence or strain. An example: "I have seen and done things I want to forget; soldiers fell like lumps of meat, blown and shot out beyond belief; arms and legs were in the trees."

This topic is no joke, but she manages to put it forth without overt drama. It's life, in all its seriousness.

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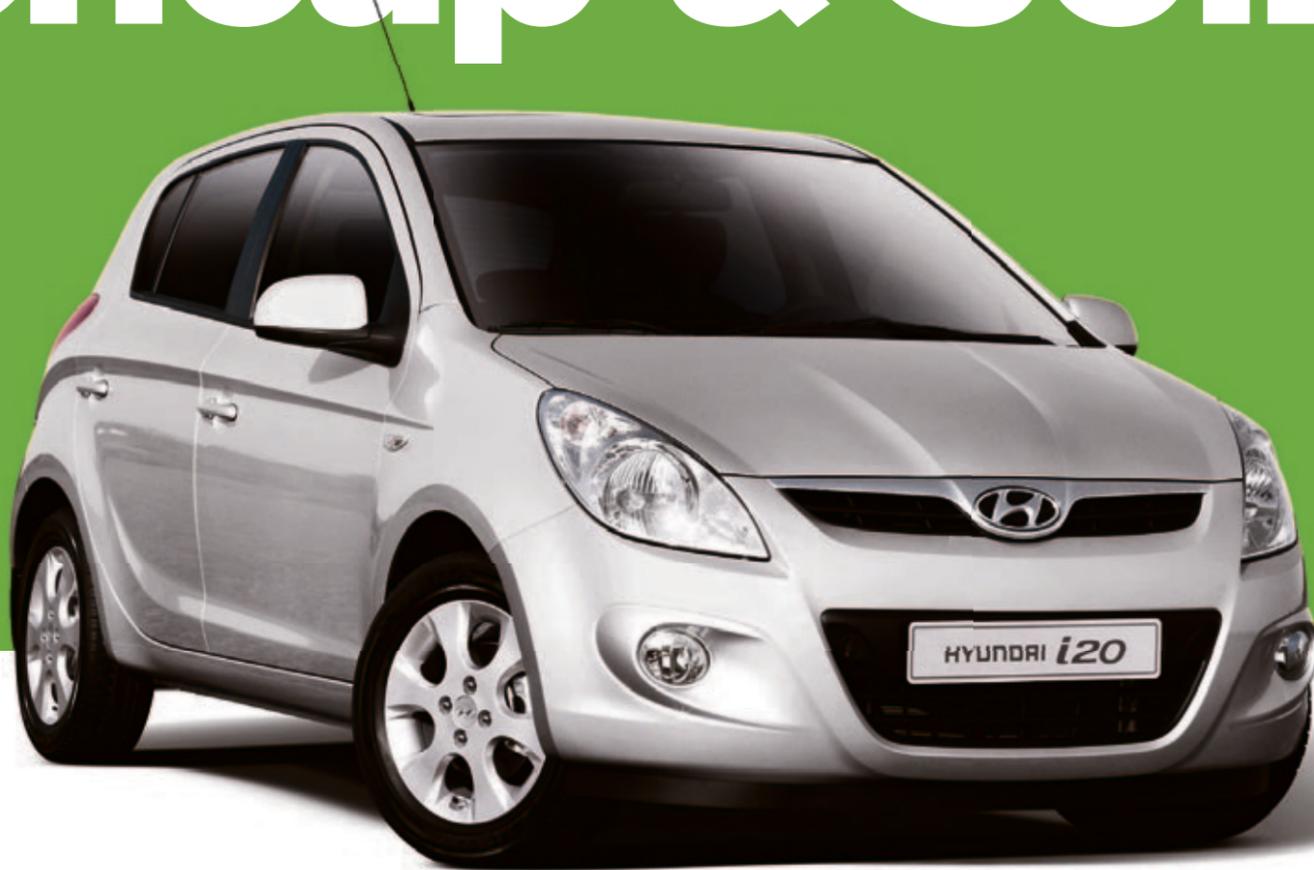
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2011 | Music

Futureographer

Ashra – *New Age Of Earth* (1976)



I enjoyed many walks and meditative moments accompanied by this album. The most memorable instance was as I was falling asleep in a tent at the Extreme Chill festival with fellow musicians Tonik and Krummi, with the song 'Deep Distance' blaring on my headphones and I could hear the boys snoring, the wind playing off our tent and the music... I flew into another dimension. An unforgettable moment. Skurken's 'Gilsbakki' is the best Icelandic album of the year, in my opinion.

Sigurjón Kjartansson, HAM

DAF – *Alles Ist Gut* (1981) / ABBA – *The Visitors* (1981)



Aside from the obvious mention, 'Svík harmur og dauði'—which truly captivated my heart and soul in 2011—I have been slowly reclaiming and renewing my vinyl collection, which had mostly disappeared into various storage spaces. The albums that I listened to the most in 2011 come from that aforementioned vinyl collection, and they are for some reason exactly thirty years old. Firstly, there is DAF's (Deutsche Amerikanische Freundschaft) 'Alles Ist Gut' from 1981, which I bought from Ási Grammið [now of Smekkleysa] in the spring of 1984! On the other hand there is ABBA's 'The Visitors' from that same year, which was the Swedish super quartet's swan song. I cannot discriminate between these two (vinyl) albums.

I have furthermore been renewing my relationship with Swans, and to this effect downloaded a bootleg recording of a concert of theirs that I attended in London in 1987. Like stepping into a time machine.

I am mostly unfamiliar with the music that was released in 2011. However, I do listen up when it comes to Sólstafr, who made an intriguing album, as well as the bands Ég and Nolo.

Tanya Pollock, PLX/Weirdcore



I don't know if I have a fun answer to this. I don't really have an album of the year, but I do have a musician of the year. I lost my best friend in 2011. His name was Sigurbjörn Þórgriðsson, and listening to his music—everything he did with Ajax, or as Babel or Biogen—provides great comfort. He was a wonderful musician, a beautiful person, everyone's best friend and a total Jedi. He lives on in the music: legends never die.

Berndsen



This is way too hard a question! So many good releases this year! However, since I am a big synth guy, I will admit I thought GusGus, Hermigervill and FM Belfast released the best albums this year. I even bought them all on vinyl, which isn't something I do a lot of.

Myrra Rós

Bon Iver – *Bon Iver* (2011)

Bon Iver's new album has been in heavy rotation on my stereo throughout the year. The arrangements are such a fun leap forward from 'For Emma, Forever Ago,' which I also loved. He is exploring all sorts of bigger ideas, and through some research I learned that a fellow called Sean Carey, who plays drums and sings backing vocals in Bon Iver, has a lot to do with this. Sean performs on his own as S. Carey, and released his first album, 'We All Grow,' in 2010. That record has a similar tone to that of the new Bon Iver one, and it seems he contributed some good things to it.

DRUNK ON POSSIBILITY

GusGus – *Arabian Horse*

By Valgerður Þóroddsdóttir

Everyone I talked to seemed to sense it. Seemed to feel the need to say it. It was not just that GusGus' latest effort was more than great; it was that its exceptionalism seemed to signal something. It suggested a blossoming. Heralded a musical ripening.

Indeed, with 'Arabian Horse,' GusGus has emerged from the crib of local infamy—from years' worth of shape-shifting and incessant reinvention—as a fully-fledged sexual being. Having flirted with international recognition for over fifteen years—since their inception in 1995—GusGus released this year an album that may just succeed in seducing a foreign audience in a big way.

For when it comes to the music of GusGus, the requisite metaphor is always sex. And when it comes to talking about sex in 2011, we must pay homage, briefly, reluctantly, to the great metaphor that is the-year-2007.

It was the year of 'Forever,' GusGus' first release in five years, one of their many rebirths. It was also, now infamously, the year of a certain teen-age for Iceland. Better said, it was the end of a phase—one I would liken to senior year in high school: a time when for unclear and possibly unmerited reasons, one is confident, contemptuous

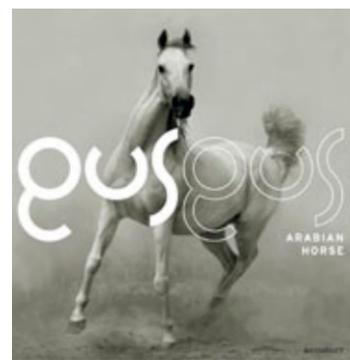
of authority, and bloated with a sense of ruling the school; all the while standing—unwittingly—at the precipice of the great existential anticlimax that is college.

In any case, as a self-assured 17/18-year-old in 2007, I was on the same page as Iceland. The world was my dancefloor; and 'Forever'—straightforward, optimistic, and silky smooth—was for me that moment-in-time distilled; Forever sparkled like the champagne bottle of a reality that I swam in.

The ten songs on 'Arabian Horse' are likewise a distillation—this time of everything that has been great about GusGus over the past decade-and-a-half. 'Arabian Horse' is like the older, more mature brother to 'Forever,' although to some extent the album draws on elements from all of the band's six previous full-lengths.

I remember the excitement surrounding the 2011 release: the band's first to go Gold in Iceland. Loyal fans whispered words like 'commercially viable'—not as a discredit to the album, but with a sigh of relief. The consensus being that all the experimenting had culminated—congealed the band's strengths—into a transcendent effort. What followed was not only a sense of awe that they could just keep getting better with time but, more importantly, a sense that this album deserved to be courted by ears of the bigger world-stage.

'Arabian Horse' does nearly to per-



fection what GusGus as a band has always done, though somewhat less potently on previous releases. It bottles a moment-in-time. It harnesses a feeling. To me it is that feeling of controlled chaos that is dancing at a packed-like-a-can-of-sweaty-sardines club-of-a-certain-disposition in downtown Reykjavík after the fall of the empire. I'm talking about the hopeless familiarity of it all; of closing your eyes and pretending that your dirty laundry is not hanging out to dry right there above the bar for everyone to see; of imagining instead that you are in a bubble. Drunk on possibility. Yes! Floating on a stream of alcoholic carbonation. 17 again in spirit except this time with a little living under your belt. Fully fledged. Sleek as a stallion. Dancing to that perfectly simple beat, everything going terribly right. Acceptance. Surrender. Reykjavík. ☘

RIPE MANGO MAN MAKES AN ALBUM

Snorri Helgason – 'Winter Sun'

By Dr. Gunni

Snorri Helgason's second album, *Winter Sun*, is my favorite album of 2011. It isn't necessarily THE BEST album of 2011—I mean, who am I to say what is BEST?—it is just the one that I liked most to put on my Winamp and listen to over and over again, especially right after I woke up (at between 5 and 6 am) and blast through my earphones as I sipped the first litre or so of black, black coffee (with G-milk). Previously the other albums that have served a similar purpose have been Elvis Costello's 'Armed Forces,' The Stooges' 'Raw Power' and ELO's 'Discovery.'

But really, isn't that what makes for a good album? Being able to listen to it over and over again without getting bored with it? And getting some kind of nice feeling out of the experience?

Snorri, if you recall, was the musical brain behind this Icelandic smart ass pop band, Sprengjuhöllin, who exploded in 2007 with their debut album and imploded in 2008 with their second, way-too-ambitious album. Snorri's first solo album, the simple sounding 'I'm Gonna Put My Name On Your Door'

(2009) was alright I guess, but the new one is just so much better. In my five star review for *Fréttatíminn*, I likened Snorri's songwriting talents to him being perfectly ripe at that moment. I said something like: If Snorri was a mango he should be eaten right now. Yes, I have way too often likened the music listening experience to the eating experience.

Snorri is a music nerd. He even had a radio show presenting nerdy pop music history details before he moved to London to try to "make it." He likes his '60s and '70s singer-songwriter stuff, and pop and rock and all that so you can hear traces of The Beatles, Beach Boys, Lovin' Spoonfuls, Harry Nilsson et al in his songs. He plays the (acoustic) guitar and sings in a mellow laid back way. It's never particularly retro, as Sindri Már Sigfússon (of Sin Fang and Seabear fame) produces the album and puts on a layer of modern indie sheen (not an overwhelmingly thick layer, though).

I deem 'Winter Sun' the feelgood album of the year. It's so nice, warm and abundant in catchy melodies. The general feel of the album is bright and sunny. The songs are usually slow and laid back, not at all full of sorrow and pain. In step with his I-have-been-staying-in-a-mountain-hut beard, Snorri sings in a rather manly voice, and not with the boring indie whine that is way too common these days and must sicken everybody that is not a young idiot.



I think the good Icelandic music stuff will keep on pouring out in 2012, and I hope Snorri makes some new stuff and will still be ripe. Here are ten other very good Icelandic albums of 2011 in alphabetical order:

- GusGus – 'Arabian Horse' \*\*\*\*\*
- Ham – 'Svík, harmur og dauði' \*\*\*\*\*
- Hellvar – 'Stop That Noise' \*\*\*\*\*
- Hljómveitin Ég – 'Ímynd fíflsins' \*\*\*\*\*
- Lay Low – 'Brostinn strengur' \*\*\*\*\*
- Mugison – 'Haglé' \*\*\*\*\*
- Reykjavík! – 'Locust Sounds' \*\*\*\*\*
- Saktmóðigur – 'Guð hann myndi gráta' \*\*\*\*\*
- Song For Wendy – 'Meeting Point' \*\*\*\*\*
- Sykur – 'Mesópótamía' \*\*\*\*\*

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2011 | Music

NEW RAVE RISING

Möller Record's 'Helga' compilation showed an electronic scene in rude health

By Bob Cluness

So in 2011, did you gaze on as Iceland's culture industries became increasingly synergised and emboldened, pushing, promoting and hyping the Icelandic music "brand" to all who'd listen? And did you groan as the Icelandic music being championed increasingly resembled a homogenous lump, sounding like all the other dross out there, save for a big shiny "Made In Iceland!" sticker slapped on it (if it's from Iceland, it must be better, right?)?

Well quit your fucking whining and stop being such a pussy. Despite the ever present alt-mainstream circle jerk, if you looked hard enough this year, there were people making all sorts of music, fun and noise, playing their own game, not a cutesy lopapeysa nor glacier in sight.

Nowhere was this more evident than with Iceland's electronic music scene. After the relative dormancy of the last few years, which saw electronic artists band together in numerous collectives—much like settlers hunker down for the winter—2011 saw an upsurge in creative energy and activity from all involved.

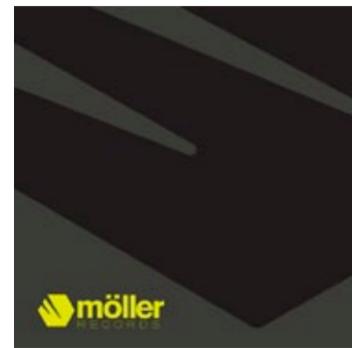
Everywhere you looked there was something interesting going on. On the broadcasting front, the guys from drum & bass collective Breakbeat.is upped their game in seeking out and mainlining the best bass sounds around, their Saturday evening show on X-ið 97.7 becoming THE ONLY THING worth listening to on Icelandic radio. Meanwhile, the scene's experimental faction saw much noise blasting frenzy, with some amazing shows as well as releases from the likes of AMFJ, Hljóðaklettur Records, and Reptilicus (their first in thirteen years).

But the scene's big development in 2011 was the creation of electronic music label Möller Records. Birthed by Jóhann 'Skurken' Ómarsson and Árni 'Futuregrapher' Grétar, the label curated a brace of releases from artists such as Fu Kaisha, Murya, Prince Valíum and Steve Sampling, as well as Futuregrapher and Skurken themselves.

All this energy culminated at the end of the year with the release of the label's first compilation, 'Helga'. Originally compiled as a collection of tunes for Icelandair's entertainment system, it was made freely available to the public as a digital download. And as a snapshot of where Icelandic electronic music is in 2011, you'd be hard pressed to find a clearer statement.

There's very little slack or deadwood within the compilation. We're treated to a variety of styles and beats that range from the sombre, new age influenced ambience of Prince Valíum ('Efni'), to the skittering kinetic rhythms of Fu Kaisha ('Porth') and the FSOL influenced shuffle of Futuregrapher ('Untitled Acid For Skurken'). What's interesting though is that you're listening to artists who look to be at a pivotal stage in the evolution of their craft. Steve Sampling's music is progressing nicely from hip hop into a meaty soundtrack-based garage/2-step sound, while Fu Kaisha's tunes are ripe for a juke/footwork workout. But the real buzz is with HaZaR and his tightly wound bass manoeuvres in 'Gullikal'. Listening to this, as well as his other tracks on Soundcloud, it obvious we're observing the creation of Iceland's first true exponent of "wobble" bass music. Fun times!

So 2011 saw a re-awakening within the scene, but in reality it's 2012 where the real fun/work begins. Out there in the big bad non-Icelandic world, electronic music is going through a period of change/mutation not seen since the heady days of hardcore rave and jungle. And while it's great many local artists are uploading stuff onto Soundcloud and releasing material through Band-



camp, it's only just the beginning.

The people of Iceland need to loosen their parochial shackles and start getting in on the act, infiltrating, listening, absorbing, reworking and bending those interesting new sounds to their will and throwing them right back out there. As for the artists, they need to harness the power and potential that rests within social media—reaching out to like-minded people, making friends, creating alliances, building their rep, etc. In other words, Icelandic electro artists need to hustle old-school style, to make themselves heard through the bitstorm.

With the looming prospect of cheap flights to and from Europe next year, along with our ever expanding digital climate, the age old orthodoxy/excuse that music and trends arrive in Iceland 3-5 years after everyone else is no longer valid. Man it's gonna be a fun ride. [www.mollerrecords.com](http://www.mollerrecords.com)

Further Listening:

- AMFJ - 'Bæn'
- Reptilicus - 'Initial Conditions 7'
- Futuregrapher - 'Tom Tom Bike'
- Bix - 'Animalog'

Sindri Már Sigfússon, Seabear / Sin Fang  
Hauschka at Iceland Airwaves



Hard as I've tried, I just can't think of an album to name. I didn't listen to enough records last year. Instead, I'd like to tell you about my favourite live performance of 2011. And that was definitely Hauschka at Iceland Airwaves, playing at Fríkirkjan. That show was mind-blowing—the best concert I've seen in a long time, and definitely the best I saw last year.

I wasn't familiar with Hauschka's music before the show but I'd assumed he played easy-going piano compositions, as my friend Samuli Kosminen has been performing with the man and I'd gleamed that he was a pianist. Boy was I wrong. Using a prepared piano—equipped with balloons, ping-pong balls and other stuff—and Samuli's drumming, they played a kind German techno that eventually had me dancing in my seat and headnodding.

It blew me away; it was nothing like what I'd expected. And then I learned after the show that large parts of it had been improvised. That's some great musicianship right there.

Aðalbjörn Tryggvason, Sólstafir  
Anathema - 'We're Here Because We're Here'



When I first heard Anathema back in the early '90s, they were young Liverpool kids playing doom metal—they did that for ten years and I never particularly liked it. But then in 1999, they turned into something wonderful, like a cross between that one good Coldplay song, 'Clocks,' and Pink Floyd, and I subsequently rediscovered them and have been a fan since.

It's not often that bands get better as they go on—usually they'll get worse and worse—but this one keeps getting fucking better! And 'We're Here Because We're Here' is just brilliant.

I'd also like to mention the new HAM album. I first heard it pre-release while at Eistnaflug. I was dead drunk with some mates, grilling horse sausages, when a friend turns up with a copy on his iPod. I was stunned. I couldn't utter a word. I've been a big HAM junkie forever—they were a big influence on me growing up—and hearing their new stuff in such circumstances just floored me. Repeated listening upon the album's release revealed the album has two or three fillers, but it's still a monster of a record.

Sóley  
Beach House - Teen Dream



I listened a lot to this one—well, the entire Beach House catalogue—for the first part of 2011, around the time I was recording my album. Thinking back I feel it is sort of indicative of my year; even though it didn't directly influence my writing I definitely kept the band in mind. Everything just sounds wonderful, and a little spooky as well. Victoria Legrand's voice is really something.

I first fell in love with the band when I was playing the Haldern Pop festival with Seabear and caught a performance. I had liked them previously, but there was something about that performance that totally caught me. Beach House are not a single band, the albums need to be consumed as a whole, more about sound and texture than specific tracks.

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## EMBRACE THE CRAZY!

Ragnar Kjartansson and Markús Þór Andrússon discuss Icelandic art in 2011

When we last spoke to artist Ragnar Kjartansson in the spring of 2009, he was on his way to represent Iceland at the 53rd edition of The Venice Biennale. A lot has happened for Ragnar since then—he's staged exhibitions and performances all over the world, making quite the name for himself and scoring favourable nods and write-ups in fancy art magazines. It's safe to say he is 'the rising star of the Icelandic artworld'.

To recap visual art in 2011, we thus thought it a good idea to get Ragnar together with curator Markús Þór Andrússon, who is an old friend and long-time collaborator of Ragnar's, as well as a rising star in his own right.

**First question: Who is Markús Þór Andrússon?**

**Ragnar Kjartansson:** Markús studied visual arts at the Icelandic Academy of Arts, before moving on to curatorial studies at Bard in the US. When you make art, you collect pieces and create something out of them. As curator, Markús sort of collects emotions that come from artists all over the world and creates shows out of them, making his statements in that manner.

Working with a curator is similar to being a musician and recording with a producer; he brings ideas to the table and shapes the work. Gathering what's already there and making it presentable,

### Words

Haukur S. Magnússon

### Photo

Julia Staples

as well as developing ideas. Engaging artists in discourse and finding a course or path for their work. And Markús has been doing this for the past few years. He is a very poetic curator, and a very practical. He and Dorothée [Kirch, director of the Icelandic Art Center] curated my show at the Venice Biennale—I've of course worked with Markús in various capacities over the years.

**Markús Þór Andrússon:** My graduation show from Bard was collaboration with Ragnar...

**RK:** ...and that show led to me working with a gallery in New York. I think we've affected each other's fate in several ways; at least he's affected my life greatly.

**Then, who is Ragnar Kjartansson?**

**MPA:** Well, mirror to that, Ragnar and his art are important influences on my work. He is one of the artists that have recently given us a much-needed kick in the rear, a reminder to ponder what's important in life. He is pointing the way forward. We are retreating from this kind of formal and spatial art, or socio-political art, and inwards, into the field of emotions.

**RK:** Exactly. Markús curated a show in Canada, 'Emotional Blackmail', that was about this exactly. We had many discussions about where art might be headed. It's turning inwards and becoming more emotional than it's been for a while.

**This seems an odd time to announce 'the end' of discursive, critical art. Are you declaring a war on socio-political art?**

**RK:** I want the petite bourgeoisie to be able to enjoy themselves again, to enjoy a cosy time once more!

**MPA:** We fortunately inhabit times where everything can thrive along with everything else. We are not at the sort of mod-

ernistic peak where people commit murder because they disagree with someone or their art. There is of course space for multitudes. But this is where we seem to be headed; this is what turns us on at the moment. Perhaps we are turning away from art that—to quote Morrissey—"...says nothing to me about my life." Art has to have something one can connect to as a human, as a person. Space, material and abstract concepts are of course relevant to us, but they are somewhat limiting on a human level. Perhaps as intellectual beings, but not as emotional ones. The critique in these forms is very cold and analytical.

The imperative is now to take our discourse to an area where the emotional spectrum is taken more seriously than it has been as a yardstick on values. This is something you hear about, read about and feel a need for. It's like the old cliché about emotional arguments in the Kárahnjúkar dam dispute, that feelings are one thing and 'real issues' are another and the two are not to be confused. One could argue the world works that way, but it's also a form you can play around with. Emotional arguments for social or environmental affairs can be just as weighty as 'concrete' as 'political' ones.

**RK:** And usually, emotional arguments are buried within, and masked by, the material ones. That's what politics amount to.

**MPA:** Politicians adopt the language of their trade, and its tone disguises the emotional content, even though it's there. Our good friend Ólafur Eliasson recently opened a show he called 'Your Emotional Future'. He words this pretty clearly—he is so well spoken—that our emotions entail

CONTINUES ON PAGE 28

## E-Democracy Takes Off In Reykjavík

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 12

The City has allocated 300 million ISK to the aptly named Better Neighbourhood project. These funds will be divided between Reykjavík's ten neighbourhoods.

Ideas will be accepted until January 16 when the administration determines the cost of the proposed ideas. Then in March, people will be able to electronically select from those ideas and place them on their proposed budget for the neighbourhood.

"Every citizen creates their own budget and this is a binding vote," Róbert explains.

Such direct participatory democracy in budgeting has been practiced in Porto Alegre, Brazil since 1989 as well as elsewhere in the world, most recently in New York. In this case, citizens will be involved in the entire process, from coming up with the ideas to putting them into the budget.

### THE CITIZENS FOUNDATION EXPORTS DEMOCRACY

While Better Reykjavík thrives, Gunnar and Róbert have made their e-democracy platform available to countries around the world under the name, Your Priorities. Each country has its own page and people are free to use it as they please.

"We presented our system at a conference in Greece last September, and since then some thousands of people there have started to use it," Róbert says. "It's quite interesting, their top priority is to subject the church to taxes like everybody else, and their second priority is to remove immunity from the prosecution of parliamentarians."

In the New Year, Róbert and Gunnar, who won a European eDemocracy Award in 2011, plan to revamp Better Iceland, formerly Shadow Parliament, and furthermore to establish partnerships such as the one that they have with the City of Reykjavík with other coun-

tries.

When I ask them if this is the future of democracy, Gunnar says frankly that he doesn't think anybody knows what good democracy will look like in thirty years. "So much is happening all around the world that it's difficult to say how to improve democracy, or how to save democracy in some cases, and even how to instate it in the Arab countries and elsewhere," he says.

"The thing is that we have a tool that works for improving democracy and we work with people who have the same intentions. We simply want better democracy and we're doing our bit to improve it."

Róbert adds: "At least as the situation is now, we feel that the public is not involved enough in the political process. We feel that people should at least have the tools to read up on and understand issues, and have some influence through this suggestion system. We think that this an important step forward." ☺



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## Austurland's Little Big Town

*A day and night in Egilsstaðir*

**Did you know that eastern Iceland kicks ass? Sea monsters! Trees! Reindeer burgers! What's not to love? And you don't have to spend all day driving to get here either. Grapevine photographer, Hvalreki, and I boarded an early flight and flew to Egilsstaðir in just 55 minutes. We arrived on the morning of the first snow of the season and were met at the airport by the Director of Business Development, Sports and Culture for Egilsstaðir, Þórarinn Egill Sveinsson.**

Egilsstaðir is the largest settlement in Austurland, located at the crossroads of the Ring Road (Route 1) and access routes to the eastern fjords. Driving through the different residential streets we observe how the slower pace of things makes for a relaxed family friendly atmosphere. Townspeople were out and about in cocoons of squeaky, colourful winter coats and parents pulled kids down the side of the road on sleds. The mayor was up on a ladder hanging Christmas lights from the roof of his house and waved to us as we drove by. Þórarinn tells us the community is quite proud of its small businesses, low unemployment rate (3%), and flourishing arts and sports programmes.

### TEENAGE TOWN

Egilsstaðir became a municipality in 1987 and is like a teenager stuck in puberty, waiting for a growth spurt and not fully developed. Business parks sprawl out unpredictably, and there is no decipherable layout to the place. As we wind our way back through some neighbourhoods toward downtown, Þórarinn talks about the farming history of Egilsstaðir (which takes its name from the Egilsstaðir farm). Farms in the area provide many local restaurants with produce and meat for their menus, like meat from the reindeer that live in Austurland.

According to Hvalreki, who lived in the area some years ago, the N1 gas station has the best reindeer burger in town. For 1500 ISK you can eat such a burger prepared with a tasty béarnaise sauce, and served with a mountainous side of fries. I ate one, Hvalreki ate two. They were delish.

Bellies full of reindeer meat, we hit up Slátturhúsið Cultural Centre (Slátturhúsið means slaughterhouse) to meet with director, Halldór Waren. Slátturhúsið is a labyrinth of old meat lockers, freezers, and renovated spaces of all sizes and shapes. Halldór said his mission is to provide the community with as many opportunities to cre-

ate and experience the arts as possible. The Slátturhúsið had 11,000 visitors last year and hosts a theatre festival, movie screenings, houses three artists in residence, a 140 person theatre, a college run radio station, recording studio, and endless exhibition space. Icelandic musicians play here regularly, too: ADHD, Mugison, and Lay Low each played concerts in the theatre recently. Keep tabs on Slátturhúsið at [www.slatturhusid.is](http://www.slatturhusid.is), and make sure to check their schedule when planning a trip to the region.

### MACY'S IS EVERYWHERE

Hvalreki and I are both Americans and since it was the day after Thanksgiving we decided to observe Black Friday, the US' biggest shopping day of the year. Hvalreki suggested we go to Macy's...but not THAT Macy's. Some years back, as an ode to the commercialism that is slowly taking over Icelandic landscapes, artists Paul McCarthy and Jason Rhoades created a Macy's department store facade and erected the structure two kilometres down a snowy horse trail. In the spirit of the day, we travelled the short trip there. It was ironic, it was Black Friday and we saw the sunset behind Macy's.

The temperature was rapidly dropping so we sought refuge in the elegant and charming Egilsstaðir Guesthouse, located on Egilsstaðir farm. Many rooms overlook lake Lögurinn where lucky guests might spot the sea monster which is said to have inhabited the lake for centuries. Old phonographs, elegant light fixtures, and a wooden spiral staircase add to the character to this historic property; it was a cosy oasis in the middle of the snow covered town.

After a restful night of sleep, I awoke to the cool morning light casting pinks and oranges on the hills across the glassy lake where a group of ducks paddled around quacking near the frosty shore grass. Andrew Wyeth himself could not have painted a more contemplative and serene landscape. 🇮🇸



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## Perfect Isolation

*Seyðisfjörður's winter glow*

### Interesting facts about Egilsstaðir

- Population: 2,265 people; 1 sea monster; 1 Olympic silver medallist
- Lagarfljót is the third largest lake in Iceland and home to the aforementioned sea monster, which has allegedly been around for hundreds of years. Don't worry, though, the monster hasn't been spotted since 1987.
- Olympians live here! Local resident, Vilhjálmur Einarsson, won the silver medal for the triple jump at the 1956 Olympic games.
- It is an 8–9 hour drive from Reykjavík to Egilsstaðir, but just 55 minutes to fly.
- The recently constructed, much-disputed Kárahnjúkar Dam is located west of town and stands 193 metres tall, 730 metres in length and the largest dam of its kind in Europe.
- Local forest, Hallormsstaðaskógur, is the biggest in Iceland

**Just a hop, skip and a jump away from the Ring Road is the tiny fishing village of Seyðisfjörður. This haven for artists is an easy drive from the Egilsstaðir airport and a gold mine of discoveries. One snowy winter morning Grapevine photographer, Hvalreki, and I took a 55 minute flight to the east and spent the day exploring Seyðisfjörður.**

The drive to the fjord is windy and steep. We admired the scenic panorama from the snowy mountain pass and stopped to snap photos of a frozen lake. The landscape was quiet except for the sound of sheep shuffling through the snow toward a waterfall, and the slow, deep moans of shifting ice. Far below us, the houses of Seyðisfjörður enshrouded the fjord in a patchwork of colour; the recent snow fall cast a pale blue glow on the afternoon.

Seyðisfjörður is charming piled on top of charming. We drove to the head of the fjord where yellow, blue and red fishing boats anchored in the harbour appeared miniscule in comparison to the massive mountains surrounding the town. As if it couldn't get anymore quaint, Seyðisfjörður has waterfalls sprinkled all over town and art murals

cover the sides of buildings.

The Technological Museum, a tinkerer's dreamland, is full of discoveries. Old printing presses, machines, and mechanical intricacies are on display for the imagination to behold. The attached blacksmith's shop had a fire going and the smell of smoke permeated the grounds with the haze of a trade ages old. Knobs! Wheels! Grease! It is inspiring to be surrounded by so much invention and reminded me of a Pablo Neruda poem: "I want everything to have a handle/I want everything to be a cup or a tool."

I had one of the best cappuccinos in my life at the artsy Skaftfell Bistro where the aroma of hand tossed pizza fills the air. The art of late Icelandic artist, Dieter Roth (of Swiss German origin), covers the walls, and a large crafts table anchors the corner of the room with boxes of paper and drawing pencils. Hvalreki ran the bistro back in the day and said not much in the town had changed – he meant it in a good way.

Walking around town, we ran into some of Hvalreki's artist friends who talked about the lack of direct sunlight during the winter months (it is hidden behind the mountains) and how locals welcome the snowfall because it actually helps re-

flect the light. I looked around and everything was aglow in a blue colour, they smiled and exclaimed: "See, it's so bright outside!"

As clouds of dry snow spin in the air around mountain peaks, as the dark ocean pulls and pushes the tide in and out of the fjord, Christmas lights quietly light up the town with colour. Seyðisfjörður is so adorable I just want to pinch its cheeks and feed it cookies. 🍪

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# Pioneering Iceland's Wild West

Arctic Adventures Founder and CEO Torfi G. Yngvason interviewed



**When Torfi G. Yngvason started working at a river rafting company in 2001, Iceland was host to 300,000 tourists annually—compared to 540,000 today—and hardly any of them were going rafting.**

"There's been a huge increase in tourists since I started, but the main thing is that these 300,000 people were different than the folks we see today," Torfi tells me. "The big change happened when the budget airlines, like Iceland Ex-

## Words

Anna Andersen

## Photo

Alisa Kalyanova

press, started flying to Iceland and putting pressure on Icelandair's monopoly. That's when we got a new target market. We kind of got our people to Iceland."

Torfi is talking about the younger and more adventurous tourist that he has spent the last seven years catering to—from offering tonnes of action packed tours through Arctic Adventures to bringing downtown Reykjavik its first hostel.

## BORN RAFTING

In 2005, Torfi and his friend Jón Heiðar Andrésson were working at different rafting companies when they decided to buy and merge them into a single company. "So rafting was the big ticket when we started and it's still kind of one of the big tickets," Torfi tells me.

In fact, they are still taking people

rafting on Hvítá River from the same base that one of the companies they bought had been using since 1983.

"You could say that in our early years we were mainly selling rafting to Icelanders," Torfi says. Rafting is one of the few tours that Icelanders go on. Forty percent of rafters are Icelanders, and since 1983, they've taken 150,000 Icelanders, which is roughly half of today's population.

Torfi and Jón Heiðar used this credibility in rafting as a launch pad to create the ultimate adventure company, which now offers more than 136 different tours. Arctic Adventures was the first to offer many of these tours—like snorkelling Silfra and rock climbing—and it is still the only company offering other tours—like sea kayaking out of Reykjavik.

It is Torfi's job to dream up the tours. When they issued their first brochure in 2005, Torfi says the tours reflected their own talents and interests. "We looked at ourselves and the crew that we hired and someone said, 'I'm a pretty good sea kayaker, can we put that tour in there.' Someone else said, 'I'm interested in diving, can we put a diving tour in there.' So we made the brochure based on talents that were available and things we thought were interesting," Torfi says.

When they started there were few requirements from the State. "We were running tours that you would need ten years of experience in New Zealand and this and this many tours under supervision," he says. "It was like the Wild West and in many ways it's still like that. When we started we just did anything that caught our fancy."

## GROWING UP

Torfi says their growing pains had nothing to do with selling the tours, though it wasn't always smooth sailing. After returning from a world tour in 2005, Torfi had seen that there were always two things you could do in any city: a bike tour and a walking tour.

"I thought it was a shoe in," he says. So they created a biking tour called, 'Reykjavik on wheels,' and bought all the bikes and helmets, which he says was one of the biggest investments in their early years, and they created a walking tour called, 'Reykjavik Panoramic,' which was a hike up Esja mountain.

"We printed these tours in our brochure, 50,000 copies, and I'm not exaggerating, we didn't sell a single bike or mountain hiking tour in the first year," Torfi says.

"In the second year we didn't sell any bike tours, but we got some people to go

hiking. By the third year, we had taken 200 people on the hike and nobody had made it to the top except one Argentinean couple. They had purchased the cheapest tour from Arctic Rafting—we were still called Arctic Rafting at the time—and that was the Esja tour, the hike. They went all the way to the top because they thought they were hiking to the boats and would have to raft down again. They were the only clients to make it to the top and then we took

*"We printed these tours in our brochure, 50,000 copies, and I'm not exaggerating, we didn't sell a single bike or mountain hiking tour in the first year"*

the tours off the brochure."

Torfi says the market just hadn't taken the leap in 2008. "We were a bit ahead of our time with something that was very established elsewhere," he says. "Now there are more people coming to Iceland—more active, young people that might have gone to a cheaper destination to do these activities."

Torfi was twenty years old when he became CEO of the company, and he says their growing pains mostly involved growing up and learning to be disciplined in running the company, which grew from seven employees to 127 in just seven seasons. "It was growing up in a company that grew faster than you," he says.

During the first few years, they would simply close the office when the summer season was over. "You guided in May, June, July, August, and September. Then you put bindings on snowboards in October, November and December, and a bit into January," Torfi says, "and then you explore the world from January until May—spend the season skiing in the Alps or kayak or climbing in Asia."

Torfi says they knew how to guide, which parts of Iceland we wanted to show, and what they wanted to do, but they had to learn the business aspect of running the company, going from something that was just for fun to an enterprise with lots of people counting on them for jobs and salaries.

"We're still learning—learning about finances, human resources—stuff that we didn't know anything about," he says, "but I don't think you can start an

Adventure company any other way. You have to start with that, and then learn the boring stuff."

## LOOKING AHEAD

Arctic Adventures now has bureaus in four foreign countries, a hostel and an outdoors store in Reykjavik, and they are expanding around the country with hubs all over Iceland. They are in the process of building Akureyri's first hostel: Akureyri Backpackers.

He says Arctic Adventures plans to continue growing their day tour and activity business, but to focus on expanding tourism outside of the 100-kilometre radius around Reykjavik. For instance, they are focusing a lot on Skaftafell, which is Europe's largest national park and contains Vatnajökull, which is also Europe's largest glacier.

Believing that most people come to visit Iceland rather than Reykjavik, Torfi says the biggest problem that the tourism industry is facing is a lack of infrastructure outside of Reykjavik.

"Tourism is growing around Reykjavik, but the countryside is sold out," he says. "Infrastructure and accommodation is not being built at the same speed as in Reykjavik. We need to more beds, restaurants, pathways, and toilets."

This brings us to the topic of how to accommodate for the ever-growing number of tourists coming to Iceland and wanting to see its unspoiled nature. It has long been debated whether Iceland should start charging entrance to its popular natural attractions.

"We're not going to become Bhutan, with its quota on tourists," he says. "We have to face the fact that we live in Europe and we have an agreement that people can come here, and that they are one of our biggest sources of revenue."

Thus, Torfi believes that Iceland should focus its efforts on developing the country's tourism industry. "If you like things to be really rustic, some things will change, but this is still the way that will have the least economic impact. If we're going to match the forecasted 12 percent growth in tourism revenue with aluminium smelters, we are going to have to build one every year, and aluminium smelters come with power plants," he says.

"It's a question of which you prefer—pathways in Skaftafell and ropes at Gullfoss or another aluminium smelter? You have to think of it in these terms. This has miniscule environmental impact. We can make money from Iceland as it is today by wrapping it up in a way that people don't ruin it when they visit." ☺

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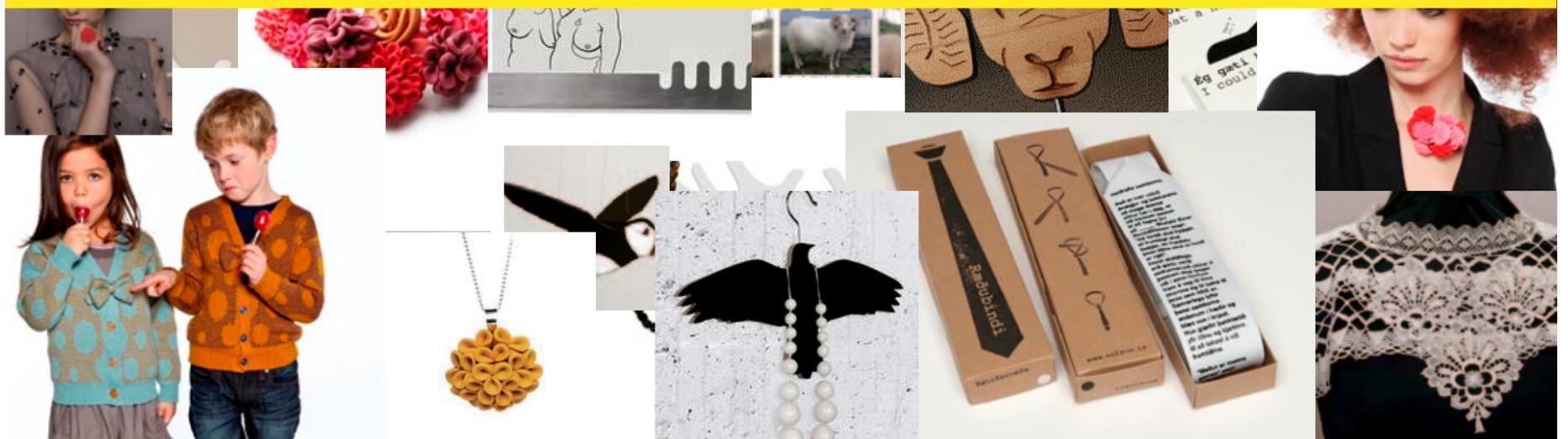
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2011 | Art CONTINUED FROM PAGE 25

responsibility and a position, and one can well tend to them in the context of building for the future. Emotion is not something you can set aside while focusing on economic, political and social issues.

At the same time, this isn't a regression to a time when the artist sought only beauty—once you've encountered irony it's hard to return. Irony ruins your chance to be 100% sincere, it is a shadow that you cannot remove.

**RK:** I think it's a good kind of shadow

**MPA:** That's what's exciting. This new interest in or turn to The Emotional that one senses all around is on ironic terms, it opens these emotional explorations to new premises that are more modern and humane. You don't have to throw away all your arms, irony is still part of the mix but the doors have been opened for other things.

The terms are changing and there is a weariness of logic and reasoning and cleverness, of the elements of what has been executed so fabulously well in our artworld over the past years. Things are opening up for different approaches and visions, bouncing from what came before as they always do.

**In 2011, the biggest events in the Icelandic artworld—certainly the most talked about ones—were probably the notorious 'Koddu' exhibit at Nýló and Ólafur Elíasson's Harpa façade. You're telling me a new era of sincerity and emotion is upon us; how do these two events reflect that?**

**MPA:** 'Koddu' appears to me as a much-needed contribution to the discourse on how the local artworld behaves. It is an institutional critique par excellence, examining how the artworld and the environment in which it resides shape and reflect one another. It expresses how the curators think art is playing second fiddle to its environment and is being overtly manipulated by it. Art never comes from a void; it is always chafing against its environment and being shaped by it, while the outer world is simultaneously influenced by the art. And at times, the nuance can go too far in either direction.

What I took away from 'Koddu' was the message that our art had given in to its environment to too great an extent, that it had started serving it—for instance by promoting Icelandic tourism or nature—rather than serving itself. 'Koddu' was a reaction to this perception and I think it was a necessary one, although you could of course debate the execution. What I took from and appreciated about the show was its critical angle.

**RK:** As an exhibit, it contained all sorts of interesting works. Halli Jón's 'forest of friends' was incredibly poetic and cool piece that addressed this theme without being all 'look at the Bónus pig!' about it. There were a lot of good items in there. But then, on the subject of emotion, it was supposed to be a sober and critical show, but it very quickly turned into an emotional circus of sorts. The whole 'Fallegasta bók í heimi' [a controversial piece shown at the exhibit, where an art-

ist 'defiled' another's work] conversation in the media quickly swayed into reality TV territory. I liked the piece, it got me thinking about the artists involved in a new way, but the circus surrounding it started taking away from the supposedly intended critical dialogue, turning it into an emotional drama.

**The exhibit's message was that art had become complacent?**

**MPA:** Those are big words. Like I said, art always plays against the environment in which it is created, and the environment is in turn affected by the art. At some point art starts claiming a white, neutral border around itself, and the next day it turns into a critique of that neutral space. It balances out in the end.

I believe the critical element of 'Koddu' was aimed mostly at our political environment, where funding is diverted to the arts with the premise that it should serve to promote Iceland to the outside world; that culture and arts are a means of image-building and tourism advertising. And this is a very strong point; state funding for art oftentimes pressures it onto those territories, forcing an agenda upon it, while it wants to exist on its own terms like it does elsewhere in the world. This tendency, which has been almost dominant, is being criticised, and rightfully so. The exhibit's catalogue named some interesting examples.

**RK:** Some of the critique in that catalogue felt a little strange to me, even betraying certain simplistically nationalistic elements, namely its claims that there was something special or about Icelandic artists seeking funds from wealthy people. That this was somehow a uniquely Icelandic thing: 'humiliated artists feasting lobster with millionaires, begging pittance for their work.' It might well be a strange existence, but that's how it is, this is how it works. It is the reality of every visual artist out there, unless they've advanced to the level of not needing to any more.

Involving collapse-politics in artistic dialogue seems odd to me. As a young and excited artist you're of course going to show up at the party and cosy up to the international curator. You want everyone to see your work and hear about it and talk about it. Attempting to promote one's art through whatever means is not a subservient position, and it doesn't mean you're guilty of anything.

**BANKERS ROASTING WHOLE PIGS**

**It seems that whole discourse has died down since the show...**

**RK:** It was a good show, it was a bit J'ACCUSE!, but it got people thinking and shook things up.

I felt the collapse element of the exhibit detracted from it, however. I once remarked to the curators that all those huge collapse photographs—building cranes, partying banksters, etc—overpowered the visual art. A lot of those press photos made for intriguing pop art in themselves, all blown up to a gargan-



antuan size...

**MPA:** Which maybe leads us back to the question of: how is visual art as vehicle for concrete social critique? It is a valid question. How effective is it to stage an exhibit of press photos? How effective is an art exhibit? How effective is a seminar? If the agenda is to discuss a particular dilemma? You could place a question mark on the outcome, as it appears in 'Koddu'—how effective was it in artistic terms?

**RK:** I honestly think the show would have worked better without those press photos. They're just so nuts. Kaupthing bankers roasting whole pigs... some of the art was overshadowed by this.

Visual art in itself can often be socially constructive, there's this Goya element. But art's nature is also very perverted. Especially working in America, you see work that's extremely socially critical in nature and the whole idea revolves around selling them to these obscenely rich people. It's twisted.

**MPA:** There's a similar twist in the fact that while you're critiquing how visual art is employed to market a nation you're using the very same methods. Using that art to put forth the curator's own, very critical position. Some artists were unhappy with how their work was contextualised at that show, used to deliver a message that wasn't necessarily their own. You weren't particularly pleased with how your work was presented...

**RK:** I had a video there that I acquired, of a small fire burning in Harpa while it was being constructed. A beautiful fire that I had no idea what meant, but

seemed important or symbolic in some way. Then it was placed next to some moralistic 'LOOK AT THE HARPA AND THE ALIENATION AND KREPPA AND ÓLAFUR ELÍASSON!!' piece. It seemed so bourgeoisie and petty. Iceland's most aggressive artists sitting around going: "Imagine! All that money! For some façade! The horror!"

**ICELAND'S LARGEST SCULPTURE!**

**Which brings us to that other event of 2011...**

**MPA:** Ólafur's façade was discussed to such an extent at 'Koddu' that I feel we've already covered the topic...

**RK:** Ah, the façade. The largest sculpture in Iceland. I like the idea of having a concert hall, and the façade with its light show turns into a sort of midwinter disco. I love it, it's really cool. I refuse to view art in terms of money and I refuse to form an opinion on Harpa based on what it cost to build. It's built. It's done!

**MPA:** When the 'private sector' proved unable to deliver on its commitments we were faced with either finishing the building or tearing it down, and each option cost around the same...

I think it's an interesting building and the façade is very much in Ólafur's spirit. He's always diverting attention away from himself and the artwork and back to the spectator. His exhibits have titles like 'Your colour memory' and 'Your black horizon'—everything revolves around the viewer. Walking or driving by Harpa, I feel the building is true to that vision, it is ever changing and dependent on your

perspective, but when that screensaver starts up, it falls over itself. You become a passive spectator.

**RK:** I haven't really thought about the concept. I just think it looks really cool. You know, when you just go: 'wow!' It's nicely opposed to the harsh and melancholic reality of Icelandic winter.

**PREACHING TO THE CHOIR**

**How was your 2011 in general?**

**MPA:** Wasn't it quite good? I thought so. A good year.

**RK:** I concur. I have nothing but good things to say about 2011.

**What about 2012?**

**MPA:** I would enjoy if the artworld here was a little livelier, with more events, outrage and discourse. I think 'Koddu' was a step towards that direction, if somewhat clumsy, and I expect more...

Actually, the publication of the Icelandic art history tome [Íslensk listasaga, a five-volume, 50.000 ISK piece that's meant to cover Icelandic art from the late 19th century up until the 21st] last September might yet stir up some heat. People certainly argued about it in 2011...

**Any conclusions?**

**RK:** No. Wait, yes. What's inspiring and great about Iceland is how crazy everything is, all the bourgeoisie paranoia and outbursts... and this isn't going anywhere. Our true nature has been revealed, and this is exciting. We have to continue angrily commenting on news stories and blogs, we have to embrace and celebrate this ever-present tedium instead of letting it get on our nerves.

**MPA:** You can certainly applaud the explosive force and all the possibilities it entails.

**RK:** Indeed! Spending all this time in the U.S. makes me love it even more. It's so sad to observe, there's no public discourse, the capitalistic blob dominates everything. Sure, there are some kids occupying Wall Street, but when you're in New York you just feel powerless. It's so huge and the power structures are so solidified, capital rules everything.

In contrast, the notion that we have this melting pot here where we are constantly in conflict over our shared values and the way our society is being run becomes insanely positive. It's real. Iceland is a real democracy, despite all the negativity.

So the thing to do is to play on these outbursts in a creative manner. Snorri Ásmundsson has been doing a lot of that. His contribution to 'Koddu' for instance was a great example. It's great that you can do something aggressive or outrageous and get entire family gatherings into heated arguments about it. The Icelandic public is so close to its art in this way. One can do so much here, it's much more fun than in the big countries where you can shout and shout and never provoke a reaction... where it's hard to ever go beyond preaching to the choir. 🍷

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**PAGE 19**

“The people in charge sure have turned completely gray in colour. And so many people are just so angry. It's like an addiction. The angry people are now able to get their fix wherever and whenever they want.”

Eleven Icelanders ponder where we're at, and where we're going...

**PAGE 6**

“What I most look forward to in the coming year is acquiring an Obi Wan Kenobi costume and wearing it around and practicing Jedi-tricks.”

Reykjavík Mayor Jón Gnarr makes a New Year's Address

**PAGE 18**

“The most memorable instance was as I was falling asleep in a tent at the Extreme Chill festival with fellow musicians Tonik and Krummi, with the song 'Deep Distance' blaring on my headphones and I could hear the boys snoring, the wind playing off our tent and the music... I flew into another dimension.”

Icelandic musicians reflect on their favourite albums or music moments of 2011...

**PAGE 12**

“It's the people themselves that police it. If it's a bad or a silly idea then it drops like a stone to the bottom of the list.”

Reykjavík is adopting e-democracy. Read all about it...

**PAGE 28**

“It's a question of which you prefer—pathways in Skaftafell and ropes at Gullfoss or another aluminium smelter?”

Arctic Adventures CEO Torfi G. Yngvasson on Iceland's tourism boom

**PAGE 30**

“I want the petite bourgeoisie to be able to enjoy themselves again, to enjoy a cosy time once more!”

Artist Ragnar Kjartansson has had it with sociopolitical, critical art!

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			<p><b>ADMINISTRACJA</b> STJÓRNSÝSLA</p>

# The REYKJAVÍK GRAPEVINE **INFO**

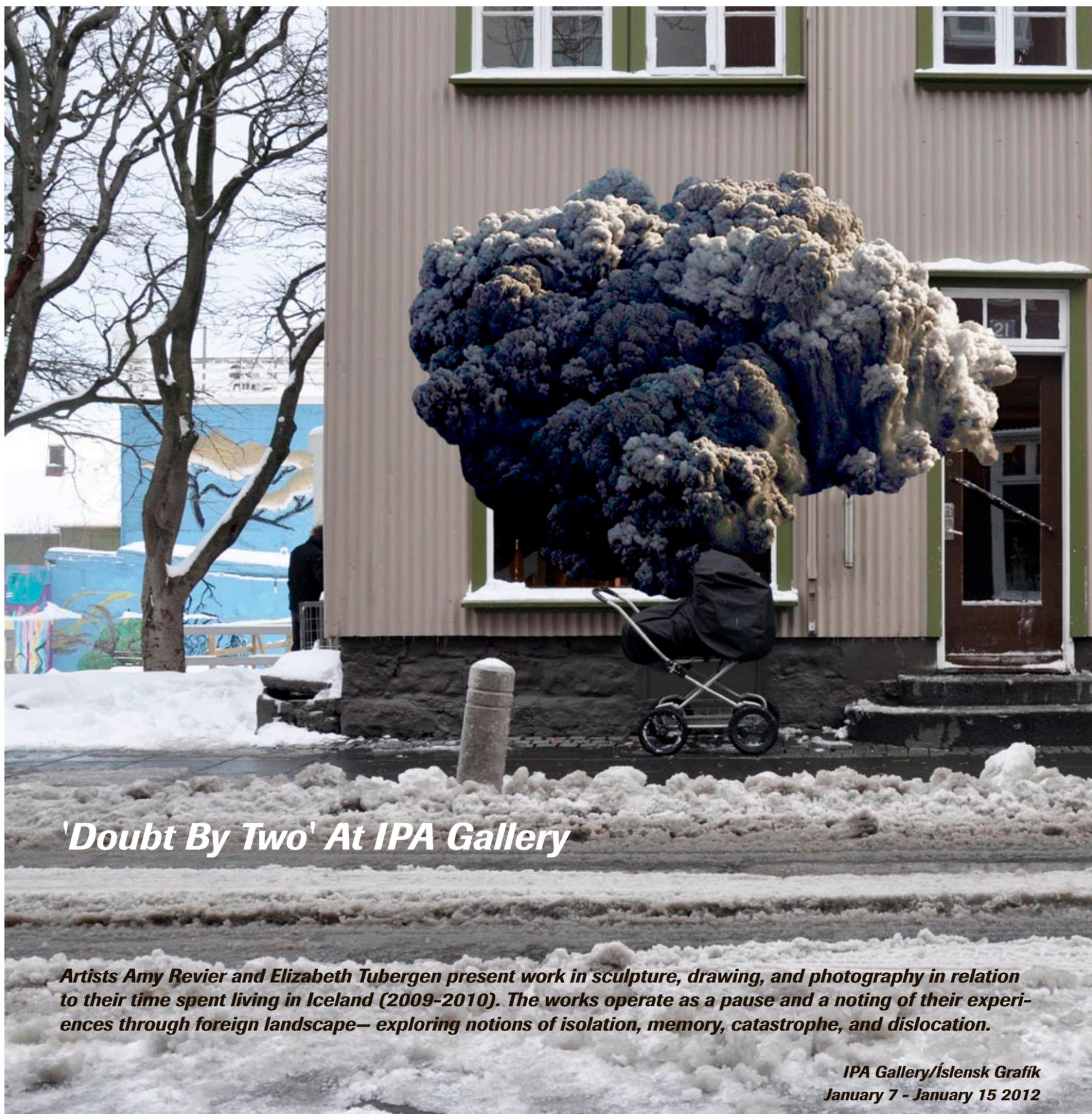


Music, Art, Films and Events Listings + Eating, Drinking and Shopping + Map

YOUR ESSENTIAL GUIDE TO LIFE, TRAVEL AND  
ENTERTAINMENT IN ICELAND

Issue 1 - 2012

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



## *'Doubt By Two' At IPA Gallery*

*Artists Amy Revier and Elizabeth Tubergen present work in sculpture, drawing, and photography in relation to their time spent living in Iceland (2009-2010). The works operate as a pause and a noting of their experiences through foreign landscape— exploring notions of isolation, memory, catastrophe, and dislocation.*

*IPA Gallery/Íslensk Grafík  
January 7 - January 15 2012*

# Albums of the Year 2011

(according to *Kvæmurell* music award)



## Sin Fang Summer Echoes

★★★★★ Morgunblaðið



## Reykjavík! Locust Sounds

★★★★★ Morgunblaðið



## ADHD ADHD2

★★★★★ Morgunblaðið



## Sóley We Sink

★★★★★ Morgunblaðið



# MUSIC

CONCERTS & NIGHTLIFE IN JANUARY

PRESCRIBING WITH LOVE  
MUSIC FOR YOUR LIVE  
EXPERIENCE

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

## 6 FRI

- B5**  
22:00 DJ Simon
- Bakkus**  
23:00 DJ Steindór
- Barbara**  
23:00 DJ Dramatík
- Café Haiti**  
21:00 Jussanam - Brazilian Jazz Sessions
- Café Oliver**  
21:00 Ladies Night followed by House DJ
- Celtic Cross**  
22:00 Live Music until 4:30, 2-1 Tu-borgs
- Den Danske Kro**  
22:00 Live Music
- Dubliner**  
21:30 Live Music  
00:00 Live band upstairs until 4:00
- English Pub**  
21:30 Live Music
- Esja**  
22:00 Bogi / DJ Hlynur
- Gaukur á Stöng**  
22:00 All the Young (UK) Showcase Concert
- Glaumbar**  
00:00 DJ Alan Jones / Haffi Haff 80s Party
- Harpa, Eldborg**  
19:30 Icelandic Symphony: Viennese Favorites entry ISK 3000-7500
- Hellirinn - TPM**  
21:00 Wistaria and Friends, 1000 ISK
- Hvíta Perlan**  
00:00 DJ Djamm
- Kaffibarinn**  
23:00 Gísli Galdur
- Prikið**  
22:00 Emmsjé Gauti's Foam Bath followed by DJ Árni Kocoon
- Vegamót**  
22:00 DJ Benni

## 7 SAT

- B5**  
22:00 Dj Jónas
- Bakkus**  
22:00 Futuregrapher, HaZar PLX  
00:00 DJs f.o.s. & Biggi Veira VJs the A of the C
- Barbara**  
23:00 DJ Manny (US)
- Austur**  
22:00 DJ Danni Deluxe
- Café Oliver**  
22:00 Ladies Night followed by House DJ
- Celtic Cross**  
22:00 Live Music until 4:30, 2-1 Tu-borgs
- Den Danske Kro**  
22:00 Live Music
- Dillon**  
22:00
- Dubliner**  
21:30 Live Music  
00:00 Live band upstairs until 4:00
- English Pub**  
21:30 Live Music
- Esja**  
22:00 Bogi / DJ Hlynur
- Gaukur á Stöng**  
21:00 Wistaria and Friends, 1000 ISK
- Glaumbar**  
00:00 DJ Einar
- Harpa, Eldborg**  
17:00 Icelandic Symphony: Viennese Favorites, 3000-7500 ISK
- Hvíta Perlan**  
00:00 DJ Djamm
- Kaffibarinn**  
23:00 President Bongo & DJ Casanova
- Prikið**  
22:00 DJ Krúsi
- Vegamót**  
22:00 DJ Símon



## SUNDAY JAZZIDY JAZZ

Weekly jam-hangout  
Every Sunday at 21:00  
Faktóry  
Free

Opened less than one year ago, Faktóry was quick to become a strong player on the Reykjavík nightlife scene with its crazy house raves and other nights of debauchery. But regardless of where you do your partying, everybody is welcome to relax after a strenuous party-weekend—or extend it if you're that kinda person—with some smooth and thick Sunday jazz. The younger elite of the Icelandic jazz scene gathers here weekly and busts out everything from old classics to sooth your mind to postmodern mind-bogglers to motivate you for the imminent week. So jazz it up baby.

## 8 SUN

- Bakkus**  
21:00 Ping pong, whiskey and guinness specials
- Barbara**  
21:00 Gentlemen's evening, men only. Kepp walking Johnnie Walker.
- Celtic Cross**  
22:00 Live Music until 4:30, 2-1 Tu-borgs
- Den Danske Kro**  
22:00 Live Music
- Dubliner**  
21:30 Live Music  
00:00 Live band upstairs until 4:00
- English Pub**  
21:30 Live Music
- Faktory**  
21:00 Live Jazz
- Prikið**  
22:00 Hangover Cinema: Close Encounters of the Third Kind. Free popcorn
- Trúnó**  
14:00 The day after. Hangover offers all day and night.

## 9 MON

- Bakkus**  
21:00 Cinéma Bakkus: Stalker by Tarkovski

- Café Oliver**  
21:00 Margarita Night 3 for 1
- Celtic Cross**  
22:00 Live Music until 4:30, 2-1 Tu-borgs
- Den Danske Kro**  
22:00 Live Music
- Dubliner**  
21:30 Live Music  
00:00 Live band upstairs until 4:00
- English Pub**  
21:30 Live Music
- Harpa, Norðurljós**  
21:00 The Brass Band Svanur Celebrates the New Year, 2900 ISK
- Háskólabíó**  
20:00 Tommy Emmanuel live in concert, 5900/6900 ISK
- Trúnó**  
13:00 We Love Coffee on Mondays. All day until you start to shake.

## 10 TUE

- Barbara**  
21:00 Lacoustique with Myrra Rós and friends, free entry + free cheese + Tuborg 500 ISK all night.
- Café Oliver**  
21:00 Live Karaoke
- Celtic Cross**  
22:00 Live Music until 4:30, 2-1 Tu-borgs
- Den Danske Kro**  
22:00 Live Music

Reykjavik Museum of Photography

Exhibitions all year round  
ADMISSION FREE

**LJÓSMYNDASAFN REYKJAVÍKUR**  
Reykjavik Museum of Photography

GRÓFARHÚS 6th floor  
Tryggvagata 15, 101 Reykjavík  
Opening hours:  
12-19 mon-fri, 13-17 weekends  
[www.photomuseum.is](http://www.photomuseum.is)

**Dublíner**  
21:30 Live Music  
00:00 Live band upstairs until 4:00

**English Pub**  
21:30 Live Music

**Prikið**  
22:00 House DJ

## 11 WED

**Barbara**  
20:00 Electric night. Live DJs. Smirnoff on offer all night.

**Café Oliver**  
21:00 Live Music

**Celtic Cross**  
22:00 Live Music until 4:30, 2-1 Tubborgs

**Den Danske Kro**  
22:00 Live Music

**Dublíner**  
21:30 Live Music  
00:00 Live band upstairs until 4:00

**English Pub**  
21:30 Live Music

**Kaffibarinn**  
21:00 Extreme Chill

**Prikið**  
22:00 DJ Krúsi

**Salurinn Kópavogi**  
20:30 Jon Olafsson Concert Series, 3300 ISK

**Trúnó**  
20:00 Wednesdays are the new Thursdays

## 12 THU

**B5**  
21:00 Jogvan and Vignir Snær

**Bakkus**  
23:00 DJ Harry Knuckles

**Barbara**  
21:00 Thursday Thunder

**Café Oliver**  
21:00 Ingó Weathergod

**Celtic Cross**  
22:00 Live Music until 4:30, 2-1 Tubborgs

**Den Danske Kro**  
22:00 Live Music

**Dublíner**  
21:30 Live Music  
00:00 Live band upstairs until 4:00

**English Pub**  
21:30 Live Music

**Gaukur á Stöng**  
21:00 Prince Tribute Concert, 1000 ISK

**Glaumbar**  
00:00 DJ Stuð

**Harpa, Eldborg**  
19:30 Icelandic Symphony Orchestra: Young Soloists, Entry ISK 2000/2500/3500

**Kaffibarinn**  
21:00 HúsDjús - Klebstoff (Lím Drím Tím)

**Prikið**  
22:00 DJ Gay Latino Man

**Salurinn Kópavogi**  
20:30 Jon Olafsson Concert Series, 3300 ISK

**Trúnó**  
19:00 Coffee in good spirit - Latte art champion Vala Stefáns creates crazy good alcoholic coffee

**Vegamót**  
22:00 DJ Símon

## 13 FRI

**B5**  
22:00 DJ Jonas

**Bakkus**  
23:00 DJ KGB

**Barbara**  
23:00 DJ Glimmer

**Austur**  
22:00 Danni Deluxe

**Café Oliver**  
21:00 Ladies Night followed by House DJ

**Celtic Cross**  
22:00 Live Music until 4:30, 2-1 Tubborgs

**Den Danske Kro**  
22:00 Live Music

**Dublíner**  
21:30 Live Music  
00:00 Live band upstairs until 4:00

**English Pub**  
21:30 Live Music

**Esja**  
22:00 Bogi / DJ Hlynur

**Gaukur á Stöng**  
22:00 Best of Grunge concert, further info available soon at facebook.

**Glaumbar**  
00:00 DJ Krúsi

**Hvíta Perlan**  
00:00 DJ Djamm

**Kaffibarinn**  
23:00 Alfons X

**Prikið**  
22:00 DJ Árni Kocoon

**Salurinn Kópavogi**  
20:00 Salon Islandus Celebrate the New Year, 3500 ISK

**Trúnó**  
20:00 Fanabulous Champagne night, special offer on Moet

**Vegamót**  
22:00 DJ Hannes

## 14 SAT

**B5**  
22:00 DJ Simon

**Bakkus**  
23:00 DJ Hashi

**Barbara**  
23:00 DJ Dramatik

**Austur**  
22:00 House DJ

**Café Oliver**  
21:00 Ladies Night followed by House DJ



### Put Your Dancing Shoes On For Tim Green

January 13

Faktorý

1500 ISK

This young and talented Brit was voted 'Breakthrough Producer of 2010' by DJ Mag. He has performed at big clubs in London, Berlin and Ibiza, and he's worked with big names Booka Shade, Cassius and Friendly Fires.

And now Tim Green is coming to Iceland. The Kanill DJ ensemble (and some other sponsors) are flying him in to knock your socks off at Faktorý on January 13. Supported him are resident Kanill DJs B.G. Baarregaard (live) and Jon Edvald and Klebstoff.

Now go get your ticket, on sale for 1500 ISK at Spútnik on Laugavegur or at the Kringlan shopping mall.

**Celtic Cross**  
22:00 Live Music until 4:30, 2-1 Tubborgs

**Den Danske Kro**  
22:00 Live Music

**Dublíner**  
21:30 Live Music  
00:00 Live band upstairs until 4:00

**English Pub**  
21:30 Live Music

**Esja**  
22:00 Bogi / DJ Hlynur

**Gaukur á Stöng**  
22:00 Live music

**Glaumbar**  
00:00 DJ Einar

**Hvíta Perlan**  
00:00 DJ Djamm

**Prikið**  
22:00 DJ Danni Deluxxe

**Vegamót**  
22:00 DJ Jónas

**Trúnó**  
21:00 Golden Oldies

## 15 SUN

**Bakkus**  
21:00 Ping pong, Whiskey and Guinness specials

**Barbara**  
21:00 Gentlemen evening, men only. Keep walking Johnnie Walker.

**Celtic Cross**  
22:00 Live Music until 4:30, 2-1 Tubborgs

**Den Danske Kro**  
22:00 Live Music

**Dublíner**  
21:30 Live Music  
00:00 Live band upstairs until 4:00

**English Pub**  
21:30 Live Music

**Faktorý**  
21:00 Live Jazz

**Prikið**  
22:00 Hangover Cinema: Species. Free popcorn.

**Salurinn Kópavogi**  
13:00 Magic Door: Vienna Concert, 1500 ISK

**Trúnó**  
14:00 The day after. hangover offers all day and night.

## 16 MON

**Bakkus**  
21:00 Cinéma Bakkus: Loves of a blonde by Milos Forman

**Café Oliver**  
21:00 Margarita Night 3 for 1

**Celtic Cross**  
22:00 Live Music until 4:30, 2-1 Tubborgs

**Den Danske Kro**  
22:00 Live Music

**Dublíner**  
21:30 Live Music  
00:00 Live band upstairs until 4:00

**English Pub**  
21:30 Live Music

**Prikið**  
22:00 House DJ

**Trúnó**  
13:00 We Love Coffee on Mondays. All day until you start to shake.



20 Jan

### Turin Brakes Church Comeback

Low-key alternative church performance

January 20, 20:00

Frikirkjan

3990/2900 ISK

Remember the Turin Brakes? Well, they had a couple of hits back in the late '90s and early 2000s and got their hands on a decent amount of BRIT statues with their soothing, but crude acoustic tunes and mellow ditties. And now, ten years later, they intend to break back onto the Icelandic scene with a small gig at the very hipster-friendly concert venue Frikirkjan. So if you wanna check out what they've been doing during their hiatus or if you're looking for a good excuse to have yet another laid-back escapade in this cute church, go ahead and secure yourself a seat. Tickets can be purchased at the skate store Noland in the Kringlan shopping mall, which is pretty fitting 'cause Turin Brakes just turned retro enough to be hip.

LaUNDROMAT

New York

w/ sauerkraut and fries  
steak sandwich Bearnaise

jor gonna  
lovitt!

www.thelaundromatcafe.com

LaUNDROMAT

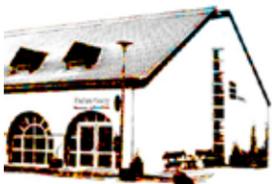
life's  
too short  
for bad  
burgers!

www.thelaundromatcafe.com

# Experience Icelandic Art and Design



**Kópavogur Art Museum-Gerðarsafn**  
Hamraborg 4, Kópavogur  
Tel. +354 570 0440  
Open 11-17  
Closed on Mondays  
[www.gerdarsafn.is](http://www.gerdarsafn.is)



**Hafnarborg The Hafnarfjörður Centre of Culture and Fine Art**  
Strandgata 34, Hafnarfjörður  
Tel. +354 585 5790  
Open 12-17  
Thursdays 12-21  
Closed on Tuesdays  
[www.hafnarborg.is](http://www.hafnarborg.is)



**Hönnunarsafn Íslands Museum of Design and Applied Art**  
Garðatorg 1, Garðabær  
Tel. +354 512 1525  
Open 12-17  
Closed on Mondays  
[www.honnunarsafn.is](http://www.honnunarsafn.is)

To the Blue Lagoon

ROUTE 40

# MUSIC

CONCERTS & NIGHTLIFE IN JANUARY

## 17 TUE

**Barbara**  
21:00 Lacoustique with Myrra Rós and friends. free entry + free cheese + Tuborg 500 ISK all night.

**Café Oliver**  
21:00 Live Karaoke

**Celtic Cross**  
22:00 Live Music until 4:30, 2-1 Tuborgs

**Den Danske Kro**  
22:00 Live Music

**Dubliner**  
21:30 Live Music  
00:00 Live band upstairs until 4:00

**English Pub**  
21:30 Live Music

**Prikið**  
22:00 House DJ

## 18 WED

**Bakkus**  
22:00 Guðmundur Pétursson

**Barbara**  
20:00 Electric night. Live DJs. Smirnoff on offer all night.

**Café Oliver**  
21:00 Live Music

**Celtic Cross**  
22:00 Live Music until 4:30, 2-1 Tuborgs

**Den Danske Kro**  
22:00 Live Music

**Dubliner**  
21:30 Live Music  
00:00 Live band upstairs until 4:00

**English Pub**  
21:30 Live Music

**Prikið**  
22:00 DJ Anna Brá

**Trúnó**  
20:00 Wednesdays are the new Thursdays

## 19 THU

**B5**  
21:00 Matti Matt og Vignir Snær

**Bakkus**  
23:00 DJ Einar Sonic

**Barbara**  
21:00 Thursday Thunder

**Café Oliver**  
21:00 Ingó Weathergod

**Celtic Cross**  
22:00 Live Music until 4:30, 2-1 Tuborgs

**Den Danske Kro**  
22:00 Live Music

**Dubliner**  
21:30 Live Music  
00:00 Live band upstairs until 4:00

**English Pub**  
21:30 Live Music

**Gaukur á Stöng**  
23:00 Janis Joplin Tribute Concert, Entry ISK 1500

**Glaumbar**  
00:00 DJ Stuð

**Harpa, Eldborg**  
20:00 James Bond Feast, 3000/3900/4900/5700/7500 ISK

**Kaffibarinn**  
21:00 HúsDjús - Alfons X

**Prikið**  
22:00 DJ Benni B Ruff

**Trúnó**  
21:00 Martini night. Crazy offers on Martini drinks

**Vegamót**  
22:00 Jónas

## 20 FRI

**Austur**  
22:00 DJ Jónas

**B5**  
22:00 DJ Einar (Easy E)

**Bakkus**  
23:00 DJ Hunk of a man

**Barbara**  
00:00 DJ Resident

**Café Oliver**  
21:00 Ladies Night followed by House DJ

**Celtic Cross**  
22:00 Live Music until 4:30, 2-1 Tuborgs

**Den Danske Kro**  
22:00 Live Music

**Dubliner**  
21:30 Live Music  
00:00 Live band upstairs until 4:00

**English Pub**  
21:30 Live Music

**Esja**  
22:00 Bogi / DJ Hlynur

28  
Jan



## ICY SPICY LEONCIE LIVE IN ICELAND

January 28, 21:00

Gaukur á Stöng

Entrance fee TBA

Unless you've been reading Iceland's page six for the last decade or so, you're probably not familiar with the peculiar and flamboyant character that bears the self-coined moniker Icy Spicy Leoncie. Her back-story is both long and complicated, but she's a gentle soul and can be described in short as both a cult Indian princess and a more musically inclined Kardashian sister—both of whom are misunderstood and underappreciated by the Icelandic people.

But don't sweat it! Soon you'll have the chance to witness this intense character, as her self-inflicted exile from Iceland is about to end, at least on January 28. On this Saturday evening, Leoncie will visit her old homeland for a one-time gig at Gaukur á Stöng, where epic things are expected to go down. Ticket prices and more info will be available soon at [www.facebook.com/Gaukur\\_á\\_stöng](http://www.facebook.com/Gaukur_á_stöng).

**Gaukur á Stöng**  
22:00 Live music

**Glaumbar**  
00:00 DJ Egill

**Harpa, Eldborg**  
20:00 James Bond Feast, 3000/3900/4900/5700/7500 ISK

**Hvíta Perlan**  
00:00 DJ Djamm

**Kaffibarinn**  
21:00 Extreme Chill Special  
00:30 Funk program DBF & Simon FKNHNSM

**Prikið**  
22:00 DJ Danni Deluxe

**Trúnó**  
21:00 Bacardi Cocktail night - Crazy offers on Bacardi drinks

**Vegamót**  
22:00 DJ Símon

**Den Danske Kro**  
22:00 Live Music

**Dubliner**  
21:30 Live Music  
00:00 Live band upstairs until 4:00

**English Pub**  
21:30 Live Music

**Factory**  
21:00 Live Jazz

**Harpa, Eldborg**  
20:00 Valgeir Guðjónsson in concert, Entry ISK 3900/4900/5900

**Prikið**  
22:00 Hangover Cinema: Homer and Eddy. Free popcorn.

**Trúnó**  
14:00 The day after. hangover offers all day and night.

## 23 MON

**Café Oliver**  
21:00 Margarita Night 3 for 1

**Celtic Cross**  
22:00 Live Music until 4:30, 2-1 Tuborgs

**Den Danske Kro**  
22:00 Live Music

**Dubliner**  
21:30 Live Music  
00:00 Live band upstairs until 4:00

**English Pub**  
21:30 Live Music

**Prikið**  
22:00 House DJ

**Trúnó**  
13:00 We Love Coffee on Mondays. All day until you start to shake.

## 24 TUE

**Barbara**  
21:00 Lacoustique with Myrra Rós and friends. free entry + free cheese + Tuborg 500 ISK all night.

**Café Oliver**  
21:00 Live Karaoke

**Celtic Cross**  
22:00 Live Music until 4:30, 2-1 Tuborgs

**Den Danske Kro**  
22:00 Live Music

**Dubliner**  
21:30 Live Music  
00:00 Live band upstairs until 4:00

**English Pub**  
21:30 Live Music

**Prikið**  
22:00 House DJ

**Trúnó**  
21:00 Trukakó special

## 25 WED

**Barbara**  
20:00 Electric night. Live DJs. Smirnoff on offer all night.

**Café Oliver**  
21:00 Live Music

**Celtic Cross**  
22:00 Live Music until 4:30, 2-1 Tuborgs

## 21 SAT

**Austur**  
22:00 Danni Deluxe

**B5**  
22:00 DJ Jónas

**Bakkus**  
23:00 DJ Pilsner

**Barbara**  
23:00 DJ Dramatik

**Café Oliver**  
21:00 Ladies Night followed by House DJ

**Celtic Cross**  
22:00 Live Music until 4:30, 2-1 Tuborgs

**Den Danske Kro**  
22:00 Live Music

**Dubliner**  
21:30 Live Music  
00:00 Live band upstairs until 4:00

**English Pub**  
21:30 Live Music

**Esja**  
22:00 Bogi / DJ Hlynur

**Gaukur á Stöng**  
22:00 Live music

**Glaumbar**  
00:00 DJ Stuð

**Hvíta Perlan**  
00:00 DJ Djamm

**Kaffibarinn**  
23:00 Partyzone annual list night - Mar & Nielsen

**Prikið**  
22:00 DJ Addi Intro

**Trúnó**  
23:00 Glitter is in the air - DJ Glimmer

**Vegamót**  
22:00 DJ Benni

## 22 SUN

**Bakkus**  
21:00 Ping pong, Whiskey and Guinness specials

**Barbara**  
21:00 Gentlemen evening, men only. Keep walking Johnnie Walker.

**Celtic Cross**  
22:00 Live Music until 4:30, 2-1 Tuborgs

The Iceland Symphony welcomes you to Harpa.

ICELAND SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA



Box office » 528 5050 » [www.sinfonia.is](http://www.sinfonia.is) » [www.harpa.is](http://www.harpa.is)

borgs  
**Den Danske Kro**  
 22:00 Live Music  
**Dubliner**  
 21:30 Live Music  
 00:00 Live band upstairs until 4:00  
**English Pub**  
 21:30 Live Music  
**Prikið**  
 22:00 Gay Latino Man  
**Trúnó**  
 20:00 Wednesdays are the new Thursdays

## 26 THU

**B5**  
 22:00 Hreimur og Jogvan Live music  
**Bakkus**  
 23:00 DJs Two Step Horror  
**Barbara**  
 21:00 Thursday Thunder  
**Café Oliver**  
 21:00 Ingó Weathergod  
**Celtic Cross**  
 22:00 Live Music until 4:30, 2-1 Tuborgs  
**Den Danske Kro**  
 22:00 Live Music  
**Dubliner**  
 21:30 Live Music  
 00:00 Live band upstairs until 4:00  
**English Pub**  
 21:30 Live Music  
**Gaukur á Stöng**  
 22:00 Crystalline Enigma, Trust the Lies and Dólgarnir Live Concert  
**Glaumbar**  
 00:00 DJ Matti  
**Harpa, Eldborg**  
 22:00 Icelandic Symphony Orchestra: Dark Music days, Entry ISK 2000/2500/3500  
**Prikið**  
 22:00 SURPRISE THURSDAY  
**Trúnó**  
 20:00 Trúnó cocktail night  
**Vegamót**  
 22:00 DJ Benni

## 27 FRI

**Austur**  
 22:00 DJ Jónas  
**B5**  
 22:00 DJ Einar (Easy E)  
**Bakkus**  
 23:00 House DJ  
**Café Oliver**  
 21:00 Ladies Night followed by House DJ  
**Celtic Cross**  
 22:00 Live Music until 4:30, 2-1 Tuborgs  
**Den Danske Kro**  
 22:00 Live Music  
**Dubliner**  
 21:30 Live Music  
 00:00 Live band upstairs until 4:00  
**English Pub**  
 21:30 Live Music  
**Esja**  
 22:00 Bogi / DJ Hlynur  
**Gaukur á Stöng**  
 22:00 Live music  
**Glaumbar**  
 00:00 DJ Gunnar  
**Hvíta Perlan**  
 00:00 DJ Djammm  
**Prikið**  
 22:00 DJ Addi Intro  
**Trúnó**  
 21:00 Tuborg Classic special  
**Vegamót**  
 22:00 DJ Símon

## 28 SAT

**Bakkus**  
 23:00 DJ KGB  
**Barbara**  
 23:00 DJ Manny  
**Austur**  
 22:00 Danni Deluxe  
**B5**  
 22:00 DJ Simon  
**Café Oliver**  
 21:00 Ladies Night followed by House DJ  
**Celtic Cross**  
 22:00 Live Music until 4:30, 2-1 Tuborgs  
**Den Danske Kro**  
 22:00 Live Music  
**Dubliner**  
 21:30 Live Music  
 00:00 Live band upstairs until 4:00  
**English Pub**  
 21:30 Live Music  
**Esja**  
 22:00 Bogi / DJ Hlynur  
**Gaukur á Stöng**  
 22:00 Icy Spicy Leoncie live in concert,  
**Glaumbar**  
 00:00 DJ Seth  
**Hvíta Perlan**  
 00:00 DJ Djammm  
**Kaffibarinn**  
 23:00 Alfons X  
**Prikið**  
 22:00 DJ Benni B Ruff  
**Salurinn Kópavogi**  
 20:00 Mom's tunes, Entry ISK 3500  
**Trúnó**  
 22:00 80s Flashback  
**Vegamót**  
 22:00 DJ Jónas

## 29 SUN

**Bakkus**  
 21:00 Ping pong, whiskey and guinness specials  
**Barbara**  
 21:00 Gentlemen evening, men only. Keep walking Johnnie Walker.  
**Celtic Cross**  
 22:00 Live Music until 4:30, 2-1 Tuborgs  
**Den Danske Kro**  
 22:00 Live Music  
**Dubliner**  
 21:30 Live Music  
 00:00 Live band upstairs until 4:00  
**English Pub**  
 21:30 Live Music  
**Factory**  
 21:00 Live Jazz  
**Harpa, Eldborg**  
 22:00 The Annual Music Academy Symphony Orchestra, 2000 ISK  
**Prikið**  
 22:00 Hangover Cinema: Outbreak. Free popcorn.  
**Salurinn Kópavogi**  
 17:00 Tíbrá Concert series: Shostakovich, 3500 ISK  
**Trúnó**  
 14:00 The day after. Hangover offers all day and night.

## 30 MON

**Bakkus**  
 21:00 Cinéma Bakkus: Singapore Sling by Nikos Nikolaidis  
**Café Oliver**  
 21:00 Margarita Night 3 for 1  
**Den Danske Kro**  
 22:00 Live Music

**Dubliner**  
 21:30 Live Music  
 00:00 Live band upstairs until 4:00  
**English Pub**  
 21:30 Live Music  
**Prikið**  
 22:00 House DJ  
**Trúnó**  
 14:00 We love coffee on Mondays. All day until you start to shake.

## 31 TUE

**Barbara**  
 21:00 Lacoustique with Myrra Rós and friends. free entry + free cheese + Tuborg 500 ISK all night.  
**Café Oliver**  
 21:00 Live Karaoke  
**Celtic Cross**  
 22:00 Live Music until 4:30, 2-1 Tuborgs  
**Den Danske Kro**  
 22:00 Live Music  
**Dubliner**  
 21:30 Live Music  
 00:00 Live band upstairs until 4:00  
**English Pub**  
 21:30 Live Music  
**Prikið**  
 22:00 House DJ

## 01 WED

**Barbara**  
 20:00 Electric night. Live DJs. Smirnoff on offer all night.  
**Café Oliver**  
 21:00 Live Music  
**Celtic Cross**  
 22:00 Live Music until 4:30, 2-1 Tuborgs  
**Den Danske Kro**  
 22:00 Live Music  
**Dubliner**  
 21:30 Live Music  
 00:00 Live band upstairs until 4:00  
**English Pub**  
 21:30 Live Music  
**Salurinn**  
 20:00 Songbirds, Jana Maria and Ivar Helgason in concert, 2500 ISK  
**Trúnó**  
 20:00 Wednesdays are the new Thursdays

## 02 THU

**Bakkus**  
 23:00 DJ Einar Sonic  
**Barbara**  
 21:00 Thursday Thunder  
**Café Oliver**  
 21:00 Ingó Weathergod  
**Celtic Cross**  
 22:00 Live Music until 4:30, 2-1 Tuborgs  
**Den Danske Kro**  
 22:00 Live Music  
**Dubliner**  
 21:30 Live Music  
 00:00 Live band upstairs until 4:00  
**English Pub**  
 21:30 Live Music  
**Gaukur á Stöng**  
 22:00 Live music  
**Harpa, Eldborg**  
 19:30 Icelandic Symphony Orchestra: Vaska Conducts Mahler, 2000/2900/3900/4700/6500 ISK  
**Trúnó**  
 20:00 Trúnó fabulous cocktail night

**Den Danske Kro**

• Mondays •  
 Shot's night - all shots ISK 400.-

• Tuesdays •  
 Live music and Beer Bingo night

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

• Thursdays •  
 Live Music / Scandinavian nights

• Fridays •  
 Live music / Sing-along nights

• Saturdays •  
 Live music / Sing-along nights

• Sundays •  
 Hangover & Live music night Really good prices on drinks

Ingólfsstræti 3 · 101 · Reykjavík  
[www.danskj.is](http://www.danskj.is)

**Harpa Tours and Packages**

**VISIT HARPA THIS WINTER.** Take a guided tour of the building and peak behind the scenes. Enjoy the glass facade, elegant halls and different floors of genius design.

Reykjavík was featured in the New York Times as amongst the top four places in the world to travel to in 2011, with Harpa as one of its main attractions. Harpa is definitely a must-see on any Iceland travel agenda.

### REGULAR GUIDED TOUR - daily this winter

Weekdays at 15.30. Price 1500 ISK (Around 10 Euros).  
 Weekends at 11.00 and 15.30. Price 1500 ISK (Around 10 Euros).

### GUIDED TOUR PACKAGES

Book a tour package for small or large groups, for example professional groups.

All tours can be booked at the box office desk, at [tours@harpa.is](mailto:tours@harpa.is) or via telephone +354 528 5009

Also in Harpa: VIDEO - a documentary on the Icelandic music scene by Árni Sveinsson shown Wednesdays at 17.00.

Check out the Undercurrent concert series, a bi-weekly event in Kaldalón hall, featuring fresh new Icelandic bands. Admission free.



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# HORNIÐ

Restaurant - Pizzeria



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

Lunch offers every day.

Open every day from 11.00 to 23.30

For reservations call 551-3340



## ALL T-SHIRTS

# 3 for 2



HAFNARSTRÆTI 5 & SKÓLAVÖRÐUSTÍGUR 10

# MAP

## Places We Like

### 1 Hressó

Austurstræti 20

You know, Hressó is basically the only place I go for coffee. Why? Their coffee is decent to excellent, but their forte is surely their wonderful patio, where you can enjoy the spring breeze in the sun, wrap yourself in a blanket beneath an electric heater in January and at all times: smoke.

### 2 Laundromat Café

Austurstræti 9

At the Laundromat Cafe you can do laundry, drink a beer and have a grandma read to your children all under one roof. This kid-friendly restaurant opened this spring in Reykjavik and prides itself on its full menu, cool concept, 5,000 books (that you can buy or trade), board games, and up-to-date newspapers and magazines (including a WALL OF GRAPEVINES).

### 3 Hamborgarabúllan

Geirsgata 1

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

### 4 Korníð

Lækjargata 4

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

### 5 NASA

Thorvaldsenstræti 2

The cornerstone of Reykjavik nightlife, NASA plays host to the biggest bands and the biggest parties. NASA has several bars inside, and with the generally late door-opening hours for every event, the shows and parties tend to go on all night during the weekends. Remember to check out their schedule, as each event differs from the next.

### 6 Boston

Laugavegur 28

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

### Useful numbers

Emergency number: **112**

Medical help: **1770**

Dental emergency: **575 0505**

Information: **118**

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

BSR: **561 0000**

### Tax Free Refund

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

### Tourist information

**Arctic Adventures**, Laugavegur 11,

tel: 562 7000

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

**Iceland Excursions - Grayline Iceland**,



### 7 Pingholt Bar

Pingholtsstræti 5

Located in CenterHotel Pingholt, Pingholt bar is tucked away just outside of the mayhem that is Laugavegur on a weekend night. For a quieter evening, Pingholtsbar is definitely worth a closer look. Show up between 17-19 for the daily happy hour.

Hafnarstræti 20, tel: 540 1313

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

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

### Pharmacies

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

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

### Coach terminal

**BSÍ**, Vatnsmyrarvegur 10,

tel: 562 1011, www.bsi.is

### Domestic airlines

**Air Iceland**, Reykjavíkflugvöllur,

tel: 570 3030, www.flugfelag.is

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

### 8 Kaffi Zimsen

Hafnarstræti 18

Kaffi Zimsen is a laid back and cosy pub without a trace of pretension. The welcoming atmosphere is enhanced only by the excellent deals on beer that they offer several times a week. A good place to enjoy a nice drink in good company.

### Public transport

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

### Opening Hours

**Bars and clubs:** According to regulations, bars can stay open until 01:00 on weekdays and 05:30 on weekends.

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

### 9 Nikita

Laugavegur 56

The Icelandic skate design brand Nikita now has a flagship store in Reykjavik and girl, it is awesome! The hot pink exterior is only the beginning; inside you'll be treated to some of the coolest and most comfortable ladies street and skate wear on the market.

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

**Swimming pools:** Weekdays 06:30-22:00 and weekends 09:00-17:00, although each pool varies plus or minus a few hours. **Banks** in the centre are open Mon.-Fri. 09:00-16:00.

### Post Offices

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

## Café Loki

in front of Hallgrímskirkja

Icelandic traditional homemade food



Open 10-18 Mon - Sat  
Open 11-17 Sundays

Raggi from the band Árstíðir is the unstoppable...

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## THE ENGLISH PUB

Austurvelli & Hafnarfirði





**LEGEND**

# EATING   # DRINKING   # SHOPPING

For a map of outside downtown Reykjavik visit [www.grapevine.is](http://www.grapevine.is) or the Icelandic phonebook website [www.ja.is](http://www.ja.is)

**13 NEW IN TOWN**

**HR Konfekt**  
Aðalstræti 10

Many will tell you that the Mosfellsbær bakery is the best in town—except it's actually like twenty minutes outside of town. If you're a Parisian looking for something (dare we claim) on par with your bakeries in France, it's definitely worth the drive. But if you're not into driving out there, and you'd like to see what kinds of delectable treats the master chocolatier Hafliði Ragnarsson is concocting, we've some good new news for you! They've just opened a chocolate store called HR Konfekt smack dab downtown on Aðalstræti, open every day 10:00 – 18:00. Mmm...



**A Day In The Life**  
Anna Svava Knútsdóttir

What's up Anna?

My days are never exactly the same due to the nature of my work. But lately they've been like this:

**EARLY MORNING >**

I often go late to bed so I don't wake up before around 9 AM. Then Hugleikur and his brother come over and we write until 12 PM. We are working together on a cartoon series.

**MID-DAY >**

Then I love to go to Ostabúðin on Skólavörðustígur (nr. 8) for lunch. They have great fish and the environment is cosy. Sometimes I also go to Asia (Laugavegur 10) to have their wonderful ginger and chilli soup. It's especially great if you think you're coming down with a cold. You won't get that cold.

**AFTERNOON >**

In the afternoon I go back to work and something different always awaits me. I usually work until 6 PM and then occasionally I'll go work out at the gym, World Class in Laugar (Sundlaugarvegur 30a).

**EVENING >**

I typically don't feel like cooking and luckily I live near two great takeaway places. One of them is Mamma Steina (Skólavörðustígur 23), which sells affordable traditional Icelandic food and the other is Mensa (Baldursgata 11), which sells healthy, home cooked food. So if I'm not going anywhere in particular to eat, I'll usually swing by and pick something up at one of these two places.

**HEAT OF THE NIGHT >**

In the evenings, when I'm not work, I might go to Ólstofan (Vegamótastígur 4). My friends hang out there and it's nice to throw down a cold one at the end of the day. It's also an ideal place to chat because they don't play music there...at least on weekdays.

**Cleanliness is next to godliness**  
"John Wesley 1778"

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Laugavegur 2 101 Reykjavik tel: 552 4444

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**10 Spúútnik**  
Laugavegur 28b

This super hip vintage shop in the heart of downtown is quintessential to Icelandic fashion trends. Ranging from classic, national pattern sweaters to some of the craziest throwback fashions from eras we thought we were glad to see gone, Spúútnik can make a pair of flowered, day-glow parachute pants seem like a smart buy.

**11 Kolaportið**  
Tryggvagata 19

Reykjavik's massive indoor flea market is a wonderful place to get lost for a few hours, rummaging through stall upon stall of potential treasures. There are heaps of used clothing, knitwear and other yard-sale type goods from decades of yore, and a large food section with fish, meats and baked goods.

**12 Fríða Frænka**  
Vesturgata 3

This small boutique is a jam-packed treasure chest overflowing with antique furniture and items to perk up your apartment. In every corner of the shop you'll find some unique items, including lamps, pillows, gorgeous 60s sofas, tables, and a selection of vintage jewellery

**Public phones**

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

**Internet Access**

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

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

**Swimming Pools**

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

**Public Toilets**

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

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ICELANDIC Fish, Lamb & Chicken in original PAKISTANI curries, TANDOORI dishes, TANDOORI Nan breads, Kebabs, Samosas & Vegetarian specialities

# ART IN JANUARY

## COCKTAIL PLEASURES AND VISUAL STIMULATION

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

## OPENINGS

### Iceland Graphic Gallery

January 5

**Doubt By Two** - Amy Revier and Elizabeth Tubergen platform their work in this exhibition that opens January 5, but the formal opening takes place January 7 between 17 and 19. The exhibition boasts sculptures, drawings and photographs the artists worked on subsequently to being inspired by Iceland in 2009 and 2010.  
*Runs until January 15*

### Hafnarborg

January 7

**Still Life** - The exhibition focuses on still life paintings by Icelandic artist of different generations, some better known for other types of work. Artwork from the Hafnarborg collection will be on display as well as works from other public and private collections. This is an opportunity to see works by some of the country's most imports 20th century artists.  
*Runs until February 26*

### Listasafn ASÍ

January 14

**Anna Lindal** - The works of Anna Lindal are built in several layers and therefore call for different approaches. The outcome is a pattern of the artists life and surroundings.  
*Runs until February 5*

## ONGOING

### The Culture House

#### Medieval Manuscripts Eddas and Sagas

It includes principal medieval manuscripts, such as Codices Regii of the Poetic Edda and Prose Edda, and law codices and Christian works, not to forget the Sagas of Icelanders.

*On permanent view*

#### Child of Hope - Youth and Jón Sigurósson

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

*On permanent view*

#### Medieval Manuscripts - Eddas and Sagas

Some of Iceland's medieval manuscripts on display. Guided tour in

English on Mondays & Fridays at 15:00

*On permanent view*

#### Millennium - phase one

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

*On permanent view*

#### The Library Room

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

*On permanent view*

### The Einar Jónsson Museum

#### Einar Jónsson

The museum contains close to 300 art works spanning a 60 year career: carvings from the artist's youth, sculptures, paintings and drawings. A beautiful tree-clad garden adorned with 26 bronze casts of the artist's works is located behind the museum

*On permanent view*

### Gerðarsafn

#### Endemis (Ó) Exhibition

*Runs until January 8*

### Gerðuberg

#### Stone, scissors, paper and the keys to heaven

The exhibition Steinn, skæri, pappír og lyklar að himnaríki features Icelandic stones, scissors of various shapes and sizes, paper (in the form of biblical pictures and bibles) and keys, some of which (who knows?) may unlock the doors of heaven itself.

*Runs until June 22*

#### Proverbs in Focus

Focus, an amateur photographers' society, exhibits photos that are based on Icelandic proverbs.

*Runs until January 8*

#### Pearls "Gymnastics for women - should be feminine."

Magdalena Margrét Kjartansdóttir exhibits woodcuts, linocuts and printing on Japanese paper. The subject matter is a mélange of poetry and reality: the female body from childhood to the last moments.

*Runs until January 8*

#### Óbið

Bjarnheiður Bjarnadóttir og Óli Róbert Hediddeche exhibit acrylics and oil paintings in the cafeteria. Two artists take part; some of the works are joint productions.

*Runs until January 15*

### Museum of Design and Applied Art

"Our Things" - is exhibition platforming the various items the museum has gathered over the years and mirrors the diversity in Icelandic design throughout the years.

*Runs until January 15*



10  
Jan

## Does E-commerce Have A Future In Iceland?

Tax Law Professor Pomp lectures at the National Museum

January 10, 14:00

National Museum of Iceland

Free

When's the last time you heard, "Attention shoppers, the time is now 20:50 and the store will be closing in 10 minutes" over an intercom at a large department store? With the rise of e-commerce, many now take for granted the beauty of shopping from the comfort of their home at the hour of their choice.

But Icelanders will surely tell you that online shopping is not as easy as pie. Waiting time aside, when Icelanders pick up their purchase from the Customs Office, where it has likely been detained, they discover that it has been taxed up the wazoo. Yep, that copy of 'The Never Ending Story' ends up costing 50% more than the sticker price.

If your blood is boiling right now, you may be interested in heading over to the National Museum on January 10 to catch Professor of law Dr. Pomp's lecture on e-commerce. As a tax law expert, he will discuss the future of e-commerce and the role that these kinds of taxation barriers play.

### "White Christmas"

The Design Museum's holiday exhibition and boasts diverse Scandinavian tableware; old mixed with new and banal side by side with exotic.

*Runs until January 15, 2012*

### "Pia Holm"

Finnish designer and her works are the subject of this temporary presentation to familiarize by-passers with new tendencies in Scandinavian design.

*Runs until January 15*

### Knitting Iceland

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

*On permanent view*

## Art | Venue finder

### ART67

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

### Artótek

Tryggvagata 15 | **D3**  
Mon 10-21, Tue-Thu 10-19, Fri 11-19, Sat and Sun 13-17  
[www.sim.is/Index/Islenka/Artotek](http://www.sim.is/Index/Islenka/Artotek)

### ASÍ Art Museum

Freygata 41 | **H6**  
Tue-Sun 13-17

### Árbæjarsafn

Kistuhylur 4

### The Culture House

Hverfisgata 15 | **E5**  
Open daily 11-17  
[www.thjodmenning.is](http://www.thjodmenning.is)

### Dwarf Gallery

Grundarstigur 21 | **F4**  
Opening Hours: Fri and Sat 18-20  
[www.this.is/birta/dwarfgallery/dwarfgallery1.html](http://www.this.is/birta/dwarfgallery/dwarfgallery1.html)

### The Einar Jónsson Museum

Eiríksgrata | **G6**  
Tue-Sun 14-17  
[www.skulptur.is](http://www.skulptur.is)

### Gallery Ágúst

Baldursgata 12 | **G5**  
Wed-Sat 12-17  
[www.galleriagust.is](http://www.galleriagust.is)

### Gallery Fold

Rauðarástigur 14-16 | **G8**  
Mon-Fri 10-18 / Sat 11-16 / Sun 14-16  
[www.myndlist.is](http://www.myndlist.is)

### Gallery Kaolin

Ingólfsstræti 8 | **F4**

### Gallery Kling & Bang

Hverfisgata 42 | **E6**  
Thurs-Sun from 14-18  
[this.is/klingogbang/](http://this.is/klingogbang/)

### Gerðuberg Cultural Centre

Gerðuberg 3-5  
Mon-Thu 11-17 / Wed 11-21 / Thu-Fri 11-17 / Sat-Sun 13-16  
[www.gerduberg.is](http://www.gerduberg.is)

### Hitt Húsið

- Gallery Tukt  
Pósthússtræti 3-5 | **E4**  
[www.hittusid.is](http://www.hittusid.is)

### i8 Gallery

Tryggvagata 16 | **D3**  
Tue-Fri 11-17 / Sat 13-17 and by appointment.  
[www.i8.is](http://www.i8.is)

### Living Art Museum

Skúlagata 28 | **E7**  
Wed, Fri-Sun 13-17 / Thu 13-22. [www.nylo.is](http://www.nylo.is)

### Hafnarborg

Strandgötu 34,  
Hafnarfjörður

### Mokka Kaffi

Skólavörðustíg 3A | **E5**

### The National Gallery of Iceland

Fríkirkjuvegur 7 | **F4**  
Tue-Sun 11-17  
[www listasafn.is](http://www listasafn.is)

### The National Museum

Suðurgata 41 | **G2**  
Open daily 10-17  
[natmus.is](http://natmus.is)

### The Nordic House

Sturlugata 5 | **H2**  
Tue-Sun 12-17  
[www.nordice.is/](http://www.nordice.is/)

### Núttímalist Galleria

Skólavörðustígur 3a | **E5**

### Restaurant Reykjavík

Vesturgata 2 | **D3**

### Reykjavík 871+/-2

Aðalstræti 17 | **E3**  
Open daily 10-17

### Reykjavík Art Gallery

Skúlagata 28 | **E7**  
Tuesday through Sunday 14-18

### Reykjavík Art Museum

Open daily 10-16  
[www listasafnreykjavikur.is](http://www listasafnreykjavikur.is)

### Ásmundur Sveinsson Sculpture Museum

Sigtún

### Hafnarhús

Tryggvagata 17 | **D3**

### Kjarvalsstaðir

Flókagata

### Reykjavík Maritime Museum

Grandagarður 8 | **B2**

### Reykjavík Museum of Photography

Tryggvagata 16 | **D3**  
Weekdays 12-19 / Sat-Sun 13-17 - [www.ljos-myndasafnreykjavikur.is](http://www.ljos-myndasafnreykjavikur.is)

### Sigurjón Ólafsson Museum

Laugarnestangi 70

### SÍM, The Association of Icelandic Artists

Mon-Fri 10-16

Hafnarstræti 16 | **E4**

### Spark, Design Space

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**The National Museum**  
**The Making of a Nation** - Heritage  
 and History in Iceland  
 This exhibition is intended to provide  
 insight into the history of the Icelandic  
 nation from the Settlement to the  
 present day.  
*On permanent view.*

**The Nordic House**  
**"Strangir fletir"**  
 An exhibition by artists Sigurður Þórir  
 and Sigurður Örylgsson. The works are  
 colorful abstract geometrical art. Open  
 from 12 pm to 5 pm every day except  
 for Mondays.  
*Runs through January 9, 2012*  
**The Library**  
 The collection centres on new Nordic  
 literature, both fiction and non-fiction.  
 The library lends out novels, academic  
 publications, audio books and more  
*On permanent view*

**Reykjavik Art Museum,**  
**Ásmundarsafn**  
**From Sketch to Sculpture** - Draw-  
 ings by Ásmundur Sveinsson. The  
 exhibition offers a first insight into  
 the rich collection of drawings by the  
 sculptor Ásmundur Sveinsson, as the  
 Reykjavik Art Museum has recently  
 completed the digital registration of  
 about 2000 drawings that the artist  
 bequeathed to the Museum.  
*Runs until April 22, 2012*  
**Magnús Árnason - Homage**  
 Árnason's works, whether in his  
 sound-pieces, sculptures or per-  
 formances, stand on a vague line  
 between the real and unreal, fiction  
 and facts. In his recent work, he has  
 worked with nature and natural his-  
 tory; moving away from the mythologi-  
 cal references seen in his earlier work.  
*Runs until April 22*

**Hafnarhús**  
**Erró - Drawings**  
 The exhibition consists of 180 draw-  
 ings Erró has done since 1944 until the  
 present day  
*Runs until August 26*  
**D22 Björk Viggósdóttir**  
 Björk works with colors, emotions,  
 signs and other things from the  
 everyday, which she brings to other  
 dimensions by creating for them new  
 perspectives and settings.  
*Runs until January 8*

**Kjarvalsstaðir**  
**Kjarval - Key Works**  
 Reykjavik Art Museum draws on  
 its extensive collection of works by  
 Jóhannes S. Kjarval for ongoing exhibi-  
 tions at Kjarvalsstaðir. The exhibition  
 in the Kjarval Gallery features key  
 works from the museum.  
*Runs until January 15, 2012*

**Reykjavik City Museum - Reykja-  
 vik 871 +/- 2**  
**The Settlement Exhibition**  
 Archaeological findings from ruins of  
 one of the first houses in Iceland and  
 other excavations in the city centre,  
 open daily 10:00-17:00, 600 ISK per  
 adult, 300 ISK for children (children  
 under 12, free) and 450 ISK per person  
 in groups (10+)  
*On permanent view*

**Reykjavik Maritime Museum**  
**From Poverty to Abundance**  
 Photos documenting Icelandic fisher-  
 men at the turn of the 20th century  
*On permanent view*  
**The History of Sailing**  
 Iceland's maritime history and the  
 growth of the Reykjavik Harbour  
*On permanent view*  
**The Call of Sagas**  
 A exhibition from Finland about a  
 adventurous voyage in an open boat  
 from Finland to Iceland, honoring the  
 old viking shipping routes.  
*On permanent view*  
**The Watercolours of Ólafur Thorla-  
 cius**  
 Ólafur Þór worked with the Icelandic  
 Coast Guard for many years as a map-  
 maker. He is now retired and paints  
 beautiful watercolors in his free time.  
*On permanent view*

**Reykjavik Museum of Photogra-  
 phy**  
**50 Years Of Photography** - An  
 exhibition of photograph Marc Riboud  
 spanning 50 years of his career as  
 a photo journalist. His work has  
 appeared in Life, Gv©o, National  
 Geographic, Paris Match and Ster.  
*Runs until January 8, 2012*

**Spark Design Space**  
**A Salon show** is being prepared at  
 Spark containing selected projects  
 from the past as well as a few new  
 things we can not resist.  
*Spark is open during the transformation.*

**Skaftfell, Seyðisfjörður**  
 Check [www.skaftfell.is](http://www.skaftfell.is) for latest  
 showst

**Sláturhúsið, Egilsstaðir**  
 Check [www.slaturhusid.is](http://www.slaturhusid.is) for latest  
 shows



**Christmas: It's Not  
 Over 'Til It's Over!**  
*Runs until January 15*  
*Museum of Design and Applied Art*

Well, we suppose it is unless you picked  
 this paper up fresh off the press as  
 January 6 marks the thirteenth and final  
 day of the Icelandic Christmas. On that  
 day we may have one last Christmas  
 party before we bid farewell to the last  
 yuletide lad and shoot off our remnant  
 fireworks.

But if you're not ready to say good-  
 bye, you should know that The Museum  
 of Design and Applied Art isn't ether.  
 Their exhibition, White Christmas, is  
 ongoing until January 15. As Christmas  
 often seems like one giant dinner party,  
 a table set in a festive Nordic manner is  
 on display. The feast is absent, but the  
 smell of Christmas is in the air.



**Alliance Francaise's French Movie Festival**  
*January 27 - February 9*  
*Movie theatres around town*  
*For prices, check [www.midi.is](http://www.midi.is)*

During these more depressing months of the year, the cultural institute Alliance  
 Francaise Islande (a Franco-Icelandic institution meant to spread French culture  
 and endorse cross-national communication) brightens our existence with this  
 brilliant film festival. It brings us the best of French cinema, from old classics like  
 Godard to new in-your-face French delicacies. Though it is fast approaching, the  
 festival remains somewhat of a mystery. All we know is that Michel Hazanvicius  
 will kick things off with his brand new feature l'Artiste. If the past film festivals are  
 anything to go by, you can count on a jam-packed programme of terrific films.  
 ATTN: film buffs should clear their calendar for this extended week of visual or-  
 gasms. Check [www.af.is](http://www.af.is) for more detailed information.

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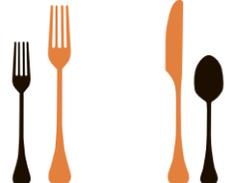
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# F O O D

FOR YOUR MIND, BODY AND SOUL IN 2011



<b>Hamborgarafabrikkan</b> Höfðatún 2 	<b>Kína Flavour</b> Lækjargata 10 	<b>Eldhrímnir</b> Borgartún 14 
<b>Saffran</b> Glæsibær/Dalvegur 4 	<b>Ban Thai</b> Laugavegur 130 	<b>Núðluhúsið</b> Laugavegur 59 
<b>Laundromat</b> Austurstræti 9 	<b>Iðunnareplið</b> Templarasund 3 	<b>Kitchen Eldhús</b> Laugavegur 60a 
<b>Tasty</b> Laugavegur 60 	<b>Sjávargrillið</b> Skólavörðustígur 14 	<b>Uno cuciana italiana</b> Hafnarstræti 1-3 
<b>Dill</b> Norræna húsið 	<b>73</b> Laugavegur 73 	<b>Núðluskálin</b> Skólavörðustígur 8 
<b>1919 Restaurant</b> Aðalstræti 16 	<b>Thai Reykjavík</b> Lækjargata 8 	

## Five Food Things That Made Me Happy In 2011

### A BIGGER SELECTION OF ASIAN FOOD

In one fell swoop NAM (Nú tíma Asísk Matargerð) have started offering bento boxes, proper dumplings (so they say) and banh mis. I thought Iceland was speeding up its adoption of foreign trends but these ones took ages. I haven't had a chance to eat there yet and the only location so far is way out in the burbs, but here's hoping this catches on. Ban-Thai is still good, Sushi-barinn is still good, Noodle Station is still bothering Skólavörðustígur with the fragrance of that insanely addictive anis-broth and Núðluskálin won me over pretty fast.

### SMALL ETHNIC PLACES WITH RAW PRODUCE

Tyrkneskur Bazaar recently opened in Síðumúli 17. Offering halal lamb in various cuts, fairly affordable goat and sheep feta, yufka, sausages, seasonal fruit (occasionally) and the usual (albeit humbler) array of spices, nuts and dried fruit. Thai/Vietnamese speciality store Mai Thai is still around and holding up

despite the recession. A couple of more Polish places popped up this year to the continued joy of my pickle-ravaged household and the Polish sausages at Laugalækur put the spring in my step and the gout in my joints.

### A GREATER FOCUS ON LOCAL INGREDIENTS

With the New Nordic tsunami sweeping over everything, it is small wonder that local ingredients have remained front and centre in 2011. A part of me suspects this may be yet another sinister Danish attempt at subtly disguised xenophobia but probably that's my post-colonial paranoia talking. The restaurant scene in Iceland has been a little too uniform in their adoption of the trend but there's no denying that as far as trends go this one has a lot going for it.

### A GROWING FARMERS' MARKET SCENE

It doesn't really have a fixed presence yet but it's only a matter of time, as last summer it seemed you couldn't

open the door without running into one. Yes it may be a little bobo and it's definitely too pricey for your average stiff to switch over completely, but if it means raw milk, non-watery beef and five kinds of kale then you'll see no complaints here. And try not to forget Frú Lauga and Kolaportið as this trend blossoms in 2012

### AN EXPLODING MICRO-BREWERY SCENE

El Grillo, Brío, Kaldi, Gæðingur, Einstök, Móri, Pils, Úlfur, Skjálfti, Lava, Bjartur, Jökull, whatever you're all called. There's 320 thousand of us—you're all insane. Skál!

RAGNAR EGILSSON



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# 2011 IN REVIEWS

<b>Íslenski Barinn</b> Pósthússtræti 9 	<b>Kex</b> Skúlagata 28 	<b>Durum</b> Laugavegur 42 
<b>Litli bóndabærinn</b> Laugavegur 41 	<b>St Paul's</b> Tryggvagata 16 	<b>Grænn Kostur</b> Skólavörðustígur 8 
<b>Haninn</b> Suðurlandsbraut 46 	<b>Happ</b> Austurstræti 22 	<b>Grillmarkaðurinn</b> Lækjargata 2a 
<b>Kolabrautin</b> Harpa Concert Hall 	<b>Harry's</b> Rauðarárstígur 33 	<b>Fjalakötturinn</b> Aðalstræti 16 
<b>Sjávarkjallarinn</b> Aðalstræti 2 	<b>Víkingakráin</b> Hafnarstræti 1-3 	

## Five Food Things I Want To See More Of In 2012

### COMPETITION IN THE DAIRY MARKET AND MORE CHEESE

They may be tracing links between milk products and prostate cancer but I just can't get enough of that milky goodness. The star of Iceland's most famous cheese, "skyr," is rising (it is technically closer to cheese than yoghurt), but the more traditional cheese production is still struggling to find its feet. Much of this can be blamed on the monopoly in the local dairy market, with the milk behemoth Auðhumla owning the farmer collective Norðurmjólk (KEA) and supermarket mainstay Mjólkursamsalan. The rest stems from severe limitation on imported dairy products. There have been many contenders but it's proven a tough nut to crack. Here's hoping Vesturmjólk in Borgarnes and Kú in Hafnarfjörður will manage to spread their milky wings.

And let's not forget the grassroots. 'Erpsstaðir' (in Dalasýsla) and 'Sæluostar úr sveitinni' offered some interesting fresh cheeses at one of the throw-up farmers' markets last December, and

we might yet see the same kind of boom the microbrews underwent.

### RAW SAUSAGES IN STORES

I want to be able to walk into Bónus and choose between 5 types of uncured, unsalted, unsmoked sausages. I can only eat pylsur for so long. Throw me a sausage why dontcha!?

### AN INDEPENDENT FRIED CHICKEN JOINT IN 101 REYKJAVÍK

Haninn proved pretty good. Not perfect but definitely something I'd like to see more of. And at Suðurver, they are still making a solid and completely independent southern-fried chicken. The problem is that neither of those is downtown. I would love to see a basic, unpretentious fried chicken place in 101 Reykjavík. I'd totally settle for Korean hot wings too (let the poultry fury at Kreuzberg's Angry Chicken guide the way).

### BYOB RESTAURANTS

With the already stupidly expensive alcohol to be raised even higher in 2012, pre-gaming has become mandatory. Let me bring my moonshine in ginger ale in a rusty flask and you'll have a loyal customer for life. Hell, you could even marry it with the chicken idea. But no cork fee or I'll cut you! ("you better listen - he's a mean drunk!").

### SMALL, COLOURFUL, CRAZY PLACES WITH A NARROW FOCUS

...and affordable! Kogi BBQ food truck in L.A., Forno Campo de' Fiori in Rome, Bánh Mì Zòn in New York, Mooli's in London, Angry Chicken in Berlin. I would like more hole-in-a-wall places that do one thing and do it really well, places that don't worry about what's fashionable or about pleasing everyone, but build on personality and repetition. Examples of this from 2011 are Litli Bóndabærinn, Noodle Station and St. Paul's.

✍️ RAGNAR EGILSSON

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