



*The*  
REYKJAVÍK  
GRAPEVINE

TOURIST OF THE YEAR

Missing

Issue 1 × 2013

January 11  
- February 7

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THE GRAPEVINE  
MUSIC AWARDS

Hafnarstræti 15, 101 Reykjavík  
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 Published by Fróken ehf.  
[www.froken.is](http://www.froken.is)  
 Member of the Icelandic Travel Industry Association  
[www.saf.is](http://www.saf.is)  
 Printed by Landsprent ehf. in 25,000 copies.

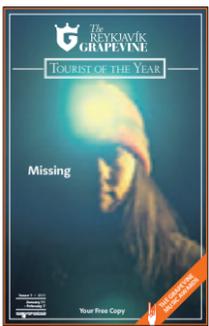
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Cover by: Döðlur  
 Photography: Daniel Atlason  
 Special thanks to: Fjallakofinn & 66°North

Editorial | Anna Andersen

## A True Icelandic Christmas Story

### Anna's 20th Editorial

As I thought about what to write in this space, the typical things came to mind—reflections on 2012, hopes and plans for 2013, a glorified table of contents... But in the end I decided, why not relay a simple Christmas story, which in many ways says so much more about the Iceland of today than any of those other ideas.



It's the story of Matthías Máni Erlingsson, a twenty-four-year-old who escaped from Iceland's maximum-security prison on December 17 and managed to evade authorities for an entire week.

From the moment that he escaped, the media published story after story about him and the public followed obsessively. Needless to say, it's not every day that the media and public have a fugitive on the loose, let alone one serving five years for the attempted murder of his step-mother with whom he had an affair.

Every single police officer in the country and 50 some search and rescue personnel were looking for

Matthías and the public was repeatedly warned to stay away if they spotted him, as he was considered highly dangerous and "equipped like Rambo."

The exciting manhunt finally came to a close early Christmas Eve morning when Matthías knocked on a farmer's door in rural Ásólfstaðir and asked to be turned in to the police.

"We started to talk to the boy through the kitchen window and offered him soup and smoked meat. We handed it to him through the window, but he seemed easy to talk to so we took him inside," the farmer told the media on Christmas Day.

"When he came inside, we gave him some coffee and Christmas cake and talked to him. He said he didn't want to let his family suffer by hiding over Christmas. Then we just waited for the police and he ate."

While most people spent their holiday with family and friends, this Icelandic family spent part of theirs with an armed fugitive sitting in their living room. There is just something so wonderfully Icelandic about the whole thing, a true Icelandic Christmas story to carry us into the New Year.

### Reykjavík Grapevine Year In Covers



## What's The Deal With Those Crazy Icelandic Letters Yo?

# Ð ð Þ þ Æ æ Ö ö

We thought we'd explain. We're ripping the idea off from the Icelandair magazine. Go read that magazine if you can. It's free.

We like spelling things using Icelandic letters like 'æ' and 'þ' and also those crazy accents over the vowels. Like Icelandair's inflight magazine—IcelandairInfo—says, the Icelandic language can use accents on all of the vowels, making them look all unique, like this: á, é, í, ó, ú, ö, ý (the accent also changes the pronunciation of the letters. The á in "kjáni" sounds quite different from the a in "asni", for instance). We also have an additional three letters. As IcelandairInfo notes:

**æ** (often written as ae) is pronounced like the i in tide.

**ð** (often written as d) is pronounced like the th in there

**þ** (often written as th) is pronounced like the th in think"

### Here Is Your Kreisi Æcelandic Frase For Þis Issue!

"Fyrirgefðu, en er ekki kominn tími á að henda jólatrénu"

(Fyr-ir-gev-thu, en err eh-kke, come-in team-eh ow ath hen-dah yol-ah-tr-yeah-n-eh?)

Pardon, isn't it time to throw out your Christmas tree?

### TRACK OF THE ISSUE YEAR!



### Háa C - Moses Hightower

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

That's right, our freebie song this issue is not just for this issue but our fancy music team voted it BEST SONG of the year! THE YEAR!!! Isn't that cool? Or rather, it's very, very hot! Totally smooth and steamy soul-pop to imagine yourself lying back on a beach, wearing cabana gear and sipping on something out of a coconut shell. Download this baby, crank up the heaters in your house, turn up this sweet tune and forget about our foul winter weather!

### FUN TRIVIA QUESTION!

Taken from the educational trivia game *Instant Iceland*

**Q:** A popular sport was banned in Iceland in 1956. Some doctors claimed the sport was not healthy for those who practiced it and that it had been linked to the early onset of Alzheimer's disease. What sport was it?

- A** Boxing
- B** Team Handball
- C** Ice Hockey

Turn to page 24 for the answer!

The ideal stop between Thingvellir and Geysir – daily tours by Reykjavík Excursions

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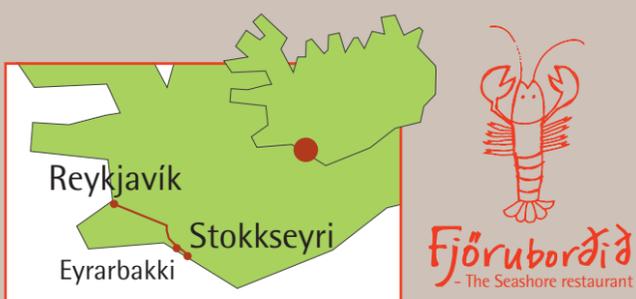


## GEYSIR

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## Sour grapes & stuff

### Most Awesome Letter of the Issue

Dear Jón Gnarr,

Thank you for working so hard to make our city a great place to live in, while being a cool guy! As I've been following your work, you were stating a few times about the importance of public transportation, and your vision for the people of Reykjavik to stop driving so much. I think it's a great initiative, truly am. But let me share a little story with you.

Me and my boyfriend are living in Reykjavik for the past few years, we both work and study downtown, so both for economic and ideological reasons we avoided buying car and trying to get by, by walking and biking. Each time however when we had to use the public transportation, we are astonished by the undeveloped infrastructure. Take this Friday for example. Early morning we had to go to office in Borgatún to sign some paper and get back to work fast. Borgatún is 6 km from our house, aka 10 minutes drive. Yet bus wise it takes 30 minutes each direction. Ok. So the new Stræto.is website layout made trip planing considerably more complicated, and also published wrong arrival time for the bus, so we missed the first bus by 3 minutes and had to wait for the next one for 15 more minutes, in an open bus sta-

tion (someone thought that having glass walls around you on cold windy January morning is privilege). When finally reaching our destination, it turned out to take more time than we assumed, so our ticket expired and we had to buy new one. There is no payment with credit cards or phone, and no possibility to buy the ticket anywhere else rather on the bus, without getting change. So, here began our journey to find a place to withdraw money, find where to change it into exactly 700kr, waiting for the bus and embark on a 40 minutes trip to Grandi (where my boyfriend works). When calculating the time (2 hours) and money (1500 kr), we realized that Reykjavik is the probably the only capital in world where it's faster and cheaper to use private transportation. Since now I will have to travel more often out of downtown due to work, we decided that in this city there is no option but to buy a car. I'm sorry that the system is so unfriendly for users that it breaks down even those who try to avoid buying a car. Unfortunately without massive change throughout the entire system, I don't see how your vision of preferring public transportation over private cars, can be possible.

Juli Vol

Dear Juli,

Well said! There is something so incredibly frustrating about being in a country that claims environmental responsibility and encourages public transport, yet can't get its act together to make their bus system's website remotely manageable. (What was wrong with it before? Why did they change it? Why did they make it WORSE? IF IT AIN'T BROKE, DON'T FUCK IT UP.) Can we talk about the bus routes for a second too? Like how there are blocks and blocks where no bus stops, so you end up walking a lot anyway, but then places like Lækjartorg where they pile onto each other like monkeys in a barrel? And how the schedules for busses in consecutive numbers all piggy-back departures, so if you miss the 11 at 9:21, you're gonna miss the 12, 13, 14 and 15 between 9:22 and 9:28! URGH. You got us started, Juli. Slow clap to you.

(Disclaimer: this letter originally appeared on Mayor Jón Gnarr's Facebook page and was later forwarded to us for print.)

Hey there, it seems that you know everything around here (RKV) and I would like to ask for an advice:

If you are a foreigner (bought a house) and moved to Iceland: is a special office or service for us, where we can get answers about paperworks, the way things work here, legal advices about common things (like house funds etc) in iceland. Or someone, who can point out the

right websites to get information?

Takk for your help,  
Thomas B.

Dear Thomas,

We did a little snooping around for you and found out from the Homeowners' Association of Iceland that foreigners who want to buy property in Iceland need to get special permission from

the Minister of Justice prior to begin their house-hunt, but apparently it's not that difficult to obtain. Supposedly! Be warned that the buying market right now is pretty bad though and a lot of properties have been grossly marked up, covering the debt incurred from the previous owners' mortgage. Real estate in a post-crash country is no gravy train. But good luck, and get in touch with the aforementioned association for all your paperwork help needs!

Hello!

I'm coming to Reykjavik for New Year's Eve and I would like to know if there is a vintage photo booth (who does the 4 different black and white pictures) somewhere in the city?

Maybe in somme museums or galleries?

I tried to have a look on internet but I didn't find anything. I thought that maybe you should know.

Thxs for your time anyway.

Best,  
Anne-Cecile.

Hi Anne-Cecile,

By now you've come and gone, but we felt like we should still answer your letter in case anybody else was wondering the same thing. In short, no, we do not have any of those vintage photo booths with the 4 different black and white pic-

tures anywhere in the city.

Your best bet is to check out Berlin where you'll find them all over the place. Alternatively, you could go to Palais de Tokyo in Paris and we think there is also one quite close to London Fields in London.

But you probably already knew that. Hope you enjoyed your stay!

Love, Grapevine

### MOST AWESOME LETTER TWO FREE PAIRS OF WOOLLEN SOCKS!

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Congratulations to this issue's MOST AWESOME LETTER. Drop us a line at [letters@grapevine.is](mailto:letters@grapevine.is) to find out how to collect those free socks! And if you're in the market for some socks come next issue, why not write us a wonderful reader letter to that same address. Like Axl Rose said: "It's so easy!"



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# Year In Photos

Grapevine photographer Alísa Kalyanova's highlights of 2012



## JANUARY

Tension was in the air at the start of the year, as President Ólafur Ragnar Grímsson intimated in his New Year's Address that he would not be running for another term that spring. He ultimately ran, in an unprecedentedly close race against an incumbent. The strongest challenger, broadcast journalist Þóra Arnórsdóttir, was neck and neck with Ólafur, but it was not to be, and the president looks to be finishing his term with a record 20 consecutive years in office. A new political party with ties to The Best Party was formed. Now called Bright Future, the party is polling high enough to win nine seats in parliament. The trial of former Prime Minister Geir H. Haarde began to wind into gear, and a bomb scare at the Prime Minister's office would finish the month off on a startling note.



## FEBRUARY

This month started with good ol' fashioned oil fever, as Norwegian and British prospectors discovered evidence of oil under the seabed of the so-called Dragon Area—the northeast corner of Icelandic territorial waters. Drilling licences have since been sold, but drilling is not expected to begin for at least another decade. A farmer in northeast Iceland shot a video of the Worm of Lagarfliót, a giant serpent reputed to live in the lake Fljótsdal. The video went viral before it was later determined that the creature was simply fishing net twisting in the current.

## MARCH

Controversy brewed due to a diplomatic misunderstanding, when the Progressive Party floated the idea of adopting the Canadian dollar as Iceland's currency. Canada's ambassador to Iceland later confirmed to the press that Canada's Central Bank was interested in the idea. Sadly for Canada, Iceland is currently trying to join the European Union, where they use euros, so loonies in Icelandic banks will have to wait. National power company Landsvirkjun is looking into building a power cable that could stretch to the UK. Talks between the two countries are ongoing. Finally, the first of two election rounds were held, ultimately resulting in Rev. Agnes M. Sigurðardóttir becoming Iceland's first female bishop.

## APRIL

Iceland pop band Of Monsters and Men began their meteoric rise to overseas success this month, selling 55,000 copies of their debut album in a single week. Chinese premier Wen Jiabao visited Iceland to discuss trade options, among other things. The Geir H. Haarde trial came to a close with Geir being found guilty of one of four charges of negligence and mismanagement during his time in office. He received no punishment and he went on to become a consultant for a law firm.

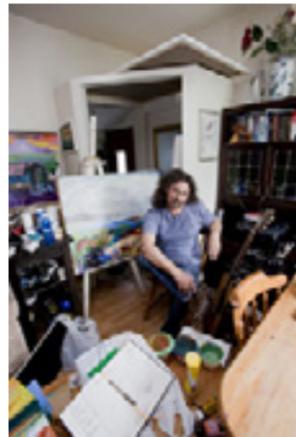
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The years change, the pylsa stays the same!



Swimmers at the Blue Lagoon before competing in the International Gay & Lesbian Aquatics championship.



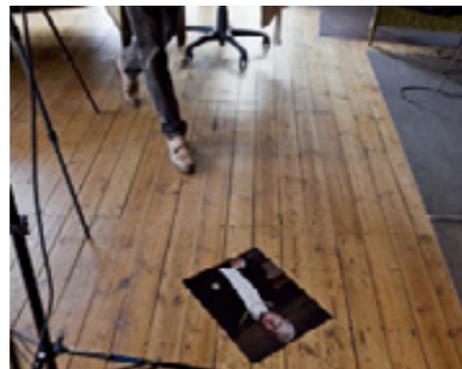
Bjartmar Guðlaugs celebrated 60 years of singing songs, drawing glaciers and painting peoples' houses.



Hallgrímur Helgason in his office, contemplating architectural importance.



Partying with horses at the Extreme Chill festival in Hellissandur.



Incumbent Ólafur Ragnar Grímsson became Iceland's longest-serving president.



Beloved venue Nasa shut its doors before Iceland Airwaves...



... but it was still a blast! American band Friends blew minds at Listasafnið.



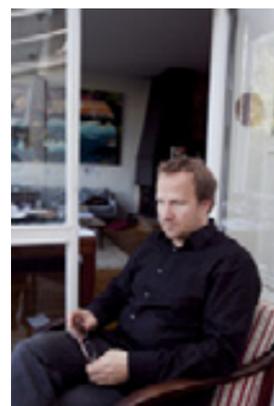
LungA festival-goers take a raft ride in Seyðisfjörður's bay.



BIRNA models bronzing up before hitting the catwalk at the Reykjavík Fashion Festival.



Pussy Riot meets Pink Iceland! Mayor Jón Gnarr with Eva María Þórarinsdóttir and Birna Hrönn Björnsdóttir at the Gay Pride parade.



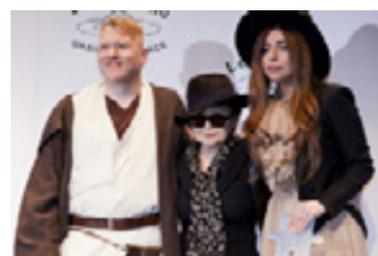
Andri Snær Magnason, the morning after finishing his new book, 'Lovestar'.



Hjartagarðurinn, as it will be best remembered.



Icelandic sheep getting all up in our business on Vigur island in the Westfjords.



The Jón Gnarr-Yoko Ono-Lady Gaga photo op at the Peace Awards ceremony.



LEGEND frontman Krummi sure was chipper at their LungA performance!



Bad weather didn't make Gay Pride a wash. You can't rain on this queen's parade!



The year ends as it always does, with a bang! Happy 2013!



Keeping Iceland warm  
since 1926

## 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 86th 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.

[magazine.66north.is](http://magazine.66north.is)

Iceland | FAQ

# So What's This New Year's Eve Sketch Comedy Show I Keep Hearing About?

**Words**

Kári Tulinius

**Illustration**

Inga María Brynjarsdóttir

There is a long answer to that question, but the short answer is that every New Year's Eve, the Icelandic state broadcaster RÚV puts on a half-hour to forty-five minute long sketch comedy programme that pokes fun at Icelandic politicians and celebrities. Roughly 75%–90% of the population tune in to watch it every year.

**AND THE LONG ANSWER?**

New Year's Eve in Iceland is a carnival. Not in the sense of a bunch of people parading down streets dressed as naked peacock-human hybrids, but in the sense of it being a time when the structure of society is overturned and celebrated and powerful are mocked, and it is considered a good idea to let drunk people play with fireworks.

**DRUNK PEOPLE AND FIREWORKS. WHAT COULD POSSIBLY GO WRONG?**

Every New Year's someone gets badly injured; this time a man went to the hospital after getting a firework in his face. In addition to that, twelve minor fires got started in Reykjavík and two grass fires broke out. Luckily, fire fighters had no trouble putting them all out. The end of the annual sketch comedy show actually serves as the starting gun for the fireworks. Icelanders generally gather for dinner with various family members for New Year's Eve, and before shooting at the sky like angry cowboys cursing God, they get together to watch a sketch comedy show.

**AND IS IT ANY GOOD?**

Sometimes it is great. When the show is funny, it lives on in folk memory for years. There are people who speak wistfully of the 1985 edition, and the ones from 2001 and 2002 are considered classics. The bad ones also etch themselves into the popular consciousness, but for



different reasons. Watching an unfunny comedy is never comfortable at the best of times, but being forced to endure it with your entire family adds another level of awkwardness. An unfunny sex joke is cringe worthy, and watching it sitting next to your mother and grandmother is even worse.

**WHY DON'T PEOPLE JUST TURN IT OFF?**

It is a ritual as old as time. Well, as old as Icelandic-language television broadcasting. Practically everyone watches it, and hopes dearly that it will be good. So when it is bad, it is like watching a magician who says he will draw a rabbit from his hat, but instead produces a photo of your parents having sex and shows it on national television.

**YOU SEEM LIKE YOU SPEAK FROM BITTER EXPERIENCE**

I will never forgive Andy "Wondrous" Sandrino for what he did. All made-up public humiliation aside, the end of the year sketch comedy is in theory as simple as pulling a rabbit out of a hat. There are only a few elements that need to be right: 1) The show must make fun of the famous and powerful. 2) It must reference events that most Icelanders will have heard of. 3) The satire must have an edge. 4) It must be funny.

**I'D WAGER IT'S THE LAST ONE THAT'S TRICKY**

You would win that bet, though past editions have fallen afoul of the other ones. Satire aimed at un-powerful people is

just mean. If it deals with things most people will not have heard of, it will go above people's heads. And jokes without an edge are just back-slapping in another form; the subjects of the satire must feel the sting.

**HOW DO THE TARGETS RESPOND?**

There are three main strategies. The first and most effective one, taken by ageing rock star and perennial satirical target Bubbi Morthens, is to say that you found it all hilarious. Edda Sif Pálsdóttir, the daughter of the director of RÚV, who was hired by her father's underling as a television sports journalist, exemplified the second method. She responded with incredulity that anyone would find the idea of hiring the boss's offspring for a high profile TV job to be worthy of satire. And then there is the third way.

**GOING PEACHPIT CRAZY?**

As demonstrated by serial presidential candidate Ástþór Magnússon, whose political ambitions this year were ended when it turned out that the signatures he turned in as a prerequisite to stand for office were forged. He responded to being the butt of humour by pressing charges against RÚV director and father-of-the-year contender Páll Magnússon and sending a complaint about the content of the comedy show to the Icelandic government's media watchdog, claiming it was not funny at all.

**WELL, WAS IT FUNNY?**

It is traditional that everyone shares their opinion of the show with everyone else in the first days of the new year. However, I am not the best judge as I spent New Year's Eve fighting off a virus. I will say, though, that my sickness was at least momentarily forgotten about as I frantically thought of ways to change the subject when my mother asked for an explanation of a deeply unfunny rape joke. Other than that, I have already forgotten what it was about.



**MAY**

Eurovision once again captivated the nation, as singers Jónsi (of Í Svörtum Fötum, not Sigur Rós) and Greta Salóme made it into



the finals with their song "Never Forget." Sadly, Sweden would end up taking it. Controversy erupted when it came to light that Huang Nubo, a perennial presence in the news, intended to build luxury villas for wealthy Chinese business folk in Grímsvötn. His land deal is currently on hold. An advisory referendum was held on some of the clauses to be added to the new constitution, among them those regarding separation of church and state, protection of natural resources, and reforming the voting system.

**JUNE**

At the start of this month, some 1,500 Icelanders observed the transit of Venus across the Sun from the top of the hill Öskjuhlíð. In keeping with Iceland's progressive policies on LGBT issues, a bill submitted by the Ministry of Welfare to create clearer laws regarding the rights of the transgendered was voted

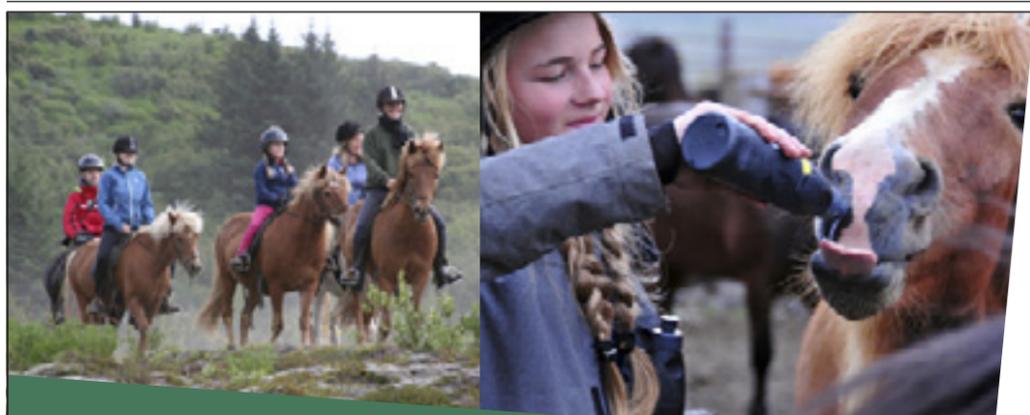


into law. The arrival of Tom Cruise in Iceland for the filming of Oblivion caused a frenzied media storm, shortly after which the actor zipped off to the countryside for shooting, never to be seen again. In Iceland. About half of the Icesave debt was paid, and the month finished off with President Ólafur Ragnar Grímsson starting a new presidential term.

**JULY**

Björk Eidsdóttir and Erla Bhlynsdóttir, two journalists who wrote articles on the strip clubs Goldfinger and Strawberries and were sued for slander, appealed to the European Court of Human Rights, and won. They were awarded damages be paid to them by the Icelandic state for not ensuring their basic right to quote someone accurately and give an accused party a fair chance to respond. An Icelandic Pirate Party launched, and with almost no campaigning, polling and little media coverage, it currently stand at 2.5%. Towards the end of

– Continues over –



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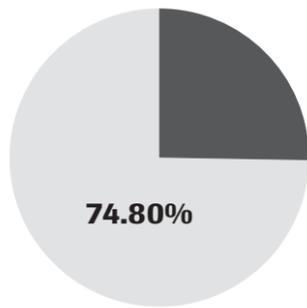


# Year In Numbers

Stats from 2012 compiled by self-proclaimed maker of the internet and data hacker Páll Hilmarsson

**946**

News articles published on grapevine.is



The percentage of Iceland's online population on Facebook

**Sigur Rós**

Most followed Icelandic celebrities on Twitter with 113.533 followers

**803.210**

Tonnes of aluminium produced

**9**

Number of reported mass layoffs, with a total of 293 people affected

**~ 1200**

Number of reported fires in Reykjavík. 114 of which were in buildings, down from 144 in 2011.

**1 1668**

Presidential election

Number of drug charges Jan-Oct

**Björk**

Most liked Icelandic celebrity on Facebook with 241492 fans

**3255**

Children born at the National University Hospital

**1585**

Number of recorded hours of sunshine in Reykjavík

**10 & 21**

Most frequent numbers in the lottery, lotto.is

**-7.9°C**

Lowest recorded temperature in Reykjavík

**9629**

Number of new motor vehicles imported

**977**

Bankrupt companies Jan-Nov

**~ 10.000**

Individuals who were prescribed drugs treating mental illness

**14.344**

Number of surgical operations Jan-Oct at the National University Hospital

**2.380.214**

Passengers travelling through Keflavík airport. Up by 12.7%



– Continued –

the month, a collective sigh of relief was heaved when the city of Reykjavík confirmed that there were no plans to tear down the nightclub Nasa. How the rest of Austurvöllur will be developed, however, remains a point of contention.

**AUGUST**

➤ **G**ay Pride was the top story this month. The Icelandic Ethical Humanist Association (Siðmennt) held its first secular gay marriage, officiated by troubadour and political activist Hörður Torfason. Reykjavík Mayor Jón Gnarr showed his support for recently-jailed Russian punk rock band Pussy Riot by dressing as a member of the band in the Gay Pride parade. Celebrities were also a summer theme, as Russell Crowe visited to shoot scenes for the movie 'Noah.' He would end up singing an impromptu duet with Patti Smith on Culture Night, and was reportedly an all-around decent guy.



**SEPTEMBER**

➤ **N**orwegian retail chain Europris announced that they were shutting their doors in Iceland, much to the dismay of anyone needing two hundred metres of Christmas lights or an assortment of plastic flowers. Prime Minister Jóhanna Sigurðardóttir announced that she would not run for another term in office. The party is still trying to determine who their next chairperson will be.

**OCTOBER**

➤ **T**he LENNONONO peace awards were dedicated in Reykjavík, followed by the lighting of the Peace Tower on Viðey. Mayor Jón Gnarr was in attendance, dressed as Obi Wan Kenobi. Amongst the recipients of the awards were Lady Gaga, the late Christopher Hitchens, and Rachel Corrie. Unemployment hit an astonishingly low 5%, but the real story this month was Iceland's constitutional referendum, which approved the submitting of a constitutional draft to parliament. That was a pretty good international news day for us.



– Continues over –

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The Future | Books

# EBooks In Iceland: The Last Frontier

## D3's eBækur manages the unsteady terrain of the Icelandic eBook market



Simon Steel

Engilbert Hafsteinsson, the CEO of eBækur's mother company D3.

eBækur can thank one book in particular for most of its business. "I think it's the same all over the world," says Engilbert Hafsteinsson, the CEO of eBækur's mother company D3. He is of course referring to the familiar title, 'Fifty Shades of Grey.'

Since opening on October 5, the fledgling eBooks realtor of Sena-owned D3, has amassed a catalogue of approximately 300,000 titles. Of those titles, Engilbert estimates that 150 to 200 are in Icelandic. Excluding sales of E.L. James' work, eighty to ninety percent of the company's profit comes from these Icelandic works.

Still, Engilbert describes the eB-

ooks industry as a "jungle," a growing and developing field that is making a lot of the same mistakes made in the music industry.

### LIMITATIONS OF THE FIELD

eBækur hopes to move away from the current sales model for eBooks, in which books can't be lent and the actual ownership of the book is unclear. "We don't want to lock the customer in, Engilbert says. "It's just like when you buy a physical book—you can lend it and so on."

Making this possible requires removing the DRM, the digital rights management protections that prevent eBooks from being shared. Baldur Bjarnason—an Icelandic writer who has written several articles and a PhD thesis on eBooks and publishing—says that while some publishers have announced their willingness to get rid of DRM on books, nothing concrete has been announced.

Regardless, eBækur is optimistic given the success this strategy had in the music industry. "We actually did it before iTunes," Engilbert says, referring to eBækur's sister company Tónlist, which has amassed the largest catalogue of Icelandic music in the

“  
We want to be  
the iTunes of  
Iceland.  
”

country over the last eight years. "We took all the DRM off the songs and our sales tripled in the first month."

Baldur mentions several other longstanding obstacles preventing the eBook industry in Iceland from growing, including the absence of back catalogues and a lack of local talent with the ability to create eBooks. "They're a welcome entrance into the Icelandic eBook market," he says of eBækur, "but a new eBook realtor doesn't solve some of the fundamental problems holding eBooks back in Iceland."

Baldur says most Icelandic publishers only retain the rights to a novel for seven years. "Iceland has never had a decent offering of backlist titles in publishing," Baldur says. This makes it difficult to attain copies of older, out of print novels and the lack of titles

hurts Icelandic eBook distributors who depend on Icelandic titles to stay competitive against international giants like Amazon.

"Amazon is a big monster to compete with. They're ruthless in prices; they're ruthless in offers," Baldur says. "If eBækur only has a few Icelandic titles to compete with, they're going to be vulnerable."

### ONE STOP ENTERTAINMENT SHOP

To combat this vulnerability, D3 and eBækur have a series of expansion projects in the works. eBækur, for instance, has been working with Icelandic publishers to convert some of their back catalogue into digital copies for them.

"Publishers are starting to notice they have to go into the back catalogue," Engilbert says. "It's just something we know after our experience with music."

Additionally, eBækur claims to have the country's largest catalogue of audiobooks in the country and offers titles read by local celebrities. For example, their edition of Arnaldur Indriðason's 'Detective Erlender' is read by Ingvar Eggert Sigurðsson, who played Erlender in Baltasar Kormákur's adaptation of Arnaldur's 'Tainted Blood.'

As for D3, in the next few months it plans to launch an online store for purchasing games, a monthly fee based eBook site and a video streaming service equivalent to America's Netflix.

The idea is that D3 sites, both those in the planning stages and established sites such as eBækur and Tónlist, will become a one-stop shop for music, games, movies, TV shows, magazines and books. One username and password would allow subscribers access to all of these services.

"We want to be the iTunes of Iceland," Engilbert concludes.

✎ - ARIT JOHN



- Continued -

### NOVEMBER

Residents of Álftanes and Garðabær voted in a referendum in favour of merging their communities, which will take effect this year. The new town is going to be called "Garðabær"—not "Álftabær" or "Garðanes"—so you know who's running the show here. It was also revealed that the former director of Iceland Search and Rescue (ICE-SAR) may have been involved in money laundering. Suspicions arose after audio recordings surfaced, wherein Guðmundur Örn Jóhannsson, the director in question, is heard giving explicit instructions on how to roll millions of krónur into phony companies. Guðmundur has since stepped down, and we suspect he's going to be in a lot of trouble when all is said and done. But no Icelandic news story this month—or perhaps even this year—really took the international media by storm as much as a reported cat party busted by police, wherein Suðurnes law enforcement were duty bound to evict "two to three cats" found "snuggling" on a sofa in an abandoned house. Let that be a lesson to you cats out there.

### DECEMBER

A giant straw Christmas goat, which is erected in front of the Garðabær branch of IKEA every December, was burned down and reduced to smouldering ash and metal frame in a matter of minutes. The suspects still remain at large. Jón Gnarr announced that he would be running for parliament this spring, taking the fifth seat for the party Björt Framtíð in the Reykjavík north district. Baltasar Kormákur's movie 'The Deep' began to rake in the accolades, and was shortlisted for an Academy Award. Ultimately, the month's big story would be a follow-up on one that appeared near the beginning, as drilling licences were awarded to a company from Scotland and Norway's national oil company. By this time ten years from now, we'll all be lighting cigars with 10,000 krónur notes that have Davíð Oddson's face on them. Just you wait.



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			10:00	10:00	10:00		
	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			

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



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# Trailblazers Of The Tech Industry

## Is CCP forging Iceland's future business model?

When people talk about Iceland's resources, it's typically regarding fish, geothermal power and the landscapes that attract hundreds of thousands of tourists every year. Sadly missing from this conversation is the one resource that has been consistently going strong, even in times of crisis, and is not likely to be ever depleted. That is, imagination. When it comes to the creative fields, Icelanders have an undeniably high output of exports. A particularly telling case is CCP Games, one of the country's most successful companies across the board.

Founded in 1997 for the sole purpose of making massive multiplayer online roleplaying games (MMORPGs), CCP's flagship product is the sprawling sci-fi game EVE Online, a game that not only permits but also encourages theft, piracy, extortion and "griefing"—the act of more experienced players attacking those new to the game within limits.

### WHY IT THRIVES DESPITE THE CRASH

EVE Online's libertarian and meticulously detailed space pirate universe is a large part of what attracts people to the game and why CCP continues to grow, weathering the financial crisis of autumn 2008 with barely a scratch.

"EVE Online has grown consistently every year since it was released," CEO of CCP Games Hilmar Veigar Pétursson tells us. "It is quite resilient to the ups and downs of the world's economy, and entertainment propositions have historically proven quite counter cyclical."

Senior writer at the company Gauti Friðriksson says one key to the company's success is the fact that the internet is everywhere. "The vast majority of CCP's profits come from outside the country," he



So the economic recession at home didn't quite affect us the same way it did most local companies.



says. "So the economic recession at home didn't quite affect us the same way it did most local companies. I think any business that emphasises international profits, due to having a wider geographical spread of income, is likely to be more resistant to localised crises."

Adding to this point, software engineer Unnar Steinn Sigtryggsson says, "Our income is in Euros, dollars and now pound sterling as well so it probably weathers the fluctuations of the ISK better than if our revenue were in ISK."

### EMBARKING ON THE WARPATH

This is not to say that the company has been without its troubles. In late 2011, the company decided it had been stretching its resources a little too thin,



Simon Steel

Photo caption photo caption photo caption

and decided to do some restructuring—a neutral-sounding word that nonetheless usually means people are going to be fired—resulting in 20% of its global staff being let go.

"Last year we indeed reprioritised our efforts, which resulted in people being moved around and there was also an overall reduction in our work force," Hilmar says. "This was a difficult decision to make, but also the right one for the company. We now have around 500 people in our offices around the world working on continued growth for EVE Online, getting [newly developed console game] 'DUST 514' to market this year and the [online roleplaying game] 'World Of Darkness' project to market in the future."

Almost a year later, in August 2012, CCP gathered its forces and went on the warpath. Tech Crunch reported that the company raised some 20 million USD in new funding, mostly through domestic sources and there were even some whispers of an IPO.

But why the push for cash, especially ten months after significantly downsizing the company? CCP President Hilmar Pétursson says it

comes down to DUST 514. "With the launch of our second product on the horizon, we felt this was the right time to increase our capital and strengthen our balance sheet," Hilmar says. "These funds will be used to support a stronger marketing campaign for DUST 514, add additional hardware and capabilities to our backend server system, and for general corporate purposes supporting our continued growth."

As for the IPO talk, it seems it's farther off than implied. "We do not have any immediate plans to go public," Hilmar says. "But we are working towards IPO readiness so if the time comes when it makes sense for us then our internal operations will be ready for it."

### WELCOMING COMPETITION IN THE FIELD

One of the biggest problems with large companies in Iceland—for competitors and consumers alike—is a distinct lack of competition. When one company emerges as a giant in a particular

field, smaller companies can be either absorbed or edged out, and consumers are left with few choices. This, again, is something that CCP Games has managed to avoid, due in part to their presence on a global rather than solely local stage.

"We compete in a global market and don't really regard other Icelandic companies as competition," Hilmar says. "And in fact we try to help others as best we can with advice and connections. The only competition really is for great people, and we believe that more high-tech companies in Iceland means a bigger pool of skilled and experienced people, and that is a good thing for everyone."

Marketing manager Eldar Ástþórsson agrees. "I find the atmosphere within this sector here in Iceland really friendly," he says. "People and companies support and help each other rather than look at each other as competitors. And I do think if we would have more successful companies here in Iceland within the tech and video game industry, it would not only benefit CCP, but the creative industry in Iceland as a whole."

Gauti agrees, pointing out the different emerging tech fields that Icelanders are engaging in. "Icelanders have a long-standing reputation for innovation," he says. "And I think that holds as true in the tech sector as it does elsewhere. I know of several people engaged in tremendously exciting projects in all spheres of the technology constellation. Web development tools, data security, music distribution models, digital forensics, brainwave headsets—the list goes on. There is a lot of superb talent out there, working hard to put genuinely new things into the world."

Adds Unnar: "We are considered a niche game on the global market, so we have little competition there. Still, there is ample room for more tech based, even computer game making, companies here in Iceland."

### FEARS A DEARTH OF LOCAL TALENT

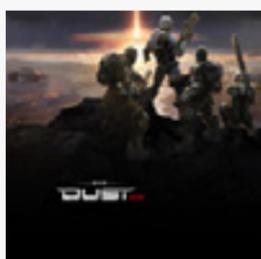
When it comes to the future of Iceland's tech industry, Unnar fears that a lack of talent might be the roadblock. "In my time at CCP alone I've seen many new companies start up and get favourable mentions here and there. But I worry about the sustainability of this growth as companies will start to have to look abroad for new talent. They might not be in the same 'established in the industry' position CCP is in and so 'move to Iceland' might become a harder sell."

This is a fair point. CCP Games pays its employees in Euros. For Icelanders, this is an attractive selling point. For Europeans, the sole difference it makes is location. If Iceland's pool of those eager to work in the tech field shrinks or becomes static, bringing in talent from abroad will become more important, and the lure to live in Iceland could take more effort.

Nonetheless, the general consensus at the company seems to be one of optimism where Iceland's tech industry is concerned. "The Icelandic tech industry is growing for sure," Hilmar says. "I see signs of it happening all over. Ultimately, what will allow it to thrive even more is educated people, either Icelanders educating themselves or companies bringing skilled and experienced talent into the country."

Gauti as well is optimistic, which he attributes in part to the national character. "The Icelandic ambition for creative enterprise is sharp and resilient." — PAUL FONTAINE

### UPCOMING PROJECTS FOR CCP:



#### DUST 514

A free FPS for PlayStation 3 wherein console gamers and PC gamers are able to share the same universe for the first time in gaming history. EVE is a PC game—it can be played on any computer that has the hardware to run it. DUST 514, however, is a console game, made specifically for the PlayStation 3. While traditionally PC gamers and console gamers occupy two separate worlds of gaming, CCP has allowed these two different gamers to share the same space in the EVE universe. This game is due to be released this year.



#### WORLD OF DARKNESS

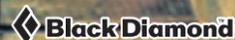
An online supernatural horror-based roleplaying game. This game dates back before the millennium, but in 2006, a merger took place between CCP and World of Darkness's publisher, White Wolf Publishing. At that time, CCP announced plans to turn World of Darkness into an MMORPG. Although the development staff was reduced last October during the re-structuring, there are still developers actively working on the game, which doesn't have a scheduled release date as of yet.



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# The Grapevine's First Ever Music Awards, Ever

By Haukur S. Magnússon

We at The Reykjavík Grapevine really like music despite what you might have surmised from reading our magazine. It's just that we care so much about it that some of the things we keep writing might be taken as being mean or antagonistic or whatever, but the fact of the matter is that if you truly madly deeply care about things, you are apt to scrutinize them every chance you get because you believe in your heart that they can and should be perfect. You really do.

Nah, the reason most of our music writers are our music writers certainly isn't the fat pay cheque they receive after every review they turn in (with a fat bonus for every pointed insult contained therein)—there barely is one. It isn't the glory. It isn't the pleasure of being harassed by asshole friends of bands at bars (although that can

be kinda fun, in a masochistic sorta way).

Nope. The reason we write about music, whether it be attempting to cover every single show of Iceland Airwaves, publishing full reports of shindigs like Eistnaflug and Extreme Chill, reviewing random garage bands or reviewing every goddamn Iceland-pertinent album we get sent (and even buying them, if people don't dare send them to us), is because we care. Our music writers as well as our editorial staff and even our goddamn advertising department lives and breathes music every hour of every day.

Yes. We have had a long standing love affair with Icelandic music. In that spirit, we decided to make our own music awards. It's nothing big, and we are not claiming to be any authority or any-

thing. We just thought that we would honour some of those wonderful people who make living on the edge of this desolate rock on the edge of the Arctic Circle bearable, enjoyable even. We want to heap them with praise and bestow prizes upon them (like a band retreat to Hótel Búðir or a dinner party at Tapas Bar) and give them a bunch of stickers proclaiming their status as awesome, which they can put on their albums to sell to tourists in the summer (tourists, if you are reading this, make sure to buy as much Icelandic music as you can).

We want to show our love, because we can.

Without further ado, let us introduce THE REYKJAVÍK GRAPEVINE'S FIRST (HOPEFULLY) ANNUAL MUSIC AWARDS!

## Album of the year



Héðinn Eiríksson

## Hjaltalín - Enter 4

It was clear pretty much from the get go that Hjaltalín's 'Enter 4' would take this cake, but our lovely committee still felt like we should be honouring some of the other great albums of 2012—leaving out great works from Retro Stefson, Ojba Rasta, Ghostigital, Moses Hightower and Valgeir Sigurðsson, to name but a few, was tough. However, "THERE CAN BE ONLY ONE" as per our Highlander-inspired guidelines. And at that meeting, we couldn't stop talking about that Hjaltalín album and its effects on us.

"'Enter IV' is nothing less than a game changer," remarked one panel member. "It was like a slap in the face. I didn't expect it! And through repeated listening, the thing only got better."

"It's a masterpiece," remarked another, "the band moves away from that huge sound of their first two albums and ventures off into an adventurous exploration of sound, melody and emotion. You don't see a lot of Icelandic bands talking about human feelings in such an honest way."

In the end, we probably spent an overt amount

of time discussing just how much we liked the album, sounding more like awestruck fanboys than a proper panel of 'music expert professionals.'

**The panel deems 'Enter IV' the best Icelandic album of 2012. It is a huge leap for Hjaltalín as a band and Icelandic music in general. In a year with so many contenders, rising above the greats was always going to be tough, so it is all the more impressive that Hjaltalín accomplished this.**

Read more on 'Enter IV' in panel member Bob Cluness's review of the album, page 19.

## This is how we did it:



We called up some people who are deeply involved with Icelandic music and whose opinions we trust pretty well and asked them to be on a small committee that would determine who would be the first recipients of our music awards thing. These people are: Andri Freyr Viðarsson, popular radio and television host for Rás 2 and RÚV respectively, Kamilla Ingibergsdóttir, Iceland Airwaves' head of PR, and our very own Bob Cluness, music writer, prosthetic limb builder and head of Grapevine's music writing team.

We arranged two meetings with these people, which we ceremoniously monitored and recorded for the purposes of eventually writing down and publishing their arguments. They had preliminary discussions at the first meeting, talking about what they liked in Icelandic music in 2012 and who they thought should get an award and why. Then we exchanged records and songs and ideas and reconvened a week later, after everyone had had plenty of time to think and listen, to determine the final list of recipients.

All in all, it was around four hours of feverish and passionate talking about music. And the results are here! Read on for our condensation of the discussion of how they reached their decision. Feel free to fret and disagree, you could even write us a letter telling us why (if it's not an asshole letter, we promise to print it. We could even give you some sort of prize... imagine that!).

Hurrah!



## Who are these people?

### Andri Freyr Viðarsson



Andri Freyr Viðarsson is the co-host of extremely popular Rás 2 morning radio show "Virkir morgnar" ("Active mornings") along with making the also-extremely popular television programmes "Andri á flandri" ("Andri Wanders"). His role as radio personality ensures he gets exposed to most, if not all, Icelandic music that gets released, and his long-standing love for music is well documented, having performed with bands, DJ'd and written about music since his teens.

### Kamilla Ingibergsdóttir



Kamilla Ingibergsdóttir is a heated music fan and has been actively involved with the organisation, management and staging of Iceland Airwaves for a while now. She also worked for the Iceland Music Export for a number of years, before recently moving on to a full-time position with the Airwaves festival. Due to Kamilla's position and passion for music, she can be frequently spotted at concerts around town and keeps an extremely close eye on every going-on in Icelandic music.

### Bob Cluness



Bob Cluness has been The Reykjavík Grapevine's Music Manager (a title we invented for him and entails him keeping tabs on what's being reviewed and by who, as well as making sure our reviews are fit to print) since early 2012. Prior to this, he had held a position as 'occasional music-and-sometimes-other-stuff freelancer' since 2009, after he submitted some super fun writing to us and we thought: hey, that guy should write some more! He also works as a prosthetic limb maker for Össur, which is pretty damn awesome no matter which way you look at it.

## Song of the year



### Moses Hightower – Háa C

It took forever to reach a conclusion on song of the year and that's only to be expected, since a year that yields such a number of great albums is pretty likely to yield a bunch of great songs, too.

Retro Stefson's "Queen" and "Glow" were both highly favoured among the panel, as well as Ojba Rasta's "Jolly Good" and "Baldursbrá." Those are all great songs. Others were discussed too. However, we all kept coming back to Moses Hightower and their stunning-in-its-simplicity track "Háa C," off their 2012 sophomore record 'Önnur Mósebók.' This was doubly reinforced during our second meeting—it seemed the assorted panel members had spent most of the days between our meetings listening to it on repeat.

"I've been listening to all the songs we talked about, and in the end I have to go with "Háa C," one panellist

proclaimed at the start of our second meeting. "The way it builds its groove and keeps going is infectious, and the way you seem absolutely unable to grow tired of it is remarkable. It's just so good!"

Although the lovely Icelandic lyrics to "Háa C" (insightful, witty, with a dash of puns thrown in for good measure) are unfortunately beyond our non-Icelandic speaking readers, the rest of the track makes up for it in volumes. It is a track where everything comes together in a delightful explosion of calculated restraint; the infectious melody, the warm '70s soul groove (emphasised by an excellent sounding drum track) and the bouncy vocal track. It's fucking good, is what it is.

**The panel deems Moses Hightower's "Háa C" to be absolutely the best Icelandic song of the year, in every possible respect. Thank you, Moses Hightower!**



### Band to watch Muck

When we say band to watch, we don't just mean a band that's physically attractive and puts on an enjoyable stage show (although both apply to our winners this year). We also mean a band that has been gaining momentum for a long while, a band that has been steadily working on their sound, songwriting and attitude, a band that feels like it's gaining velocity at an alarming rate, destined to arrive at a critical bursting point where they will transition from being promising to dominating sooner than later.

And brutal thrashcore savants Muck proved in 2012 that they were this band without a doubt.

"We have countless examples of extreme bands who make a really extreme debut album and get the young kids wild for their aggressive sound, where the second album is a fucking masterpiece that has a universal appeal beyond the extreme music circuit," a panellist noted. "We've heard this story

so many times, and it'll come true: this is what Iceland needs at the moment and this is what Muck will do. They will transition and maybe smooth their sound a little, and they will hit big. I have no doubt of this."

Continued another: "There seems to be a relative dearth of inspiring rock music in Iceland at the moment, dangerous stuff that kids can get behind. Muck, with their proper attitude towards music, touring, hard work and absolutely no compromise seem to be just what everyone is waiting for. They seem destined to cross over."

**The panel deems Muck BAND TO WATCH! for 2013.** Through their stunning 2012 LP 'Slaves', countless live shows in and around Reykjavík, tours of the US (where they are for some reason currently artists in residence at some fancy artist residency in New York) they have convinced us that we have to keep a close eye on them. And we will.

## Go see them play live as soon as you can award GusGus

There are tons of consistently great live bands to contend with in Iceland. Retro Stefson. Muck. Skálmöld. Mugison. All total pros, each in their own genre, who put on an outstanding show every single time and leave you flustered and thankful to be alive. There is a presence towering over all of these, however, one that simply cannot be ignored, as it can be reasonably argued that they have played a crucial role in pushing forward the quality and idea of Icelandic live shows since before any of Retro Stefson were even born.

And they are still doing it.

That band is GusGus.

This was the conclusion we finally reached. After debating the merits of Muck's raw hardcore assault versus Retro Stefson's crafted showmanship versus Skálmöld's powerful delivery versus Mugison's absolute control of the crowd, and then thinking whether any working band combined these qualities, the committee slapped its collective forehead and proclaimed: "HOW COULD WE FORGET GUSGUS?"

Perhaps it's easy to take things for granted when they are constantly present? Or perhaps it is because they set the standard we have come to judge other live shows by? Whatever the rea-

son, we remembered, and they are getting this prize.

Noted a panellist: "Anyone that's taken a peek behind the scenes of a few GusGus show productions can attest that they can be hard to deal with, but this is merely because of their uncompromising attitude and high level of ambition. GusGus absolutely refuse to put on a show that's anything short of awe-inspiring, making high demands on the audience, the sound system, the venue and on themselves. This is part of what makes them so great, and why everyone should aspire to see at least one GusGus show during their lifetime."

To which another added: "And they make it work in every situation, every setting. Even opening up the stage at KEX during lunchtime on Airwaves Wednesday, they enthralled the crowd and blew everyone away."

**The panel deems GusGus Iceland's best live band. They captivate, tantalise and give their 100% in any situation, truly an experience to be experienced. It is true that a lot of bands played more shows in Iceland in 2012 than GusGus. However, if we are going to give anyone a 'BEST LIVE ACT', it has to start with GusGus.**





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## Most overlooked album Skúli Sverrisson & Óskar Guðjónsson – The Box Tree



Why do some albums not get the love or credit they deserve, while others go on to win mass appeal, capture thousands of hearts and gain untold accolades? Circumstances must play a large part in this, sometimes the public is ready for a certain kind of sound, sometimes there is a space for a certain kind of artist. And sometimes people just don't notice.

We are once more going to recite the now-cliché phrase “2012 was a great year for Icelandic record releases” (it was). And now we are going to tackle on: it is therefore inevitable that some pretty goddamn great records got overlooked or fall by the wayside, or at least not heard by as many people as they should have been.

There are several examples of this, and we are made more aware by the fact that the newspapers had, at the time of

our meeting, just released their year-end lists. Glaring omissions of arguably great records from folks such as Valgeir Sigurðsson, Múgsefjun, Dream Central Station, Sudden Weather Change, Heavy Experience... (all names that got thrown around in our discussion) are, well, glaring.

We tackled this subject for quite a while. What albums from 2012 should people have paid more attention to? What should they hurry up and go listen to? Ultimately, we decided that among many great and sort of overlooked records, Skúli Sverrisson and Óskar Guðjónsson's 'The Box Tree' definitely warrants some of you seeking it out and having a listen.

Like a lot of Skúli's work, 'The Box Tree' is a hypnotic and engaging affair that bears repeated listening. Of course this sort of music doesn't appeal to everyone (music that appeals to everyone

is usually not very interesting anyway), but once you let it sink in it can quickly become an indispensable part of your daily routine.

“The reason I keep coming back to this one in our discussion,” one panel member noted, “is that I, well, keep coming back to it. There is something rather magical about this record, a lot of people could probably get a lot out of it given the chance. The problem is maybe that this kind of music usually needs to be sought out. So here I am, encouraging everyone to seek it out. It's awesome.”

The panel deems Skúli Sverrisson and Óskar Guðjónsson's 'The Box Tree' to be a worthy holder of the title 'MORE PEOPLE SHOULD HAVE LOVED THIS ALBUM IN 2012'. It is endearing, deep, lush sounding and rewards repeated listening. Give it a chance to enhance your life, and it just might.



## The band to remember Botnleðja

As we are meant to be servicing the international community and telling it about all of the wonderful music that's coming from Iceland, we sometimes wish there were a way to instil in our readers a sense of context and appreciation for how we got to where we are.

So, we thought we would go beyond celebrating whatever happened in 2012 and having a sort of 'legacy award,' honouring and celebrating greatness in our past. We thought: we should make a BAND TO REMEMBER! category, urging everyone to remember some awesome band or musician and dig up their music and give it a spin.

So we did. And as soon as we decided to do it (this was actually an idea from the panel itself), we almost immediately jumped on this chance to honour all our childhood heroes Botnleðja (whom some of you might at some point have heard referred to as “Silt” when they were opening up for Blur back in the '90s)!

Botnleðja burst onto the scene in 1995 when they won the Músíktíll-

raunir battle of the bands. Apparently, every teenager in the country taped their grungy performance of three tracks on the final night of the competition and for a lot of us the six or so months that passed until they released their proper studio debut 'Drullumall' took an eternity to pass (the cassettes were getting wobbly from being constantly overplayed and dubbed)!

The Hafnarfjörður three-piece (consisting of guitarist/vocalist Heiðar, bassist Raggi and drummer Halli) had a wonderful sort of appeal that fit right into the climate of the time and seemed designed to resonate with teenagers of all ages. The music was grungy and melodic like Nirvana, dreamy like Smashing Pumpkins, quirky like Blur and fiercely independent, tongue in cheek and possessed a sense of humour for itself that had hitherto been lacking in Icelanders' version of grunge. And they sang in Icelandic, clever and colourful lyrics, and they dressed cool and they even seemed friendly.

They were a revelation.

A burst of garage bands followed in

the wake of Botnleðja, many of whom evolved into some of the bands you love to day (or at least ones that influenced those bands). All the while Botnleðja kept making great music, supplying us with five awesome LPs before calling it a day around a decade ago (which one is the best of these is a highly debated subject among Icelanders, but 'Fólk er fífl,' and 'Magnýl' are excellent starting points).

Botnleðja made a brief comeback in the summer of 2012 and played a couple of shows to great acclaim. However, we feel like there should have been more. They should have kept going a little, played a few more shows, recorded a few new songs even.

Alas, they did not. But you should most definitely still remember them.

The panel deems Botnleðja as A BAND TO REMEMBER. Their music shaped a generation of Icelanders, and their impressive canon offers hours of enjoyment. Go have a listen at Gogoyoko if you don't believe us. And thank you, Botnleðja.



## Album Review

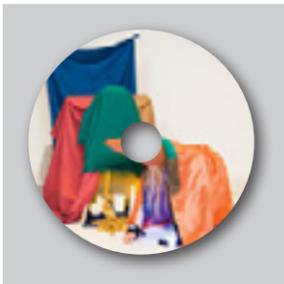
### Hjaltalín

Enter 4

2012

facebook.com/hjaltalinband

'Enter 4' will go down as a classic Icelandic album for years to come and a huge breakthrough for Högni as a songwriter/lyricist.



Over the years, Hjaltalín have enjoyed a large amount of respect and success on the back of their two albums, 2007's 'Sleepdrunk Sessions' and 2010's 'Terminal.' Still, I can honestly say that I've never really loved Hjaltalín. Their music seemed to wallow in delusions of cinematic grandeur, and for all its incessant art-school bombast it had precisely nothing of substance that grabbed you and stayed with you afterwards. It's no coincidence that the song they were best known for was their cover of Páll Óskar's "Þú komst við hjartað í mér."

But here's the thing—since 'Terminal,' Hjaltalín seem to have gone away and worked out what it is that they want to represent with their music. And it shows with their new album, 'Enter 4.' Not only have they made Grapevine's Best Icelandic album in 2012 by a country mile, but they've also created what is probably one of the most searingly bleak and honest records from an Icelandic group in what feels like...forever?

From beginning to end, there's a terrible sadness to 'Enter 4' that clings to every nook and cranny of the album. Its world seems to be one of missed chances, a longing from afar, or a love that's been lost or dashed. At the heart of all this, like a rich seam of ore, is the theme of loneliness. While other albums in 2012 have alluded, or claimed, to explore the concept of loneliness, none have managed like 'Enter 4' to convey the sheer ache that occurs within every person that experiences it.

When listening to 'Enter 4,' you encounter the album's gallery of damaged individuals involved in unhealthy situations as they desperately try to achieve some meaningful form of human contact. Even Lucifer himself is reduced to finding "Love with myself/So someone could love me back," after being cast out from heaven on "Lucifer/He Felt Like A Woman." The song "Myself" describes transgressive, yet mechanical and empty hook-ups with strangers, while "We," tells of a couple whose relationship has run out of love but still stay together ("Can't you see you're hurting me/Why don't you push me away?" Sigríður cries, only for Högni to coldly reply, "Usurper, that's what you are"). But the most uncomfortable moment on 'Enter 4' is the paraphilia displayed by Sigríður's character on "Forever Someone Else." As she erotically breathes the lines "I wanna be touched/I wanna be found/I wanna be seen/ I just want you to hit me/Don't wait/Just hit me," the effect is as sensual as it is unsettling, more Michael Haneke than Richard Curtis.

These themes of loneliness have seeped directly into the music itself. From the shuffling soul beat and deadened bass of the opening moments of "Lucifer," this is music that resides in the quiet and space of the twilight hour. Gone are the fussy, surperfuous melody lines that cluttered up their previous albums. In their place, their instruments develop a deep synthesis of textures, layers, and an actual groove, with the drums and bass of Axel Haraldsson and Guðmundur Óskar pinning everything together.

There are still the flourishes of the old Hjaltalín with the appearance of Högni and Viktor Árnason's string arrangements, but even here they show a more restrained, uncomplicated beauty. This restraint allows the vocals of Sigríður and Högni to rise to the fore. While their two styles are drastically different (the soft caramel tones of Sigríður against the cracked raggedness of Högni), they manage to complement each other brilliantly.

The music on 'Enter 4' is not so much minimal as it is barren. The songs feel pulled apart and kept distant from each other, as if the band itself were playing in separate corners of a very large room. Such a sound allows you to explore the gaps and distance within the sounds, with the result being each listen brings up further little discoveries. This approach also allows for moments of eerie quietness that can build to truly monumental proportions, such as the primal sturm of "I Feel You," or the crashing apex of "We," where you actually find your heart runs just that little bit faster.

People have noted Högni's current membership with GusGus as an influence on 'Enter 4,' mostly due to the amount of electronic processing evident in the music, but personally I don't hear it that much. I actually think the album shares a closer sonic bond with the analogue/digital mesh of Radiohead's 'In Rainbows,' and the end-of-the-line soul from late era Gil Scott Heron and Bobby Womack.

No other album in 2012 has affected me on such a visceral level in the way that 'Enter 4' has. In terms of the quality of music and songwriting, it's such a marked step up from their old stuff as to render Hjaltalín right now as a new band, completely divorced from their old music. It might seem that this album, from reading this review anyway, is rather melancholy, but I really don't think it is. It's just that 'Enter 4' talks about themes that affect us all in an open and honest way that is actually rather life affirming. Since I received my copy a month ago, I've pretty much played it every day, to the point where my .mp3 version is exhibiting signs of bitrot. When Högni repeatedly lets out the wounded cries of "I FEEL!" as he does on "We," you really feel it. Name another piece of music from 2012 that makes you feel like that and I will call you a liar. ♡ - BOB CLUNESS

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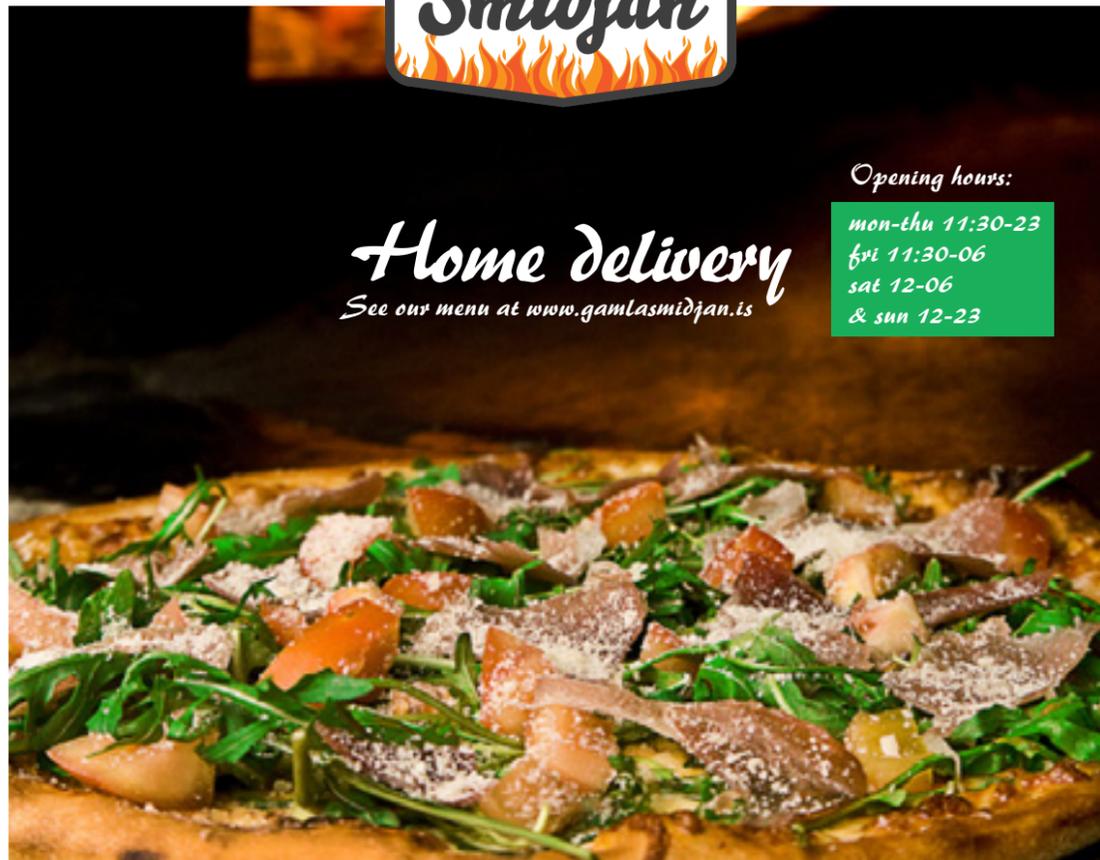
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# Tourist Of The Year

## The inaugural 2012 edition

Every New Year, publications reflect on the past, bundling up the last twelve months into various year-end lists. Some, like Time Magazine, which put Barack Obama on its cover this year, also choose a “Person of the Year,” who they believe stood out from the rest. In Iceland it’s customary for everything from horse publications to local radio stations to take part in the tradition. Big or small, there’s something to be learned from those who are chosen and one might even look to them as a model in our continued struggle to do and be better.



This year, for instance, listeners of national radio stations Rás 2 and Bylgjan both voted Eiríkur Ingi Jóhannsson as their “Person of the Year.” Eiríkur was aboard a ship that sank off the coast of Norway last January. The sole survivor of the accident, he endured nearly four hours in the open ocean before being rescued by helicopter. He recounted the experience in a moving 80-minute interview with Kastljósið, which can be watched with English subtitles at <http://bit.ly/wSEM08>



In a slightly different version of the award, readers of the tabloid DV voted Hildur Lilliendahl Viggósdóttir as “Hero of the Year.” Through Hildur’s fight against male on female violence and the pervasive degradation of women in public discourse, she has faced personal attacks, threats and Facebook bans, as DV reports. In fact, she has had to withstand the wrath of DV’s very own readers, who leave notoriously brutal remarks in the site’s comments section, which incidentally featured in this year’s annual New Year’s Eve sketch comedy programme (See page 8).

Although we’ve thought about picking a “Person of the Year” in the past, we’ve never actually done it, not until this year when we decided that we too would take part in the tradition. However, as an unabashed tourism magazine, we thought it made most sense for us to



pick a “Tourist of the Year.” And as soon as this thought crossed our minds, so too did the winner. Without a doubt, we thought, it’s the woman who was reported lost and took part in the search for herself this summer.

### TOURIST OF THE YEAR: THE WOMAN WHO FOUND HERSELF

As the story goes, an Asian woman was reported missing from a Reykjavík Excursions bus after it stopped at Eldgjá, in South Iceland. The search for this woman described as 20-30 years old, 160 cm tall, wearing dark clothing and carrying a small light-coloured handbag, continued into the early morning when everything was called off. It had finally occurred to her that she was that “missing woman.” She had, yes, found herself.

In reality, she didn’t do anything out of the ordinary. It turns out that the bus driver had miscounted the number of passengers and also failed to recognise her after she changed clothes. However, this story made the news all over the world and brought us great joy. After all, many of us spend our whole lives, sometimes unknowingly, trying to find ourselves. She went to Iceland and did just that.

We spent some time trying to track her down, but still to this day she remains somewhat of a mystery to us. Neither the Hvolsvöllur police nor the ICE-SAR rescue team ever saw her or even knew her name, and whether or not Reykjavík Excursions knows more, they declined to give us any information. We still wonder just how something like this could have happened, but we are also content to enjoy the story for what it is.

If you’re reading this, woman who found herself in Iceland, send us your address and we will mail you your “Tourist of the Year” award.

### RUNNERS-UP:

#### TOM CRUISE AND THE NAKED TOURIST

It wasn’t exactly a close race, but we toyed with a couple of other candidates. The first was noted actor and recent divorcee Tom Cruise who spent his summer on this fair island filming ‘Oblivion’ and returned to America singing our praises. We can’t be entirely sure, but there’s certainly a chance that his divorce had something to do with his love for Iceland and that just tickles our ego.

The second was the ‘Naked Tourist’ who was found running around the lawn of the Prime Minister’s Office. It turns out that he was pranked by a couple of girls who tricked him into the deed and then ran off with his clothes. That story left us sympathetic, but crying with laughter.

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

We are now officially accepting nominations for “Tourist of the year 2013.” Please submit your nominations to [editor@grapevine.is](mailto:editor@grapevine.is) to be considered. We will read them, post them to our web-

site and print the best one come next January. Note: To be eligible, the tourist (this can be you) must have visited Iceland in 2013.

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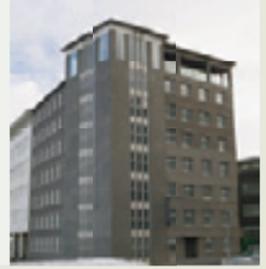
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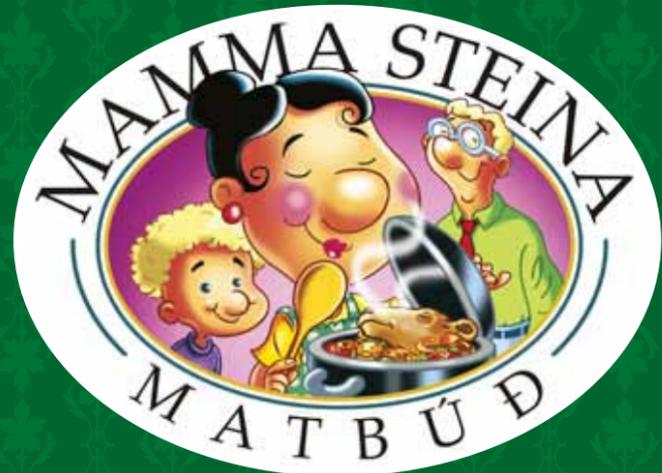
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The advertisement is a vertical stack of promotional text and graphics. It starts with a red banner for Spanish Sundays, followed by a yellow banner for Cuban Wednesdays featuring a Cuban flag. Below that is a green banner for Sangria Thursdays with a list of sangria varieties. The bottom section features a blue banner for Icelandic Seafood and a logo for Tapas House with contact details.

## If You Screen It... With new programmes in full swing and more in the works, Bíó Paradís invents its audience



Bíó Paradís Programme Director, Ásgrímur Sveinsson.

Iceland, as you may have gathered, is a small island nation in the middle of the North Atlantic, a fact which as much as any other has determined the course of cinema here for most of its history. The trafficking of film prints is quite the logistical project, so new films from Hollywood, with its globe-spanning might, have been the primary attraction on Icelandic screens since around World War II. Films for a more niche audience, that can only be expected to screen a few times at most, only make it here through heroic individual initiative. Festivals like RIFF and its predecessors have long imported new art films, but vast tracts of film history—classics, let alone more obscure titles—have been rare objects, the provenance of private hobbyists. (The pop star Páll Óskar, for instance, is said to have perhaps the largest collection of 35mm film prints in Iceland. If you're very lucky, he may invite you over to watch one.)

According to Björn Norðfjörð, a film studies professor at the University of Iceland and a specialist in Icelandic cinema, repertory screenings here have recently been in short supply. He says that filmmaker Friðrik Þór Friðriksson, a key figure in the rise of a domestic film industry in the late 1970s, "was instrumental in the legendary cinema club Fjalakötturinn, which was never really replaced, and the screenings of classics has been very limited ever since." That is, limited to the Icelandic Film Museum, which has its own archive of foreign films but has recently been focused on screening its Icelandic holdings, and now Bíó Paradís downtown.

### PARADISE RECLAIMED

Creating a more diverse film culture has been the goal of Bíó Paradís ever since it opened in 2010. At the time, programme director Ásgrímur Sveinsson told Grapevine that the theatre's ambitions, beyond first-run bookings of foreign arthouse and American independent fare, were to foster an interest in film history in Icelandic culture at large, by presenting an ambitious slate of classical, cult and new festival films. Asked if he thought there would be an audience for such films, Ásgrímur replied, "This is what we are excited about finding out—will anybody come?"

Since then, Ásgrímur says the audience response has been "variable," but the work continues. It's important, he continues, "because it has an effect on how film is perceived in the culture." Icelanders can, unsurprisingly, claim a high rate of cinema attendance per capita—especially among student-age moviegoers—but the options are relatively narrow. Broadening a sense of what's out there was, and continues to be, the goal; building an audience for regular repertory and special programming was, and continues to be, the challenge.

This fall saw, as usual for the theatre, a significant chunk of screentime given over to festivals. But, perhaps more significantly, there's been a steady presence of in-house programming. The BÍÓ:DOX programme started in November as a grab-bag of recent documentary hits, and led to an open run for the music documentary 'Searching for Sugar Man.' It was an "experiment," Ásgrímur says, in keeping up with more non-fiction film, put together with the help of Brynja Dögg Friðriksdóttir, of Reykjavík Shorts and Docs.

Bíó Paradís is also at work developing a regular monthly LGBT slot, which they hope to debut early this year, in conjunction with local organisations that will be active in the programming and, presumably, in bringing their own audience. In this model, the theatre functions as an umbrella for regular themed programming, identified with different voices of society. Expanding the offerings and broadening the potential audience go hand-in-hand.

To see how this sort of thing might work, you can look to the successful 'Svartir sunnudagar' ("Black Sundays") series which began just after Halloween. It features weekly cult classics and curios, with a pre-show programme of far-out trailers. 'Black Sundays' is now working on locking down heady genre movies like Clint Eastwood's elemental Western 'High Plains Drifter,' Henri-Georges Clouzot's existential truck-driving thriller 'The Wages of Fear,' and Hitchcock's 'Psycho' for January.

The series is curated by the aforementioned Páll Óskar, TV performer and producer and former HAM guitarist Sigurjón Kjartansson, author Sjón, and artist Huguileikur Dagsón. Ásgrímur explains that these artistic luminaries had been griping on Facebook about the unadventurous film programming at Bíó Paradís so the theatre decided to offer them the chance to show the movies they'd like to see.

This consistent, colourful curatorial voice has proven effective in establishing a regular presence in the cultural life of Reykjavík. The original posters Bíó Paradís displays for each Black Sunday title, designed by local artists "who do it for the fun," draw eyes, and establish the series as the ongoing endeavour of enthusiastic people with creative taste. Ásgrímur hopes to arrange an exhibition of all the Black Sundays posters in spring.

### FILM IS DEAD; LONG LIVE CINEMA

American studios are phasing out celluloid entirely, preferring digital exhibition for both new releases and, increasingly, their archival titles. This has distressing implications for repertory cinema in the United States—it bodes ill for the continued preservation, circulation and exhibition of much of film history—but it's also one of many technological advances bringing the rest of the world to Iceland's doorstep. Ásgrímur is hopeful that the theatre will soon be installing projection equipment for the new DCP (Digital Cinema Package) format. As of right now, he says, "most of the time we have to come up with the disc ourselves."

Other concerns about securing a cultural presence for classic film remain: the theatre is currently experimenting with 'Þrjúbió' ("three o'clock") screenings—having put on a couple of Charlie Chaplin afternoons—hearkening back to adolescent matinees. When programming for a younger audience, there's still a kind of national isolation as movies must be dubbed or subtitled in Icelandic; and for young moviegoers as well as old, figuring out what will draw crowds is still a matter of trial and error. "So basically," Ásgrímur concludes, "the entire cinema is a trial period." ❖ - MARK ASCH

“The pop star Páll Óskar, for instance, is said to have perhaps the largest collection of 35mm film prints in Iceland.”

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# No Place For H&M

ATMO's collective of sixty designers takes over the top of Laugavegur



Alísa Kalyanova

CEO Ásta Kristjánsdóttir in front of Atmo.

An hour before ATMO's grand opening on November 15, CEO Ásta Kristjánsdóttir was far from ready in a flowing white top, grey jeans and pink and grey Nike sneakers. She hadn't finished putting on her make-up, but there were a dozen small tasks to be completed first: construction workers needed directions on last minute projects, ceremonial ribbon cutting scissors needed to be spray painted red, random mops and brooms needed to be moved out of the hallways. It was the sort of chaos that probably goes on backstage before a runway show.

"I'm running around fast, so you'll have to run fast if you're coming with me," Ásta tells me. And we do run—up to the all-white offices on the top floor; down to the second floor, where racks and racks of knitwear share space with shoes, purses and accessories; and

down to the lobby, where children's clothing by As We Grow and Ígló, among other things, are on display. The basement, the only area that's ready for guests, features Red Cross clothing handpicked by ATMO designers.

Ásta's involvement in Iceland's fashion industry spans more than a decade with her founding the modelling agency, Eskimo, in 1997. From there she moved into designing, founding E-Label, a women's clothing brand sold at Topshop, in 2007, and then finally founding the Reykjavik Fashion Festival in 2009.

A year later, in 2010, she began working on securing financing for the building of ATMO, which opened for the first time in March 2012 as a brief pop-up market during DesignMarch. The success of the initial launch prompted her to open the store full-time and

the multilevel design and fashion house, which doesn't charge rent but does take a cut of sales, now holds lines by sixty of Iceland's established and up-and-coming designers.

## DOES ICELAND NEED A DESIGN HOUSE?

One feature that sets Laugavegur apart from other major shopping streets is the absence of a large, international, mass-market clothing shop. Kringlan has a Zara and a Topshop, but Laugavegur (and the entire country) are completely devoid of Forever 21s and H&Ms. "H&M was actually going to take this house," Ásta says. "And I'm really happy that we're here instead. If H&M would have opened here, so many shops would have gone out of business, especially the Icelandic designers."

But why do Icelandic designers need a single, massive store to operate from? Many of the ATMO designers have achieved some level of

success outside of the country. Brands like Cintamani ship internationally, while designers like Mundi have presented lines in fashion weeks around Europe and others, like Birna, operate shops both in Reykjavík and abroad in Copenhagen.

"All these designers, they have little shops to put their products in around town," Ásta says. "but it's a lot of work to stand in the shop or pay someone to do it. Many of the designers don't have time to do the designing and take care of the manufacturing because they're involved in the store all the time."

There is also the camaraderie aspect, the "strength in numbers" appeal of ATMO. "We quite like the idea of all the Icelandic designers staying together," says Þórunn Hannesdóttir, part of the design team behind FærID. "It gives us the feeling of a department store filled with Icelandic designers, something that we want to be a part of. There's so much support in being part of a group."

## ICELANDIC DESIGN: WOOL, KNITWEAR AND OPTIMISM

The hope is also that there will be greater opportunities for the individual designer through the collective, specifically where finances are concerned. "We can say to a bank, 'Here we are 60 people and we all want to do business with your bank. Can you help us by doing this and this,'" Ásta explains.

If designers can't finance their designs then they don't produce any products and ATMO ends up with empty shelves. "If you want to know what we're the most scared of, it's that the designers won't be able to manufacture more products," she says, pointing to rows of near empty shelves near the entrance. In one day, of the ten Umemi's NotKnot pillows (woollen bundles inspired by scout-style twists) on sale, eight were purchased. "And we called the designer and said 'Well, it sold out,' and she said 'Sorry, I don't have any more.'"

In the future, ATMO plans to host workshops and speaker series with the goal of helping Icelandic designers to finance and sell their designs. "In Iceland I think we're really good at designing, but all the backend stuff, the making it and financing it and marketing it, that's a different story," Ásta says she also plans on turning the house into a showroom two to three times a year, to present Icelandic design to international buyers. "We're all very positive," Ásta says. "I mean, being from this small island in the North Atlantic and thinking that we can become Gucci or something, it's pretty optimistic." — **ARIT JOHN**

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# Designer Spotlights

## Tulipop

Signý Kolbeinsdóttir  
Founded: January 2010



One part cuddly and one part goth, Signý Kolbeinsdóttir's Tulipop characters challenge the idea that certain colours, designs and symbols are gender-specific. "There's so much going on for guys that has a scary side to it, but for girls it's always 'everybody should wear pink and ribbons,'" Signý says. Characters like Bubble, a gentle-hearted mushroom boy and Skully, a rough around the edges lady-skull worthy of a "Hamlet" production, bend gender stereotypes and make great plate, bowl and cup designs.

## Hlín Reykdal

Hlín Reykdal  
Founded: January 2007



"I think of colours, because each piece is unique and hand painted by me," Hlín Reykdal says of her line of beaded necklaces and bracelets. Hlín graduated from the Iceland Academy of the Arts in 2009, where her graduation show featured a series of bold, colourful accessories. In her current line, every bead is hand painted by the designer with colours she designed.

## Studiobility/Bility

Guðrún Lilja Gunnlaugsdóttir  
Founded: January 2005



In 2005, Guðrún Lilja Gunnlaugsdóttir started off with Studiobility, a line of high-end furniture products. Bility is the result of the 2008 crash and a dose of pragmatism. "It's kind of crazy to be making very expensive things that no one can afford to buy," Guðrún says. One of the first Bility products to hit the market was the Bilberry candleholder, a thin, stainless steel cluster of bilberry branches.

## FærlID

Pórunn Hannesdóttir, Karin Eriksson  
and Herborg Harpa Ingvarsdóttir  
Founded: January 2005



Pórunn, Karin and Herborg first sold their products during DesignMarch in 2010. Nearly three years later their brand is a mix of high-end household items and cool, novelty items aimed at trendy shoppers, Pórunn says. Icelandophiles might be interested in the Iceland-shaped coasters or the Perlan-shaped cookie cutters.

## Skaparinn

Dúsa  
Founded: January 2007



Dúsa's first design was a red, cotton sleeveless cocktail dress. "Sleeveless," she says, "because I didn't know how to make sleeves yet—I was 15." Since that first design she's produced seven lines, specialising in women's clothing and bags. Dúsa says she sees her line being worn by a woman who isn't an attention seeker, but is adventurous and mysterious, always looking for action "and cocktails, which is what fashion is all about in the end," she says.

Answer to trivia question on page 2:

A Boxing

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# The Ocean Breathes Salty

## A watery weekend in Snæfellsnes

Words: Rebecca Louder

I'm clinging to the lighthouse rail at the top of Sugandisey, looking across the harbour onto Stykkishólmur. The wind is blowing powerfully and hawks soar above in the dusky clouds. Every time the green and red lights flash behind me as they rotate I get the sense that I'm about to be swept right off this sea-cliff into the cold ocean below. October might not be the most ideal time to visit the Snæfellsnes peninsula, but I'm damn glad I'm here.

Shawna O'Flaherty & Daníel Atlason

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Earlier, before climbing up to my potential-watery grave, I began my visit to this small town at a potential grave of water. The Library of Water opened in 2006 and it is a permanent installation by American artist Roni Horn, who became compelled by Iceland's nature and weather to devote this project to the preservation of glaciers. It's usually closed at this time of year, but manager Ragnheiður Óladóttir has unlocked it on request to give us a very intimate tour.

While the term 'archive' is most commonly associated with documents, which conserve concepts in a purely textual sense, this one is comprised of twenty-four glass columns containing water extracted from the core of each glacier in Iceland. As the glaciers recede from the effects of climate change, these columns will be the physical record that they once existed. "In fact, one glacier has already disappeared completely," Ragnheiður says. "It was called Ok, and it's not okay!" With weather-describing adjectives printed on the rubber floor and giant curved windows looking over the town and sea, the library is imbued with a quiet comfort and sense of purity.

### HARBOUR CHIC

The connection between this town and water runs deeper than just the museum though. Owner of Hotel Egilsen Gréta Sigurðardóttir later explains that Stykkishólmur takes its water management very seriously. "We are the first town in Iceland to receive the Blue Flag eco-label for our harbour, because it is so clean," she says proudly. The town recycles its hot water by re-injecting it into the ground and has partnered with four other communities on the peninsula to make the most effective waste management system in Iceland. This has earned Snæfellsnes the only Earth Check certification in Europe.

Gréta's hotel, where I'm spending the night, looks like a cross-section of a barn from the outside and something out of a design catalogue on the inside. The narrow and intimate lobby and dining hall is adorned by locally crafted furniture and art and contains a bookshelf of impeccable first-

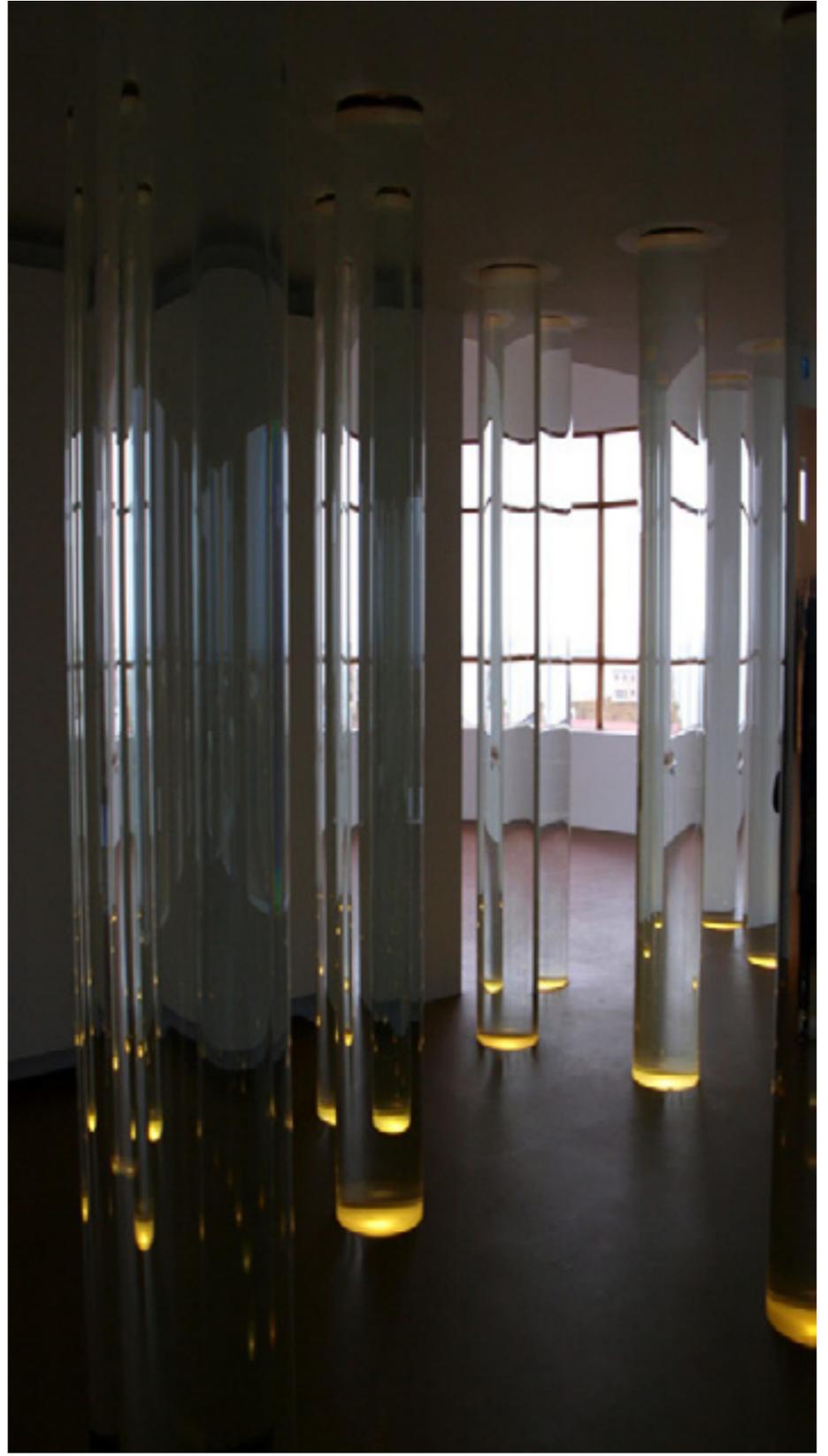
edition replicates of classic novels by Charlotte Brontë and, of course, Jules Verne. The kind staff supplies me with a complementary iPad before handing over the keys to the stylish room, adorned with cold-cancelling blankets by Vík Þrjónsdóttir and l'Occitane en Provence toiletries. Holy crap this is fancy. I step into the shower and resolve to never, ever come out of this room again.

### GLOOMY BEACHES

After a wonderful night's sleep, I do reluctantly depart from the lovely chambers to continue trekking around the peninsula. As we approach the tip of the land, Snæfellsjökull glacier is unfortunately shrouded by the weather. But after rounding the top of a fantastic lookout cliff, I finally see one of the most distinctive features of this region—golden sand beaches. Far from looking tropical, these sands are still heavily mixed with black volcanic fare and look like a glitter-on-the-disco-bloodbath dance floor. So despite the heavy wind, I jump out of the car as soon as we reach the northern tip at Öndverðarnes and run down the beach to the shore, where giant waves crash against blunt black cliffs.

Another few minutes down the road and suddenly there's a giant sign: "HVALREKI/DEAD WHALE." Past the ruins of one of the oldest sheep round-up structures and just a quick climb over a black rock embankment, sure enough, there is a rotting carcass of a sperm whale. It does not smell as bad as one would think! In fact, it's at this point I realise it's time for lunch, so I head to Hellnar to try a restaurant recommended by Gréta. Fjöruborðið is neither the easiest café to find nor the easiest to access, even in a compact vehicle. But it proves to be well-worth taking the steep road down to it for the delicious fish soup, chicken quiche, and an astounding view of a sea cave.

As luck would have it, the sun comes out while I'm eating and on the drive back up to the main road, I see the gem of the peninsula—the glacier made infamous by Jules Verne and rendered immortal by Roni Horn. ☘



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# Rolling Around Reykjavík

Fishnets, concussions and a sheep on skates are all part of the charm



© Sigurbjörg María (Lexi DeLarge)

Photo caption photo caption photo caption

Kristbjörg Sigtryggisdóttir recalls the time when she lost consciousness at her very first bout in Montgomery, Alabama. A member of the opposing team slammed into her, knocking her onto the hard concrete floor. Shaken but stable, she pulled herself up and attempted to catch up to the speeding pack. That's when she began to feel dizzy. She skated to the side of the rink and everything went black.

The game came to a halt as paramedics rushed to her side, but even then Kristbjörg wasn't done competing quite yet. She sat out for a break, but was not content to watch from the sidelines and re-entered the bout. "When you fall—because you will fall—get back up as fast as you can," she warns. "As you're falling, you're thinking about how you're going to get back up."

## ROLLER DERBY COMES TO ICELAND

This is roller derby, a predominantly female sport boasting thousands of members in 172 recognised leagues around the world. The sport, which

dates back to 1940, saw resurgence in Austin, Texas, in 2001 and has since spread across the United States and Europe, finally making its way to Iceland seemingly by chance a year ago.

Kristbjörg, who lives in Montgomery, Alabama, and speaks with a Southern drawl, had a chance run in with another Icander, Guðný Jónsdóttir, at a roller derby match in Atlanta, Georgia in 2011. Both women had been casually playing on teams in the States.

Together, the two women were able to round up five interested Icelanders—Jóna Þorsteinsdóttir, Rake Snorradóttir, Anita Rubberdt and Guðrún "Mobus" Bernharðs—who organised a meeting in August 2011 to gauge interest in forming an Icelandic team. There was a big turnout at the meeting, and after getting protective gear and equipment

shipped over from the United States and Europe, the ladies were ready to play by September.

## ORCHESTRATED CHAOS

From the outside, a roller derby bout looks like pure chaos: two teams of five women race around a track, skating until a referee blows a whistle to initiate a "jam"—a two-minute period where one person from each team bolts ahead of the rest of the pack, racing back around to be the first through the army of skaters.

Unlike most sports which involve a ball and some kind of goal, roller derby turns its players into points. "Everyone asks, 'where is the ball in this game!?' It's not like handball where you know exactly what the goal is and where the ball needs to go," Anita says. "The jammer is kind of like the ball."

The team's goal is to help their jammer through the pack while preventing the other team's jammer from getting by. The first jammer to get through becomes the "lead jammer," and each subsequent player they pass from the opposing team earns their team a point. The lead jammer can call off the jam at any time to keep her opponent from scoring, and there can be up to 15 jams in the space of one thirty minute half.

Although the sport is rough, there are a number of rules to keep players from outright fighting each other. Players are also required to wear wrist guards, mouth guards, elbow pads, kneepads and helmets at all times, and a team of seven referees and 15 non-skating officials are quick to call out those who violate the rules.

Players can't use their forearms to push, shove or hit, explains Jóna, one of the founders and current coaches. Instead, they use their hips, shoulders and bottoms to block or hit opponents. "Yet, it doesn't matter how many rules there are," Mobus says, "there's still going to be adrenaline and chaos."

In addition to the strength and discipline it takes to play the game, which can last two hours, there are strong influences from DIY, feminist and punk cultures. Teams and players adopt intimidating monikers that are more punk rock than ice skating princess. Team names such as the Back Breaking Bambis from Frankfurt, Germany, the

Crime City Rollers from Malmö, Sweden or the Rat City Roller Girls from Seattle, Washington embody the fighting spirit of the sport.

"It's aggressive, which is something girls aren't encouraged to be in contact sports," says Jóna, whose derby name is Black Metal Banshee. "We're more encouraged to be feminine and subtle and nice."

## NO PLACE TO CALL HOME

As roller derby is relatively new to Iceland, none of the gear, including the sport's signature quad skates, is available locally. In fact, there isn't much of a skating culture in the country at all. Jóna, Rake and Mobus all admit that they were completely new to skating and the sport when they joined the team, and only one of the team's current coaches, Anita, had any previous skating experience. Not only that, but many of the team's current members say they never played sports prior to roller derby.

"I'm hard-core anti-sports, actually," jokes Rake, who says she became interested in the sport after seeing 'Whip It,' a 2009 film in which a misfit girl from a small town in Texas joins a local roller derby team. For her, roller derby is different because it not only involves strength, but also speed and grace. "It's aggressive, but you must know how to control your body and your legs while on skates," says Rake whose derby name, Rushkva, is a play on the Icelandic word röskva, meaning agile or quick.

With no place to call home, the team has had a number of practise spaces, including a parking garage and an old go-kart track and the team has yet to play an official bout. But with the current core group of 8–10 girls practising twice a week and a third weekly practice planned after the new year, Jóna says she hopes they will be able to start host-

ing minimum skills tests as soon as February.

"We'll see how many can get through that, and then we can really start building a team," she says.

## PRETTY IN PUNK

While the aggression of the sport may scare some away, the Icelandic roller derby girls agree on one thing that makes it universally appealing: its acceptance of anyone and everyone.

"As long as you can skate and pass minimum skills test, you're in," Rake says. In fact, Jóna, Rake and Mobus say players with varying body types and sizes actually make for a stronger team overall.

"Here there is no cookie-cutter body shape. Look at me, I'm big and beefy," Mobus says. "If I'm on a team with a bunch of skinny girls, like Rake, who is super agile and fast, the team would have a completely different strategy. If you have two people like me and three like her, it would be a completely different team. Every time there's a new person, there's a new dynamic!"

"I have never felt too fat, too short, too tall, or too anything," Kristbjörg adds, noting that before she joined the Alabama derby team, she had been self-conscious of her weight and big thighs. "After I joined the team, I began to see myself in a different light."

For a sport that combines athleticism, feminism and a punk, DIY attitude, Kristbjörg says she sees no reason that it shouldn't take off in Iceland. Not even the fear of broken bones and concussions keep her from playing, and in fact it's part of the reason she keeps coming back for more. "It makes me feel like a superstar," Kristbjörg says. "When I put on my skates and my gear, I feel invincible."

✦ - KIRSTEN O'BRIEN



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# Welcoming Winter

## The phenomenology of migration

You move away. You're elsewhere. You may move away repeatedly, you may stay away for long, your elsewhere becomes a here, your former here a onceuponatime. Yet. However. That onceuponatime lingers. That supposed elsewhere remains more here than you expected. Its stubborn hereness bothers you, because you thought you were moving. You thought you might settle. This isn't even hereness, you say as you look around yourself. It's not even heredity; it's her ish, at most. It's all just mildly hereish.

like; the new here does too. All the heres, they're somewhat rude. They don't seem to know their boundaries. They here you more than you care to be hered. Still they never seem to here you fully—they push as they pull; they don't send clear messages. You know there's nothing vague about yourself, all flesh and blood, so it must be them. It's the heres that are only vaguely here. They demand you, yet they give so little in return. They demand all of you, your absolute presence, but you realise they will never be fully yours.

You take a new turn. Whatever there is that can be referred to as you changes its attitude, takes pride in this lack of a full and complete here and decides: I'll be neither here nor there, their refusal to fully here me, to here to me, the necessity they impose on me is now my choice, my chosen I, I will be neither here nor there. You decide: whatever lack of here I feel, that is my own private here, I cannot not be here, in any real sense, wherever I do not fully go, there I am. So here I am, by definition, whether any acknowledged, identifiable here heres me or not.

I'm trying to deliver some sort of thoughts on nationality or ethnicity as experienced through migration. In 'Reflections on Exile,' Edward Said paraphrases Wallace Stevens' 'Snow Man': "Exile ... is a 'mind of winter' in which the pathos of summer and autumn as much as the potential of spring are nearby but unobtainable." It's true. This betweenness makes you always absent, absent as only winter is.

Whether it was forced or voluntary migration, there remain traces of that old place within you, around you, that you may not care to bring with you. You may never have felt at home

there either. Because you're anti-nationalist. You're cosmopolitan. You're no-borders. And yet, there you are, somewhere on the national-identity-obsession-scale, preoccupied either by nationality as an enemy, something to conquer, slay and do without, or, in rarer cases, as something to be cherished. Origins stay with you the way shared celebrations do, the way Christmas does for anyone brought up in a pseudo-christian, post-christian, post-post-society: not celebrating that sort of thing takes more force than taking part ever does. It's human-made, it's something we do. Yet it's simply there, persistent as you thought only mountains would be. A habit.

Of course though, it's not just about actual migrants. Whenever you grew up is no longer there. Phones didn't use to be this smart; energy didn't use to be this green. Coffee wasn't this creamy, the heres weren't this vague, vague wasn't this vogue, there seemed to be a saner shade of vain. Even etceteras seemed to know their place and lead somewhere. Etc. Still this is not nostalgia. (Ah ... remember when we had nostalgias? (Ah ... remember when we reminisced about the times we had nostalgias (etc.)))

You're all grown up now, you migrant, you let go of your here and thought there was something to be gained. You're all grown up now. This is it. It's not even a this. Not even an it. Just fifty old flickering shades of not here. Not even revolution will be here in any fulfilling sense. Here is over. Who killed it?

**Words**  
Haukur Már Helgason

**Illustration**  
Lóa Hjálmtýsdóttir



You move away. You're elsewhere. You may move away repeatedly, you may stay away for long, your elsewhere becomes a here, your former here a onceuponatime. Yet. However. That onceuponatime lingers. That supposed elsewhere remains more here than you expected. Its stubborn hereness bothers you, because you thought you were moving. You thought you might settle. This isn't even hereness, you say as you look around yourself. It's not even heredity; it's hereish, at most. It's all just mildly hereish.

All the heres you travel through accumulate into a heap of hereishness you waddle in, but the one that most irritates you with its stubborn refusal to become a there and onceuponatime is the place where

you started. It even lingers in your mouth; when you speak, it's there. Your accent keeps giving you away, linking you to lots of people you have no particular reason to like a lot and even more reasons not to particularly like at all. Your accent even gives away your relation to particular people that may or may not like you at all; none of you may like each other and yet, there you are, all like each other, with that never absolutely local pronunciation of whatever words, whatever language you supposed might become part of your new here. Pronunciation, grammatical errors, slang, habitual keywords, exclamations—hereishly they stay.

What's more, you find you don't even care. It's not just the old here that presses on you more than you

One of the greatest paradoxes of Icelandic discourse is the generalised aversion to any form of small talk, but an all-encompassing passion for the subject of weather. All clichéd tourist jokes aside, it really does change so rapidly and drastically (sometimes dangerously) that it can quickly put a room in a tizzy. Our meteorologists have a particularly tough gig on their hands too, given how inconsistent it is from one year to the next! The one that just ended was no different, providing the whole country with endless excitement.

We kicked off last winter with crazy snowstorms carrying over from 2011, resulting in dozens of grounded flights and general havoc in Reykjavík, a city thoroughly unprepared for snow clearing. However, this was no match for Ísafjörður, whose mass amounts of precipitation caused an avalanche warning to go into full effect, shutting down businesses and schools. The children of the Westfjords rejoiced.

The winter eventually petered out in an anti-climax and spring ushered in with classic showers. Things started getting interesting in May as the leftovers of that famous ash cloud rolled into the capital area just in time for allergy season, much to the dismay of asthmatics. Luckily, the ash blew away by the end of the month and gave way to remarkably clear skies, allowing the whole country to witness an extraordinary and rare astronomical event, the transit of Venus.

Starting in May and carrying on through June and July, there was much confusion about the island as the light season clocked in record hours of unobstructed sunshine—836.6 hours to be exact! While some rejoiced at the rare opportunity to wear nothing but hot-pant jorts and nipple tape (well, not really), the sun forced others to deal with real world problems: severe droughts caused farmers to yield low hay production for their livestock and a state of emergency was declared as the Northwest battled raging grass fires.

The north had it rough again in the autumn, as sudden, extreme weather knocked out power and killed thousands of sheep during the round-up season. (Let it be said though, they were on their way to the slaughterhouse at the time.) Meanwhile, as tourists and bands piled into Reykjavík at the beginning of November, winds over 28 metres per second raged through the streets, truly putting the air back in Airwaves! These bouts of bad weather caused much hubbub as people came up in arms against the Icelandic Met Office, claiming they hadn't been warned. The latter rightfully responded that yes, they actually had.

Finally, the weather reporters got one clean break by accurately bearing the bad news that there would be no white Christmas in the capital. Despite a nice dusting to ring in the New Year, it's back to grey clutch for now. Hang onto your hats; who knows what's next!

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STUFFED WITH STUFF

Issue 1

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**P.28** “ From the outside, a roller derby bout looks like pure chaos: two teams of five women race around a track, skating until a referee blows a whistle to initiate a “jam.” ”



Could roller derby be the next big sport in Iceland!?

**P.22** “ Icelanders can, unsurprisingly, claim a high rate of cinema attendance per capita—especially among student-age moviegoers—but the options are relatively narrow. Broadening a sense of what’s out there was, and continues to be, the goal.”



Is Bíó Paradís changing the way Icelanders go to the movies!?

**P.12** “ EBækur hopes to move away from the current sales model for eBooks, in which books can’t be lent and the actual ownership of the book is unclear.”



Will ebooks be the cool new way to read in 2013!?

**P.24** “ The success of the initial launch prompted her to open the store full-time and the multilevel design and fashion house, which doesn’t charge rent but does take a cut of sales, now holds lines by sixty of Iceland’s established and up-and-coming designers.”



Are Icelandic designers onto something with ATMO!?

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+ Eating, Drinking and Shopping + Map

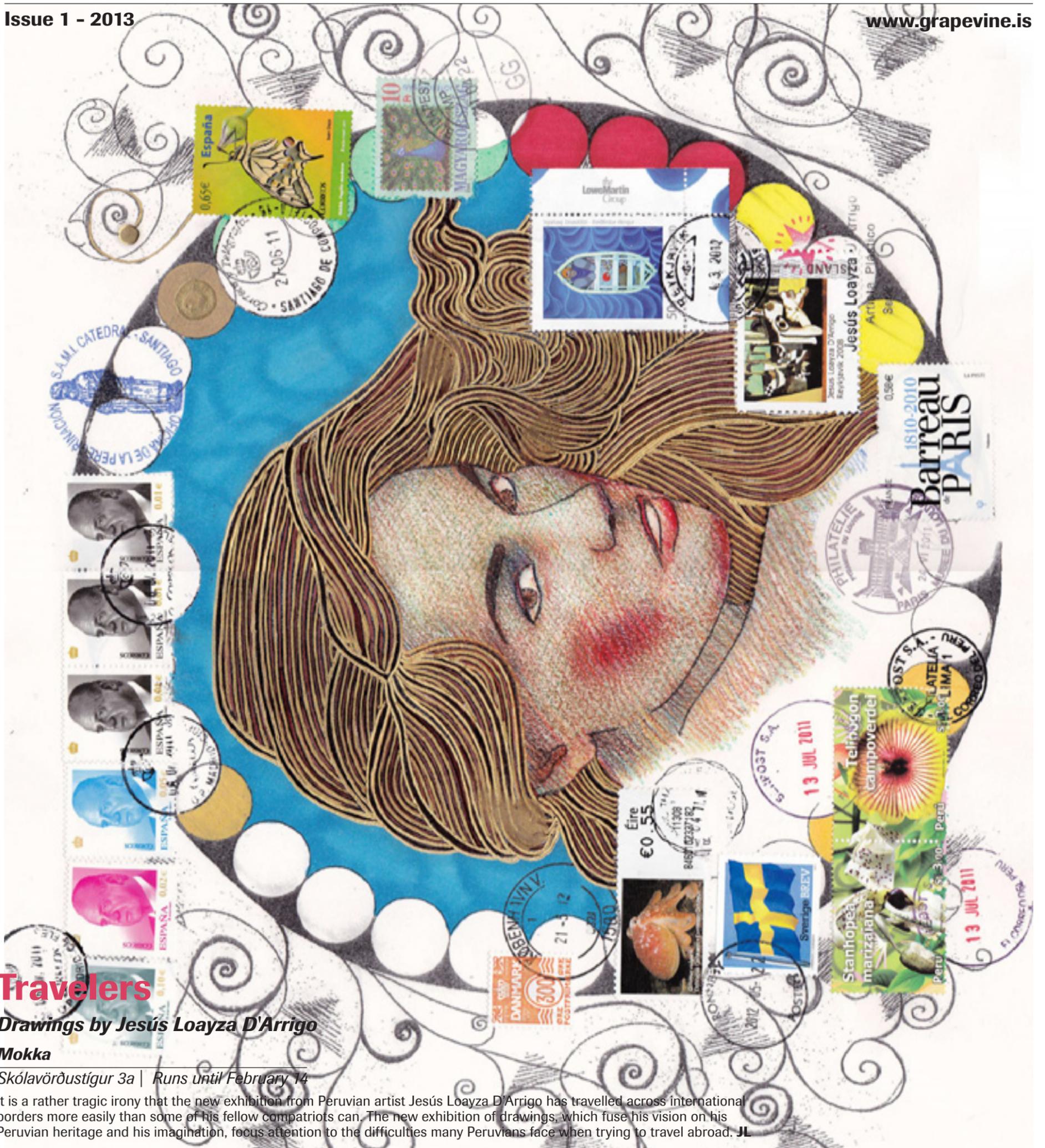


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Issue 1 - 2013

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## Travelers

Drawings by Jesús Loayza D'Arrigo

Mokka

Skólavörðustígur 3a | Runs until February 14

It is a rather tragic irony that the new exhibition from Peruvian artist Jesús Loayza D'Arrigo has travelled across international borders more easily than some of his fellow compatriots can. The new exhibition of drawings, which fuse his vision on his Peruvian heritage and his imagination, focus attention to the difficulties many Peruvians face when trying to travel abroad. JL



## Tuesday January 22

- Café Rósenberg**  
 • 22:00 Gudrid Hansen  
**English Pub**  
 • 22:00 Troubadours  
**Harlem**  
 • 22:00 Tuesday Night Fish Fry  
**KEX Hostel**  
 • 20:00 KexJazz  
**Kaffibarinn**  
 • 22:00 DJ Kári  
**Prikið**  
 • 22:00 DJ Hús

## Wednesday January 23

- Café Rósenberg**  
 • 22:00 Hjalti Porkels  
**English Pub**  
 • 22:00 Troubadours  
**Harlem**  
 • 22:00 Einar Sonic  
**Kaffibarinn**  
 • 22:00 DJ Katla  
**Prikið**  
 • 22:00 Dungeon Massive

## Thursday January 24

- Café Rósenberg**  
 • 22:00 Tónelskir Læknar (The Tune Loving Healers)  
**Celtic Cross**  
 • 22:00 Live Music  
**Dubliner**  
 • 22:00 Live Music  
**English Pub**  
 • 22:00 Troubadours  
**Gamli Gaukurinn**  
 • 22:00 Pearl Jam Tribute  
**Gay 46**  
 • 22:00 DJ Dramatík  
**Harlem**  
 • 22:00 Hits & Tits – Karaoke  
**Hressó**  
 • 22:00 DJ Cypie  
**Kaffibarinn**  
 • 22:00 KGB  
**KEX Hostel**  
 • 20:00 Scottish Festival Week – Burns Night  
**Prikið**  
 • 22:00 DJ Maggi Lego

## Friday January 25

- Café Rósenberg**  
 • 22:00 Elvar Örn & Band  
**Celtic Cross**  
 • 22:00 Live Music  
**Dubliner**  
 • 22:00 Live Music  
**English Pub**  
 • 17:00 Troubadours  
**Gay 46**  
 • 22:00 DJ Bluescreen  
**Glaumbar**  
 • 22:00 DJ Atli  
**Harlem**  
 • 22:00 Hermigervill  
**Hressó**  
 • 22:00 Mars  
**Kaffibarinn**  
 • 22:00 Alfons  
**Kjallarinn**  
 • 22:00 DJ Kollster  
**Prikið**  
 • 22:00 DJ Dreptu Pig & Trap Strákarnir

## Saturday January 26

- Amsterdam**  
 • 22:00 DJ P. Kaze  
**Café Rósenberg**

- 22:00 KK & Maggi  
**Celtic Cross**  
 • 22:00 Live Music  
**Dubliner**  
 • 22:00 Live Music  
**English Pub**  
 • 21:00 Troubadours  
**Gamli Gaukurinn**  
 • 22:00 Kontinum

- Gay 46**  
 • 22:00 DJ Manny  
**Glaumbar**  
 • 22:00 DJ Seth  
**Harlem**  
 • 22:00 KGB  
**Hressó**  
 • 22:00 Playmo  
**Kaffibarinn**  
 • 22:00 PZ – Már & Nielsen  
**Kjallarinn**  
 • 22:00 DJ Dramatík  
**Prikið**  
 • 22:00 Benni B Ruff

## Sunday January 27

- English Pub**  
 • 22:00 Troubadours  
**Harlem**  
 • 18:00 NBA Games  
**Kaffibarinn**  
 • 22:00 Kristinn Pálsson

## Monday January 28

- Café Rósenberg**  
 • 22:00 Barsvar  
**English Pub**  
 • 22:00 Troubadours  
**Harlem**  
 • 21:00 Emozeen  
**Kaffibarinn**  
 • 22:00 DJ 2,25  
**Prikið**  
 • 22:00 DJ Hús

## Tuesday January 29

- Café Rósenberg**  
 • 22:00 Elva Björk  
**English Pub**  
 • 22:00 Troubadours  
**Harlem**  
 • 22:00 Thule Quiz  
**KEX Hostel**  
 • 20:00 KexJazz  
**Kaffibarinn**  
 • 22:00 Símon FKNHNSM  
**Prikið**  
 • 22:00 DJ KAMISAMA

## Wednesday January 30

- Café Rósenberg**  
 • 22:00 Robert the Roommate  
**English Pub**  
 • 22:00 Troubadours  
**Harlem**  
 • 22:00 Good Moon Deer DJ set  
**Kaffibarinn**  
 • 22:00 Terrordisco  
**Prikið**  
 • 22:00 Berndsen

## Thursday January 31

- English Pub**  
 • 22:00 Troubadours  
**Glaumbar**  
 • 22:00 Bingo (Corona Night)  
**Harlem**  
 • 22:00 DJ Kári  
**Kaffibarinn**  
 • 22:00 HúsDjú with Kanilsnældum  
**Kjallarinn**  
 • 22:00 DJ Nalli  
**Prikið**  
 • 22:00 Surprise Night

**31**  
Jan



**Dark Music Days Festival**  
*Concert for new and progressive music*

Harpa - Eldborg | 19:30 | 2.000 - 3.600 ISK

You'd think with Iceland being famed for it's long, dark winters that locals would want something more light and uplifting at this time of year, right? Wrong. One of the highlights of the winter season, The Dark Days Music Festival has been an integral part of Iceland's musical offerings since 1980. Performing at Harpa in addition to the premieres of three young Icelandic composers. The festival is an important forum for new and progressive music in Iceland and in particular a platform for new and upcoming domestic musical talent. As well as new music the festival relies also on the traditional aspect, with the impressive Iceland Symphony Orchestra also featuring. So instead of hanging on for the long Icelandic summer, celebrate the darkness in a way that only Iceland can. JL



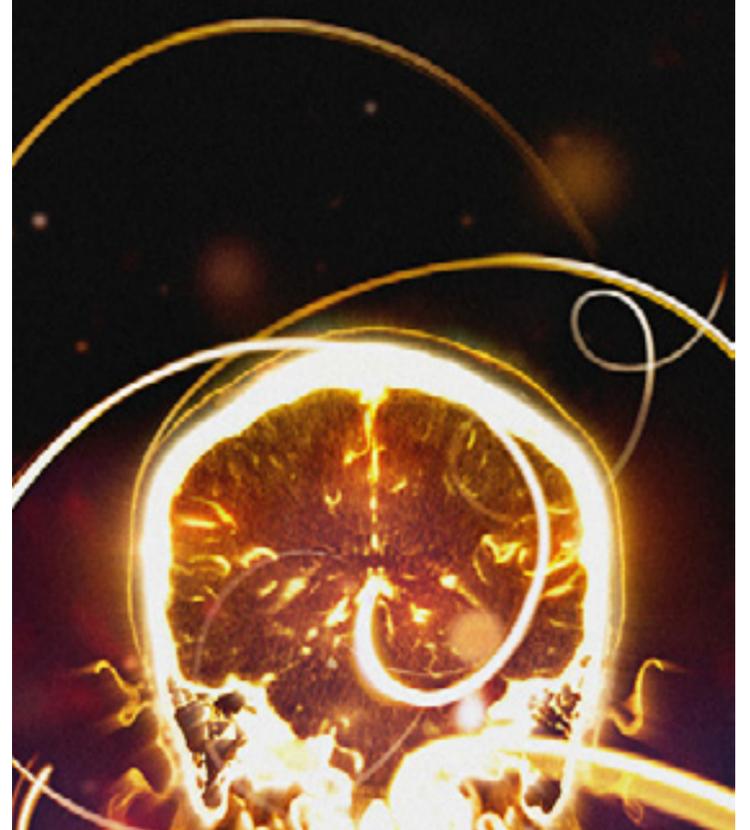
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# ART

## OPENINGS AND ONGOING

### January

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

### Opening

#### ASÍ Art Museum

January 12

##### Part of a Part of a Part

In his work Bjarki Bragason often confronts issues regarding historical events.

Runs until February 10

#### Hafnarborg

January 12

##### Gravity - Circular Motion by Björk Viggosdóttir

A new installation exhibition that encompasses multiple and diverse media.

Runs until March 17

##### Drawings - Ingólfur Arnarsson

January 12

Pristine delicacy is a characteristic of both Ingólfur's paintings and drawings.

Runs until February 17

#### i8 Gallery

January 17

##### Ragna Róbertsdóttir

A collection of landscapes which are applied directly onto the wall.

Runs until March 9

#### Kling og Bang Gallery

January 12

##### REFLAR -Fragments of Life by Jóna Hlíf Halldórsdóttir and Guðjón Tryggvason

The installation includes text pieces, sound and kinetic works that form a narrative in to the formation of a friendship.

Runs until February 10 and is open on Thursdays to Sundays from 14-18

#### Reykjavík Art Museum - Hafnarhús

January 19

##### Spill - Ívar Valgarðsson

Spill comprises three murals of drips of paint which have trickled onto the floor. Ívar focuses a digital camera on the paint drops and projects the images on to the walls in real time.

Runs until April 14

January 19

##### Robert Smithson: The Invention of Landscape - Broken Circle/ Spiral Hill

This exhibition focuses on his only Earthwork in Europe, Broken Circle/ Spiral Hill, created in Emmen, Holland in 1971.

Runs until April 14

#### Reykjavík Museum of Photography

January 26

##### Guðmundur Ingólfsson Kvosin - 1986 & 2011.

Runs until May 12

### Ongoing

#### The Culture House

##### Medieval Manuscripts Eddas and Sagas

It includes principal medieval manuscripts, such as Codices Regii



### Mindplay And Fingerdance Ragnheiður Jónsdóttir's career in art

#### Reykjavík Art Museum - Kjarvalsstaðir

Miklatún, next to Flókagata | On permanent view

As a pioneer who put graphic art firmly on the map of the Icelandic art scene in the 1970s and 80s, her work could easily be described as Andy Warhol with an Icelandic twist. However, in a career spanning over four decades that has seen numerous transformations in expression and technique, the highly prolific and influential artist Ragnheiður Jónsdóttir is still held with high regard in the popular imaginations of Icelanders. A dynamic artist who has trodden a unique career path, this is definitely an individual's footsteps worth following. **JL**

of the Poetic Edda, Prose Edda, law codes and Christian works, not forgetting the Icelandic Sagas.

On permanent view

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

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

On permanent view

##### Millennium - phase one

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

On permanent view

##### The Library Room

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

On permanent view

#### The Einar Jónsson Museum

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

On permanent view

#### Gerðuberg Cultural Centre

##### Ikons - A Window to Heaven

An exhibition of ikons in the traditional Byzantine style by Konstantinos Zaponidis.

Runs until January 13

#### The Beginning

An exhibition in the Boginn exhibition area of oil paintings of Icelandic landscapes and birds by Kolbrún Ingimarsdóttir.

Runs until January 13

#### Knitting Iceland

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

On permanent view

#### Latin Dance Studio, Faxafen 12

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

On permanent view

#### Museum of Design - Hönnunarsafn Íslands

##### Gísli B. - Five Decades of Graphic Design

This survey of Gísli B. Björnsson's career features, among other things, work from his student days, magazines, book cover design and layout.

Runs until March

#### The National Museum

##### Drawing Across Time and Space

See sketches of Iceland from as far back as 1789, when Scottish scientist John Baine took part in an expedition to Iceland, up to the present.

##### Drawing - Traversing Time and Technique

This exhibition presents drawings by four draughtspersons from

## THE FRESHEST FISH ...AND IDEAS!

After years of study, strings of awards and having led kitchens of some of Reykjavík's most esteemed restaurants, Guðstaf still sees himself as just a kid from up north, with a lifetime passion for fish.



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Practical Info

Reykjavík Area

January 11 - January 31

Keep it in your pocket

## Three Weeks

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

ON - GOING

**PARTY**  
Trivia & Games



**11 FRI FILM French Film Fest** The folks at Græna Ljósíð (Green Light Films) present a series of new French movies, such as 'Amour', 'Rust & Bone', 'La Clé des Champs' and more. At Háskólabíó until January 24. 3.900 ISK for 5 passes.

**14 MON MUSIC Monthly Blues** Local bluesman Bjöggi Gísla and band jam out at this monthly event at Café Rósenberg, presented by the Reykjavík Blues Club.

**18 FRI MUSIC Grapevine Grassroots** Get back to your roots at Hemmi & Valdi with our longest running concert series. This month features surprise live music and DJ Krystal Carma spinning after.

**SUNDAYS SPORTS NBA Games** Head over to Harlem to catch all the dribbles, passes and three-point shots on the big screen.

**Pub Quiz**  
Free

*Dolly, Hafnastræti 4 | Every Tuesday 21:00*  
There are the essential ingredients to a pub quiz: a team with a hilarious name, copious amounts of alcohol, and having no shame in hurling abuse at other teams when you catch them cheating by finding the answers on their phones which they're trying to keep hidden under the table. A pub quiz always provides fascinating insights in to individual players. You may find out that your ultra-macho sports nut friend does indeed know how many weeks pregnant Kim Kardashian is. Likewise it may be that your ultra-prim girlfriend can answer straight away in what round Tyson took a chunk out of Holyfield's ear. So check one out. You may find out things about your team mates that you'd never ever think possible. **JL**

17  
JAN

**CONCERT SERIES**  
Heineken Music #4



**Pétur Ben**  
Free entrance, offer on Heineken  
Slipbarinn, Hotel Marina 22:00

How does Pétur Ben stay so cool? Have you heard his new album, full of his consistently well-crafted rock tunes? Have you seen that gorgeous swath of red hair floating in the abyss on the record cover? Did you know that he wrote the scores for two recent movies, 'Parents' and 'Children'? How can you pass up a chance to see this guy for free!? What about cheap beer, is there anything uncool about that? Have you been to Slipbarinn and basked in its bastion of cozy classiness? Could this concert series be any nicer, really? **RL**

18.19  
JAN - APR

**ACTIVITY**  
Kid's Play



**Music and Creative Movement for Children**  
19.800 ISK

*Kramhúsið theater and dance centre. 14:00*  
In a world where young children are becoming so sedate that even the idea of physical exercise tires them out then this new course is definitely an energetic winner. The program includes singing, creative moving and development of basic concepts like rhythm, perception, and memory. The goal for each lesson is to nurture creativity by listening for children's ideas, giving them opportunity for choice, letting them lead and provide a rich musical environment in which they may learn. **JL**

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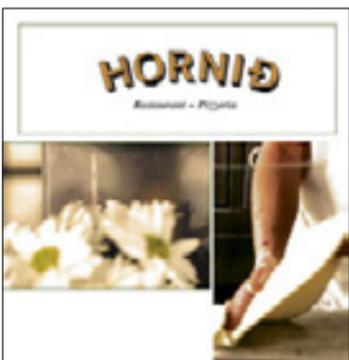


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Opening Hours: Mon-Thu 12-19  
Fridays 12-18, Weekends 13-17  
[www.photomuseum.is](http://www.photomuseum.is)



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For reservations call 551-3340

**A**

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GET 1  
FREE**



**LONDONNY**

HAFNARSTRÆTI 5 & SKÓLAVÖRÐUSTÍGUR 10

**B**

**Café Loki**  
in front of  
Hallgrímskirkja



Enjoy some solid  
homemade  
Icelandic food  
**Open 10 - 21**

**C**

# MAP

## Places We Like

### Food

#### 1 Sushi Samba

Pinghóltsstræti 5

Sushi Samba is a Brazilian/Japanese sushi bar and restaurant that blends tropical Latin flavours with traditional Japanese ingredients. They offer imaginative takes on ceviche, sashimi, sushi, and steak (try saying that three times fast) and food is available for dine-in and take-out.

#### 2 Íslenski barinn

Pósthússtræti 9

Íslenski barinn is not THE cheapest meal in town. You can for instance get a hot dog and a Coke from Bæjarins Beztu for 500 ISK, but that let's be honest, won't hold you over for long. Íslenski barinn this year offers hearty Icelandic dishes for a pretty reasonable 1200-1300 ISK and it's decidedly more upscale than other traditional Icelandic home cooking for a similar price.

#### 3 Búllan

Geirsgata 1

Considered by some to be the best "real" hamburger in Reykjavík, "Búllan" does serve some mysteriously delicious burgers, guaranteed to take the edge off any hangover. This is a very cool little hamburger bar, where you can sit right up close to the counter and savour the amazing smells as these top class burgers are cooked away.

#### 4 Munnharpan

Austurbakki 2

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

#### 5 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 Reykjavík 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.

### Drinking

#### 6 Tíu Droppar

Laugavegur 27

If you're sick of all the arty café bars, filled with Sigur Rós wannabes browsing Facebook on their Macs – go to Tíu Droppar. It's a back-to-basics Icelandic café that hasn't changed its interior since the sixties. Really proves the old adage "if it ain't broke, don't fix it." Plus, the coffee's great and so are the pancakes. In addition to coffee there's also a very good wine and spirit collection.

### 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

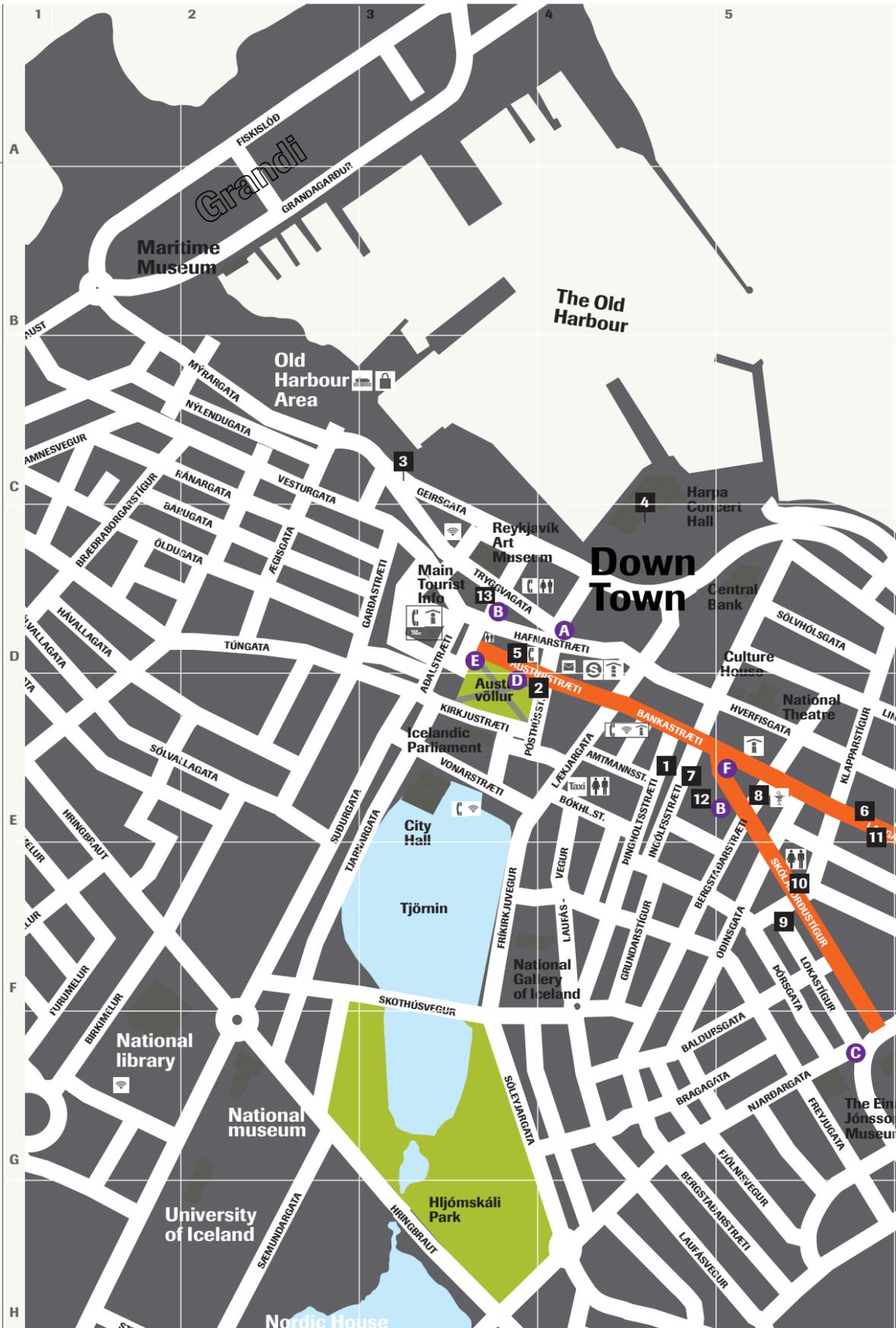
### Tourist information

**Arctic Adventures**, Laugavegur 11,

tel: 562 7000

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

**Iceland Excursions – Grayline Iceland**,



#### 7 Den Danske Kro

Ingólfsstræti 3

This Danish-themed bar is located on Ingólfsstræti, just off Laugavegur. They serve up Danish favourites, such as open faced smørrebrød sandwiches, Tuborg beer and Akavit schnapps. Their 'Happy Hour', every day between 16–19, is a great source of fun. How to ask for a large beer in Danish: "Hej, jeg vil gerne ha' en stor øl, tak".

#### 8 Kaffibarinn

Bergstaðastræti 1

A popular café on weekdays, on weekends Kaffibarinn turns into a ticket for a wild night out, as the space fills up with the late-night souls oozing energy in every corner. With DJs playing and the occasional rock band, the party usually lasts until early morning, yet often manages to leave you begging for more.

#### 9 Café Babalú

Skólavörðustígur 22a

It's tough to miss the brightly colored Café Babalú walking up Skólavörðustígur. A cosy place for coffee and cake, the well-worn, homey ambience makes it difficult to leave. Check out their rooftop patio on sunny days as well.

Hafnarstræti 20, tel: 540 1313

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

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

### Pharmacies

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

**Lyfja**, Laugavegur 16, tel: 552 4045 and

Lágmúla 5, tel: 533-2300

### Coach terminal

**BSÍ**, Vatnsmýrarvegur 10,

tel: 562 1011, www.bsi.is

### Domestic airlines

**Air Iceland**, Reykjavíkflugvöllur,

tel: 570 3030, www.flugfelag.is

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

### Public transport

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

### Opening Hours

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

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

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

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

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

### Post Offices

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



## 23<sup>RD</sup> IHF MEN'S HANDBALL WORLD CUP

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**D**

## New In Town



### 13 Harlem

Tryggvagata 22

Well it would seem as though the short lived Þýski Barinn unceremoniously shut down over the holidays. This after the old Bakkus covertly moved out the place and tanked at its new location! Now there's a new sheriff in hipster-town and it's called Harlem - although given the elaborately handpainted interior, faux-wood bar panelling and super DJ booth, it's obviously taken the wrong NYC neighbourhood as a namesake. Will third time be a charm on Naustin?



## Venue Finder Music & Entertainment

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

## Museums & Galleries

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

## Shopping

### 10 Handprjónasambandið

Skólavörðustígur 19

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

### 11 Spúútnik

Laugavegur 28B

Vintage fashion is definitely the "in" thing in Iceland and if retro and vintage clothing is your thing, then you have to have a good snoop through some amazing second-hand bargains. In particular if you're looking for an Icelandic sweater but don't want to spend a fortune then this may be your place as there are plenty in all sizes and colour patterns.

### 12 Rauðhetta og úlfurinn

Skólavörðustígur 8

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

#### Public phones

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

#### Internet Access

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

The National and University Library, Arngrímsgata 3

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

#### Swimming Pools

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

#### Public Toilets

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

# Gandhi Indian restaurant



Example from our menu:

## Indian adventure

Let our chefs surprise you with fish, chicken and vegetarian courses accompanied with nan bread and raitha. + Indian dessert

ISK 4.900.-



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RUB23 | Kaupvangsstræti 6 | 600 Akureyri  
Phone: +354 462 2223 | rub23@rub23.is

# Best Of Reykjavík

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



## BEST MUST-TRY DINING EXPERIENCE: MAMMA STEINA

You've tried the rotten shark, the minke carpaccio and the pickled ram's balls—now it's time to get acquainted with the Icelandic grandmother kitchen that has kept Icelanders nice and lumpy through the centuries. Mamma Steina offers genuine Icelandic home-style fare that most locals know from growing up, including svið (seared sheep heads), fish balls (yummy fried balls of haddock) and salty mutton. While the food doesn't make for as good a story as the ram's balls, it's certainly a lot tastier and equally authentic.



Located at Skólavörðustígur 23



## BEST SECOND HAND SHOP: FATAMARKAÐURINN



Fatamarkaðurinn by Hlemmur seems to be pretty popular these days. "Clothes at Nostalgia and Spúútnik have been pre-selected so they tend to be cooler, but they are more expensive. If you're willing to put in the work, Fatamarkaðurinn is can be pretty great," one of our second hand shoppers explained.

Located next to Hlemmur



## BEST PLACE TO READ A BOOK: STOFAN

There are a bunch of nice places to read a book, but many of them are weather-dependent and relying on the weather is risky at best. If it's sunny we agree that the botanical garden is a pretty nice, quiet place to read. You can find a spot there sheltered from the wind, but if it's cold and rainy, you probably don't want to be outside. That's why we decided to go with Stofan, a cosy café with comfortable couches. It feels super homey, like grandma's house homey, and it's typically pretty quiet.

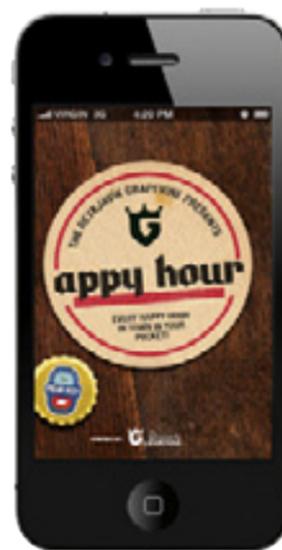


Located at Aðalstræti 7

# A GUIDE THAT FUCKS YOU UP

## A list of every Happy Hour in 101 Reykjavík

- 101 Hótel**  
Every day from 17:00 to 19:00,  
Beer for 450 ISK and wine for 645 ISK.
- Austur**  
Every day from 20:00 to 00:00. Beer 495 ISK and wine 550 ISK.
- B5**  
Every day from 16:00 to 22:00,  
Beer 550 ISK, cider 750 ISK, wine 550 ISK
- Bjarni Fel**  
Every day from 17:00 to 19:00,  
2 for 1 beer for 890 ISK.
- Boston**  
Every day from 16:00 to 22:00,  
Beer 500 ISK and wine 500 ISK.
- Café Haiti**  
Everyday from 16:00 to 22:00.  
Beer for 500 ISK and wine for 650 ISK
- Celtic Cross**  
Every day from 17:00 to 20:00,  
Beer for 500 ISK.
- Den Danske Kro**  
Every day from 16:00 to 19:00,  
2 for 1 beer for 900 ISK and wine for 900 ISK.
- Dillon**  
Every day from 16:00 to 20:00,  
2 for 1 beer for 850 ISK.
- Dolly**  
Every day from 16:00 to 20:00.  
Beer for 500 ISK and wine 500 ISK.
- Dubliner**  
Every day from 16:00 to 20:00,  
2 for 1 beer for 1000 ISK.
- Faktory**  
Every day from 17:00 to 20:00.  
Beer for 550 ISK.
- Fálkinn Bistro**  
Everyday except Sunday from 17:00 to 22:00.  
Beer for 500 ISK and wine for 500 ISK
- Harlem**  
Every day from 17:00 to 22:00.  
Beer for 550 ISK, wine for 700 ISK.



## Download the FREE Grapevine Appy Hour app!

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

- Hemmi og Valdi**  
Every day from 12:00 to 20:00  
Draft beer for 550 ISK and wine for 700 ISK.
- Hilton Hotel Bar**  
Every day from 17:00 to 19:00,  
Beer for 500 ISK and wine for 650 ISK.
- Hótel 1919**  
Every day from 16:00 to 19:00,  
2 for 1 beer for 1000 ISK, wine for 1190 ISK.
- Hótel Holt Gallery Bar**  
Every day from 16:00 to 19:00,  
beer for 475 ISK, wine for 695 ISK,  
champagne and cocktails half off.

- Hótel Plaza Bar**  
Every day from 17:00 to 19:00,  
Beer for 500 ISK
- Íslenski Barinn**  
Every day from 17:00 - 19:00.  
2 for 1 on beer and wine.
- Kaffi Zimsen**  
Sun - Thurs from 17:00 to 22:00,  
2 for 1 beer for 800 ISK.
- Kolabrautin**  
Every day from 17:00 to 19:00,  
Beer for 500 ISK, wine for 700 ISK.
- Lebowski Bar**  
Every day from 16:00 to 19:00,  
2 for 1 beer for 900 ISK and wine for 1000 ISK.
- Micro Bar**  
Every day except Sat from 16:00 to 19:00,  
500 ISK for a draft beer.
- Miðgarður Bistro bar**  
Every day from 17:00 to 19:00.  
50 percent off all drinks.
- Obladi Obladi**  
Every day from 12:00 to 20:00  
Beer 600 ISK
- Prikið**  
Weekdays from 16:00 to 20:00,  
2 for 1 beer for 690 ISK.
- Reykjavík Backpackers**  
Every day from 17:00 - 20:00.  
2 for 1 beer for 750 ISK
- Roadhouse**  
Friday & Saturday 22:00 - 23:00.  
2 for 1 beer for 790 ISK and wine for 790 ISK.
- Slippbarinn**  
Every day from 17:00 to 19:00,  
50% off beer and wine.
- Stofan**  
Every day from 17:00 to 20:00,  
Beer for 500 ISK and wine for 600 ISK.
- Tapashouse**  
Everyday from 16:00 to 19:00.  
Beer for 950 ISK and wine for 1150 ISK.
- Uno**  
Everyday from 17:00 to 19:00.  
50% off all drinks.
- Uppsalir - Bar & Café**  
Every day from 17:00 to 19:00.  
2 for 1 beer for 900 ISK.
- Pingholtsbar**  
Every day from 17:00 to 19:00.  
Beer for 500 ISK

# ART ONGOING

– continued –

dissimilar times, on the one hand the year of the French Revolution, 1789, and on the other the age of digital information technology.

*Runs until January 27*

### 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*

### People on Þórsgata

Photographs and drawings by Alda Lóa Leifsdóttir of houses and inhabitants of Þórsgata in Reykjavík.

*Runs until January 13*

### Tvær í Einni/Two in One

Sverris Björnsson's photos capture Iceland during its two most extreme seasons, summer and winter.

*Runs until January 27*

### The Nordic House

#### Ekphrasis

Exhibition by Scottish artist Calum Colvin's

*Runs until January 20*

### The Library

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

*On permanent view*

### The Icelandic Phalological Museum

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

*On permanent view*

### Reykjavík Art Museum - Ásmundarsafn

#### The Fire Within

A collection of sculptures by Ásmundur Sveinsson housed in his former home.

*Runs until April 14, 2013*

### Reykjavík Art Museum - Hafnarhús

#### Erró - Graphic Art, 1949-2009

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

*Runs until August 25, 2013*

### Reykjavík Art Museum - Kjarvalsstaðir

#### Kjarval - Key Works

Reykjavík Art Museum draws on its extensive collection of works by Jóhannes S. Kjarval for ongoing exhibitions at Kjarvalsstaðir. The current exhibition offers a unique and powerful retrospective from Iceland's most beloved painter.

*Permanent exhibition*

### Reykjavík City Museum

#### Reykjavík 871 +/- 2

#### The Settlement Exhibition

Archaeological findings from ruins of one of the first houses in Iceland and other excavations in the city centre, open daily 10:00-17:00, 1.100 ISK per adult, 650 ISK per person in groups (10+) and free for children 18 and under.

*On permanent view*

### Reykjavík Maritime Museum

#### From Poverty to Abundance

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

12, 16  
& 27  
Jan



### The Magic Of The Mask Hjartaspaðar (Heart of Spades)

Hafnarfjörður Theatre (Gaflarleikhús)

20:00 | 3.500 ISK

What better way is there to confront the ravages of old age, the reality of time and the final years of one's life than by slapping on some crazy masks and simulating group sex? Honestly, we're stumped! This new silent play by Ágústa Skúladóttir flips the table on the typical depressing script that accompanies the narrative of the elderly, replacing it with ridiculousness, toilet humour, slapstick and farce. No word is spoken aloud, no human face is shown unmasked; silence and anonymity are better anyway. **RL**



Find all art listings online  
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*On permanent view*

### The History of Sailing

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

*On permanent view*

### The Coast Guard Vessel Óðinn

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

*On permanent view*

### Focus on the Sea

Focus holds regular photographic exhibitions, this time the theme is the sea. Focus was founded in 1999 and membership is open to all amateur photographers. The main aim of the association is to provide a platform for its members to pursue photography, hold competitions and give talks about the topic.

*On temporary view*

### The wood carvings of Lúkas Kárason

Lúkas Kárason uses driftwood from his childhood home, Strandir, in all his carvings. He manages to extract magnificent creatures from his material. Lúkas was born in 1931 and grew up in Strandir, North-West Iceland.

*On temporary view*

### Spark Design Space

#### Posters by Goddur

Over the years Icelandic graphic design legend Goddur has created

dozens of posters for various art exhibits, music events and films.

Twenty-nine posters from the last 16 years will be on display.

*Runs until January 15, 2013*

### Víkingakráin

#### Let's Talk Iceland

A comedy show about Iceland's Viking history in English, performed in a pub mocked up as a Viking longhouse.

*Every day at 20:00 at Víkingakráin*

### Reykjavík Museum of Photography

#### MATS 1956-1978

The exhibition Mats 1956-1978 focuses on Mats Wibe Lund's early career, when he travelled around Iceland, taking pictures of whatever caught his attention.

*Runs until January 20, 2013*

#### Trausti Ólafsson (1891-1961) from Breiðavík to Copenhagen

The exhibit comprises about twenty photographs from a collection by Trausti Ólafsson. Most were taken between 1919 and 1928, in his home territory in the West Fjords, during his student years in Copenhagen, and in Klaksvík in the Faroe Islands, the home town of his wife.

*Runs until January 20, 2013*

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**F O O D**

FOR YOUR MIND, BODY AND SOUL

by Ragnar Egilsson

## Trendy Foody Trendies Of 2012

I was originally going to write about major trends in the Icelandic food scene in 2012, but I struggled to find something that really defined the year.

Of the minor trends, local food began to gradually usurp the position held by organic food, although this trend was more pronounced in the UK and US.

Béarnaise and Hollandaise were still everywhere and on everything. New Nordic cuisine is still prominent but other influences, mostly Spanish, have started to creep in.

Artisanship continues to rise, with further small time producers and specialised providers selling directly to restaurants or to us lowly plebs via stores like Frú Lauga and Búrið.

The 1920s cocktail trend finally started a slow trickle in from America with whiskey sours and old fashioned. But the hoi polloi still seem insanely attached to their ultra-sugary mojitos.

We saw some criticism levelled at the sat fat and sugar rich food being offered in the nation's school cafeterias, probably following Jamie Oliver's efforts in the UK.

Factory farming and a pathetically

weak food regulatory system continued unabated with tainted salt and poisoned horses being vigorously ignored.

Thrift and frugality still play a key role as people claw their way out of the recession amidst ballooning food prices. Icelanders themselves continue to balloon at a similar rate with growing obesity, despite their continued obsession with superfoods and muffintop-annihilating wunderberries.

This frugality has driven more people to experiment with preparing their curry sauces and pasta sauces from scratch and even the most unadventurous among us seem to be trying their hand at homemade sushi.

We managed to dodge enlightenment for another year with our ridiculously paternalist state monopoly on the sale of alcohol. This was celebrated at the end of the year with a hefty hike in taxes on alcohol and tobacco. Of course the government claims to be doing this to improve our health, although they did grudgingly accept massive tax revenue, which is the unintended by-product of this humanitarian effort.

The result was that we saw a sharp increase in moonshine production,

home-brewing and illegal stimulants.

But the closest we had to a big, underlying, unifying food trend in 2012 was the globalisation of Icelandic cuisine and the continued, global trend of food fetishisation. We saw more Icelanders sharing food photos on Instagram; Icelanders still don't have much time for home cooking, but those who do made a big deal out of it. We also had more cooking shows, we have a stake in the MasterChef franchise, we have more food blogs, and more Icelanders munching and photographing their way through our dainty restaurant scene.

As a consumerist society, food has become just another product to analyse and fetishise, another talisman to ward off the void. The basic idea of sustaining ourselves through the intake of body fuel has succumbed to the physics of fashion. There is still something that, with enough determination, could be called "authentic Icelandic cuisine" but we now perceive that culinary heritage like...well...like people who use words like "culinary heritage."



## Open And Shut

The restaurant scene is a brutal game of musical chairs where key locations will see an endless stream of new owners and new names, while the old ones get ushered, unceremoniously, out into the harsh light of day.

Of the popular restaurant hot spots we saw the disappearance of downtown institution **The Seafood Cellar** at Aðalstræti 2 and it will be sorely missed. In its place we got a Reykjavík branch of the California-style Sushi place **Rub23**.

The restaurant at Hótel Borg went through yet another metamorphosis, shedding the name of Silfur in favour of **Lounge** (let's hope this one is the winner).

**Sakebarinn** opened as an extension of the existing **Sushibarinn** on Laugavegur but now with superior lounge capabilities. Nice addition, hope it works out.

Some downtown spots have chewed through so many bars and restaurants, that it's beginning to look like the ground itself is rejecting them—like a botched organ transplant.

Finally, there's **Friðrik V** that took over from **Tasty** at Laugavegur 60. **Friðrik V** is, like **Rub23**, a much-loved place up north, which opened a Reykjavík branch this summer. I have yet to try their wares but the original **Friðrik V** was quite the trailblazer in locally-sourced ingredients back in the day.

Others seemed to suffer from an identity crisis and have gone rotated the names under mixed management. **Aldin/Happ** on Austurstræti is a particularly confusing example and it would take a

particle physicist to figure out exactly what type of place we're looking at in 2013. Some kind of healthyish food, no doubt.

At least two places opened and (seem to have) shut their doors within the same year—**Silfurtunglið** and **ConFusion**. **Silfurtunglið** was one of two restaurants that opened on Snorrabraut this year (the other being **Roadhouse**) and now seem to be focusing its energy on catering.

**ConFusion** was a deeply confused young place. It seems to be closed now but who really knows. Maybe it went to India to find itself.

But in 2012, some decided to shake things up by throwing some new chairs into the game of musical chairs, and suddenly we had interesting restaurants popping up outside the traditional downtown perimeter.

**Bergsson mathús** opened up within duck-feeding distance of the city pond and have a suitably family-friendly atmosphere. A little too twee and healthy for my tastes, but has found its pool of sustainably grown admirers.

**Pho Vietnamese Restaurant** is the first proper Vietnamese place in Iceland (to my knowledge) and decided to breathe a fresh air into the burger and sausage fest over in Ármúli. Heartily recommended.

The aforementioned **Roadhouse** opened to much fanfare early last year and has been building a reputation as a go-to place for heart-attack burgers to glaze your ribs and organs with.

**Steikhús, Mar, and Slippbarinn** popped up in former industrial buildings on the western perimeter of the restaurant village that has formed around the old harbour. **Steikhús** do steaks and hand out menus on iPads (I figured more restaurants would pick up on that trend). **Slippbarinn** is discussed at length in the Top 3 restaurant list.

**Mar** is a brand new seafood place that I know nothing about. But, hey, their website is nice and simple to use. That's something, right?

And finally there's **Snaps bistro** under Hótel Öðinsvé. A fantastic little bistro and hipster lounge, it came close to making my Top 3 list.

The Icelandic restaurant scene is a confusing beast and we at the Reykjavík Grapevine know there's a good possibility that we've left some new restaurants out. We apologise in advance for any errors.

RAGNAR EGILSSON  
ALÍSA KALYANOVA



## My Top Three Restaurants In Iceland

When people hear that I write about food, the first question is always: "what is the best restaurant in Iceland?" Or, much to their amusement, if it's at a dinner party: "you're not going to be reviewing the food here, are you?"

So, here you are, you bloodsucking cretins! My bloody top three list for the year of our Lord 2012 (in no particular order).



### Grillmarkaðurinn (The Grill Market)

Lækjargata 2A, 101 Reykjavík  
+354 571-7777  
info@grillmarkadurinn.is  
Weekdays: 11:30-14:00 and  
18:00-22:30  
Weekend: 18:00-23:30

If it's seared flesh you want, Argentina Steakhouse and Grillið at Hótel Saga are still forces to be reckoned with, but the year belonged to Grillmarkaðurinn (The Grill Market)—earthy, simple and elegant with a strong emphasis on locally-sourced, quality ingredients.

I have a sneaking suspicion that they will have a hard time maintaining this level of excellence and I'm frankly very doubtful that they are able to source all their ingredients from small, local producers. But there's no denying that in 2012 The Grill Market were the undefeated champions of lunchtime burger specials, glazed ducks, and tender loins.

If you're walking downtown in the afternoon, you won't be able to ignore the smell.



### Fiskfélagið (The Fish Company)

Vesturgata 2a, 101 Reykjavík  
Tel: +354 552 5300  
www.fiskfelagid.is  
info@fiskfelagid.is  
Mon- Sun: 11:00-23:30

The design deliberately but subtly seesaws between the rustic and the stylised, and if you squint, you can almost imagine yourself in a small Icelandic farm. But I doubt anyone would confuse the menu with anything Grandma Nanna from Eskifjörður would have come up with.

The meals are categorised by nationality (often at quite a stretch) and they mix and match ingredients and flavours from around the globe, although the focus remains on local seafood. There is an impressive amount of skill on display; they avoid getting lost in the frivolous details (for the most part). This is a haven for strange ideas and experimentation but shy of the more obnoxious tendencies in molecular gastronomy.

All that and a killer dessert menu to boot.



### Slippbarinn

Mýrargata 2  
101 Reykjavík  
Tel: +354 560 8000  
facebook.com/Slippbarinn  
Kitchen is open every day  
11:30-22:00

In the business casual lounge category, it has to be Slippbarinn. An increasingly popular hangout for the downtown crowd, especially during the cocktail happy hour, Slippbarinn is working under a Spanish influence and offers a lovely selection of small courses and charcuterie without taking the step into tapas territory.

The head chef has already picked up the award for chef of the year here in Iceland (a small-scale, local industry award not unlike the James Beard) and the general consensus is that this is one of the success stories of 2012.

Try the plaice tempura, flatbread and the shredded pork (or duck)

Now slip out of these wet clothes and into a dry martini.

✍ RAGNAR EGILSSON  
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