

April 12th—April 25th

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**Also in
this issue:**

WOW... Just Wow
The airline that
keeps on falling

**The Beauty
Of Process**
Design without
borders

Out To MSEA
Rising electronic
pop star returns

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ABOUT THE PICTURE:
Rut as usual sought
inspiration from
hip-hop covers. This
time, the inspiration
was De La Soul's '3
Feet High And Rising,'
NWA's 'STRAIGHT OUTTA
COMPTON,' and A\$AP
Rocky's recent TESTING.



**12: Just WOW: The
Airline Aftermath**



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Under Things**



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Enough Of The Overconfident CEO



EDITORIAL The Icelandic tourism has been almost unbelievable. Iceland has gone from a couple of hundred thousand tourists to 2.1 million travellers within a decade. This development is one of the key factors in Iceland's quick recovery from the total collapse of its banking sector in 2008.

We literally struck gold. And we are thankful for that.

But—just like the heyday of Icelandic banking—tourism has grown incredibly fast, and become a huge part of our economy in an eerily short amount of time. So it had quite an impact when WOW Air went bust. The low-budget airline held 30% of the Icelandic market, so it was clear that the airline's failure would have a huge impact on the country, from WOW staff, to travellers having their plans interrupted, to the travel industry at large, and the cancellation of Sónar Reykjavík 2019.

But there's also good news. There are still 27 airlines that fly to and from Iceland. Experts say the impact of WOW's collapse will be short term. Around 2,000 people have already lost their jobs, almost all of them directly linked to the airline in one way or another. More jobs will be lost in the restaurant industry and other related industries—even small magazines like The Reykjavík Grapevine will have to fight for their lives. But Iceland has always had a very low unemploy-

ment rate, and it was historically low just before WOW Air crashed. So we expect to be back on our feet quickly. We'll be fine.

Still, WOW's bankruptcy leaves us with a bitter taste in our mouths. It's almost too similar to the banking system collapse. The owner of WOW Air flew too close to the sun—while the government watchdogs slept. They were overconfident that this would resolve on its own and allowed a shaky company with an overconfident CEO to continually overreach until it became a threat to national interests. At its core, it's exactly what happened with the banks in the lead up to 2008.

Perhaps the bankruptcy of WOW Air was a necessary wake-up call. A harsh one, sure, but the travel industry is still here, and it will continue to grow in the coming years. But we need to learn from our mistakes and stop letting overconfident CEOs rule our economy—or even destroy it.

With this in mind, we want to remind you that you can support The Reykjavík Grapevine by visiting our homepage at grapevine.is, our store at shop.grapevine.is, and our new travel market—gotravel.grapevine.is—where you can book tours all around the country. Also, if you like Youtube, subscribe to our channel, The Reykjavík Grapevine, for news, travel, and all kinds of videos about Iceland. **VG** 🇮🇸



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



Hannah Jane Cohen is based out of Iceland by way of New York. An alumni of Columbia University, Hannah has lived on five continents and speaks three languages fluently. Her visionary work is known for expanding the definitions of emotion, introspection, and above all else, taste.



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



Art Bicnick is a man of mystery, moving like the wind through the parties, soirées, openings and social events of Reykjavík. Sometimes he can be seen abroad in the countryside, braving the spray of a waterfall or the frozen glacier air. Always, he will have a camera, documenting the moves of his writer companion.



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



Sam Daniels, a Grapevine Intern, is a connoisseur of the weird and wonderful. Originally from the UK, he moved to Iceland a few years ago and never looked back. He enjoys writing poetry, novels, and short stories and finds amazing amounts of inspiration in the tales of Norse mythology and Icelandic folklore.



Andie Fontaine has lived in Iceland since 1999 and has been reporting since 2003. They were the first foreign-born member of the Icelandic Parliament, in 2007-08, an experience they recommend for anyone who wants to experience a workplace where colleagues work tirelessly to undermine each other.



Aliya Uteuova is a reporting intern all the way from Kazakhstan. She studied journalism in Maine and reported on ocean acidification, rising sea levels, and marine crustaceans (i.e. lobsters). Her fascination with sea life brought her to Iceland where she thoroughly enjoys the coastline.



Lóa Hlín Hjálmtýsdóttir is a national treasure. One of Iceland's leading illustrators, when she's not drawing in her unique style, she's the front-woman of Icelandic electro-pop supergroup FM Belfast. Her comic strip Lóaboratorium appears every issue on page 8, and is also available as a daily dose on her Twitter.

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What Are Icelanders Talking About

The latest cheers and jeers on social media

Words: **Andie Fontaine** Photo: **Wikipedia**

NEWS The hottest story of the past couple weeks here in Iceland has been the **end of the strikes** of hotel workers and bus drivers for the unions Elfing, VR, and aligned unions, culminating in the **signing of a collective bargaining agreement**. While the agreement fell short of all the unions' demands, one of the more glaring details was the timing. The unions had postponed planned strike actions on March 27, attributed to "a new basis for talks, which has now been presented on behalf of the employers' association."

The next day, **WOW Air** ceased all operations and announced its bankruptcy. Shortly thereafter, unions and management were able to work out a deal. If it looks like these events are connected, well, congrats on your powers of observation.

Speaking of WOW Air, it seems we haven't seen the last of the company's CEO, **Skúli Mogensen**. While it's true the airline filed for bankruptcy, its corpse wasn't even cold before he announced **his intent to start a new airline**, tentatively called "NewCo." This airline is planning on picking up many of the routes WOW Air used to service, both in Europe and North America, but there's just one small catch: Skúli needs 40 million USD to get things off the ground. To raise this capital, he is reportedly turning to **crowdfunding** as a strategy. Meanwhile, many of the 1,100 workers he laid off are still looking for jobs.

Public transit company **Strætó** took a brave step that has reportedly paid off in a major way: **offering free day passes on high air pollution days**, also known as "grey days." Air pollution has been a pervasive problem in Reykjavik and health officials have repeatedly pointed out that one of the best ways to reduce these emissions is to get more people to use public

transit. April 8th was the first such grey day since the feature was introduced to the Strætó smart-phone app, and it proved wildly popular; 5,140 people made use of the free day pass, with some 1,846 using the app for the first time. Is it bad we're praying for more air pollution?

The four current and former members of **Sigur Rós** arrived in Reykjavik District Court to answer to **charges of tax evasion and tax fraud** that have been filed against them. Financial scandal has dogged Sigur Rós for over a year now, culminating in tax evasion charges last year, which were later dropped. The band has denied any wrongdoing, but the state reportedly has a strong case against them, and they stand accused of failing to report on revenue and capital gains totally in the tens of millions of krónur. The trial begins on May 20th.



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I mean c'mon, who'd mess with these guys?

Hell Awaits: Slayer Suing Secret Solstice

The future of the music festival is also uncertain

NEWS

Words: **Andie Fontaine**

Photo: **Wikipedia**

On April 8th, it came to light that veteran metal band Slayer has still not been paid by the Secret Solstice music festival, where they performed last June. The future of the festival, including where it will be held, is unclear. Slayer performed at Secret Solstice 2018 as the headlining act. RÚV reports that the band were not paid when they were supposed to be—July 2018—and are now seeking recompense to the tune of about \$133,000 USD.

Furthermore, a representative for the band contends that festival organisers retained 20% of Slayer's revenue to pay cash to tax authorities, but these same tax authorities confirmed that this money has not been paid.

And the money adds up

The question of ultimate responsibility is unclear. Many musicians and contractors have said that they still have not been paid for working with

Secret Solstice, but the company that runs the festival recently changed from Solstice Productions to Live Events. As such, Live Events eschews any personal responsibility for paying Slayer, as they were not organising the festival when the band performed.

The debts do not end there. The festival is supported by the City of Reykjavik, and RÚV has reported that the festival owes the city some 11.6 million ISK.

Where even to hold it?

For the record, the current organisers of Secret Solstice have every intention of going forward with the festival this year. The only problem, apart from finances, is where it should be held. The residents of the Reykjavik neighbourhood Laugardalur don't want it to return, and other options are being explored, some of them as far afield as Selfoss or Ölfus, in South Iceland.

Where Secret Solstice will end up—and whether Slayer will get paid—remains to be seen. ☹

ASK A **Medieval Historian**

Q: Who Wrote Njáls Saga?



Words: **Aliya Uteuova / Arngrímur Vídalín**
Photo: **Art Bicnick**

Njáls Saga is one of the longest of the forty Icelandic sagas written between the 13th and 14th centuries.

Many Icelanders can track their heritage to the characters in the sagas. In Icelandic, the word 'saga' means both 'history' and 'story' and the Njáls saga is a heck of a dramatic one. There are deaths and burnings, famine and revenge; but one of the most intriguing mysteries is Njáll's sexual orientation.

So we asked Medieval Historian Arngrímur Vídalín: "Who wrote Njáls Saga and was Njáll gay?"

Almost no medieval Icelandic text is attributed to a particular author. Sagas are based on a centuries-old oral tradition of storytelling that is compiled and worked into a narrative and, finally centuries later, written down. The version of Njáls Saga most people are familiar with was edited by Einar Ól. Sveinsson in 1954. His aim was to recreate the lost original Njáls Saga by collecting it from various redactions of different manuscripts.

Many scholars have brought forth arguments for its authorship, with potential authors being Sæmundur the Wise, Snorri Sturluson and his nephew Sturla Þórðarson. Yet no one argued that it could have been a woman who wrote it.

The homosexual undertones of Njáll are insinuated by his lack of facial hair and close ties to Gunnar. Homosexuality was not a known sexual orientation in the Middle Ages, so Njáll is never described as being gay. But, people have had homosexual sex in every country and Iceland is no exception.

Thankfully, there is no true answer to this question—that would take the magic out of the story. We are able to approach sagas with our own mindsets and experiences, without prejudices and biases. It is because we are able to mirror ourselves in these texts that they continually offer us new and exciting possibilities of interpretation. ☹

FOOD OF ICELAND

Bananastangir vs. Froskar



Thanks to numerous reaction videos on YouTube, Icelandic candy is now well known around the world.

Sometimes, it's difficult to tell brands apart, and some skirt dangerously close to being identical contents in different packaging. No more is that the case than when it comes to Bananastangir and Froskar, two "different" candies sold by the company Vala.

How similar are they? Well, they look the same, being chocolate-covered bars with a fluffy

filling, although one has yellow filling and the other green. They're also both banana-flavoured. Their respective ingredients show that the only difference between them, apart from what kind of colouring, is their emulsifiers; one uses soy lecithin, and the other, rapeseed lecithin.

So similar are they that when we conducted a blind taste test

in our offices, none of our subjects could tell them apart.

Fortunately, they are also priced the same. So if you see Bananastangir and Froskar from Vala on the shelves of a local store (and they are often conveniently displayed side by side), the only question you need to ask yourself is "yellow filling or green?"

AF ☹

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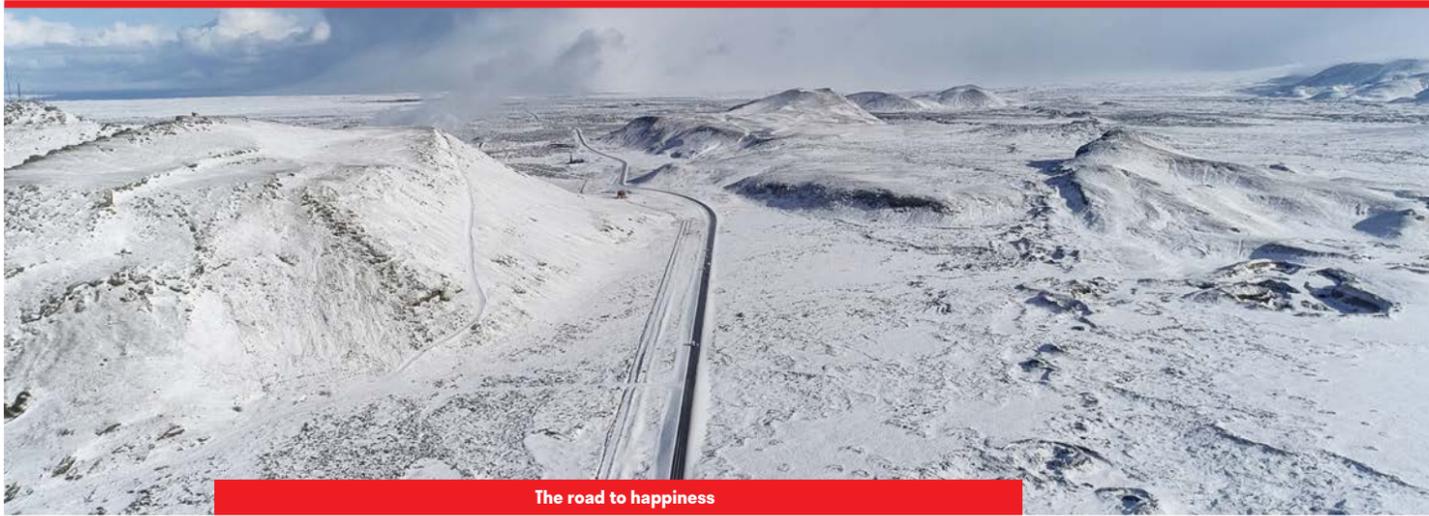


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The road to happiness

Icelanders Are Living Their Best Life

The fourth happiest country? Duh!

WHAT HAVE WE WON?

Words: **Hannah Jane Cohen**

Photo: **Art Bicnick**

Iceland has the second-highest rate of antidepressant use worldwide, so it's no surprise that they were also recently named the fourth happiest place on Earth, according to the World Happiness Report, which ranks overall satisfaction based on a country's GDP, available social support, individual freedom, and other factors. It makes sense—a nation that would choose to send an anti-capitalist BDSM band to

Eurovision is clearly one that has got its shit figured out.

Smiles all around

This isn't the first time Iceland has shown its stuff in the happiness category. The country was the fourth happiest in 2018, third happiest in 2017 and 2016, second happiest in 2015, and so on. Basically, ever since the index's

inception, Iceland has been in the top 10. Hey—Iceland may not have smited at the World Cup, but they are killing it in the smiles department.

In conjunction with the report, the Icelandic Directorate of Health revealed that the happiest Icelandic people live in the small southern fishing town of Grindavík. To be honest, it's a bit of a mystery why, but potentially this is because of the fantastic lobster soup at their local café, Bryggjan. Don't lie—if you could stuff yourself with delicious lobster soup every day, you'd probably be very happy. That is, unless you're kosher.

:D --> D:

Of course now that WOW Air has shut down and tourism is dead and we are all about to lose our jobs, perhaps happiness might decrease. The króna value definitely will. ☹

JUST SAYINGS



Það liggur í augum uppi

“Það liggur í augum uppi” is an old and fairly common saying in Iceland. It literally translates to: It lays in the eyes upstairs. Confused? Well, it actually means “obvious.” But there is nothing obvious about it. I mean, on what floor do these eyes live? The saying implies that things are so obvious that it's just ridiculous to discuss that any further. Icelanders use this term in their everyday language and it feels quite organic in discussions. But of course, if you translate the idiom to English, it unveils the oddity of the Icelandic language in a hilarious way. So the next time an Icelandic tells you about something obvious, just say: Well, of course, it lays in the eyes upstairs. How complicated can it be? ☹ VG

LÓABORATORIUM



THE GRAPEVINE PLAYLIST

The must-hear tracks of the issue



Kristín Anna - I Must Be The Devil
Kristín Anna Valtýsdóttir, the artist formerly known as Kria Brekkan, has been on the Reykjavik music scene since múm became a breakout success. This accomplished chamber pop album comes after a long break, and it was worth the wait. **JR**



Högni - Paradisarmissir
The dulcet-toned Högni returns with an ode to love that's both simple and grand in scale. He croons softly through this one, over a delicate piano melody that unfolds into a memorable orchestral string arrangement. **JR**



Snorri Helgason - Við Strendur Mæjorka
Meaning, roughly translated, “By the Coast of Majorca,” Snorri's latest is seemingly an ode to getting the hell out of this sub-Arctic wilderness and going on your holidays. And, during a grey April day in Iceland, who would argue with that? **JR**



Janus Rasmussen - Green Wine
While his partner in Kiasmos, Ólafur Arnalds, takes a lap of the some of the world's best concert halls, Janus Rasmussen has kept himself busy. His solo album—“Vin”—is a continuation of the Kiasmos brand of atmospheric, low-key electronica that has a certain sun-kissed feel. **JR**



Junius Meyvant - New Waves
Like a time-capsule of analogue 1970s soul-pop comes Junius Meyvant's “New Waves.” It might not have a single drop of anything new in it—it could just as easily be a dusty charity shop vinyl find as a Spotify playlist discovery—but that doesn't stop it from being an enjoyable few minutes of musical nostalgia. **JR**



Tumi Árnason / Magnús Tryggvason - Perfect Animal
Beginning with a few notes played on what sounds like a pan flute, this masterpiece of raw sounding, improvised jazz quickly turns it up to 11. “Perfect Animal” comes at you like a hurricane, with an erratic energy that fades away just as quickly as it came. Check it out on Bandcamp. **SD**

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Cometh The Hour, Cometh The Smite

Iceland sail past Euro minnows Andorra,
but hit choppy waters in France

FOOTBALL

Words:
John Rogers

Illustration:
Lóa Hlín
Hjálmtyróttir

As the Icelandic Football Association continued picking out altars on which to store the Euro 2020 trophy in the great hall, the team got to work on qualifying for the finals of the tournament for the second time running. Here's what went down.

The ashing of Andorra

The first step for Euro 2020 qualification was a battle that has quickly become known as "The Ashing of Andorra." The horde travelled to the tiny, half-full Estadi Nacional—a 3,000 seater astro-turf ground—to administer a forceful

2-0 thrashing. First, Birkir Bjarnason bollocked a rebound into the net with his demonic forehead; then, after misfiring Alfreð Finnbogason blazed over, his replacement—Viðar Örn Kjartansson—sealed the deal with a right-footed second. As a rain of grey ash floated down onto the battle-pocked pitch, the victorious horde waded back to the longship through the awful marais, sailing towards Paris with revenge on their minds.

French fiends sink longship

The next game, however, proved to be a different proposition. In front of a 64,500-strong audience at the Stade de France, Iceland turned in a robust first-half defensive display, doggedly keeping the world champs at bay. Olivier Giroud, Anton Griezmann and Kylian Mbappe threw everything but the kitchen sink at the shield wall, limping in at half time with a paltry single goal to show for their efforts. After the break, the horde pressed forward, fiery hearts set on pulling the match back from the brink. As they mounted wave after wave of terrifying charges, few were left behind to defend; France capitalised on this fearless bravery and dinked in a couple more. The battle ended 4-0.

No pardon for Turkey

This leaves the Icelandic longship listing and rolling at fourth place in a tumultuous qualifying group, drawn on points with Albania, who lead on goal difference. The next two matches—both to be played on the mossy turf of Laugardalsvöllur—will prove decisive. Only the top two in each group qualify for the finals, so Iceland need to profit from the home advantage and get some

points in the pillaging sack. The plan? Our sources indicate that Albania will be torn to shreds by a pack of starving Arctic foxes on June 6th; then, the entire Moldova team will be swallowed into the belly of a volcano on July 9th. Between these two: an epic crunch game against Turkey on June 11th. A note: Iceland have roasted Turkey on three of their last four meetings. Yes. We. Can.

Warnock's war of words

Granite-faced war horse Neil Warnock—manager of Cardiff City—had some choice words for the Icelandic Football Association after these mighty clashes. His team are torrid Premier League stragglers, in grave danger of relegation to the Football League this season. Talismanic midfield general Aron Gunnarsson is off to seek gold and glory at Qatari side Al-Arabi at the end of the season, but Warnock flew into a rage about him playing for Iceland whilst carrying a slight injury niggler. "I just thought it was pure selfishness," he ranted, "and I'm so disappointed in Iceland for doing that." He should probably know by now that Aron "The Annihilator" would play for Iceland in a wheelchair if he was allowed to.

Vikings run wild

In other parts of Europe, the horde have been running wild and changing games. "Golden boots" Gylfi scored to sink Sarri's sorry Chelsea; Jóhann Berg scored against insurgent title contenders Liverpool in March, and got Leicester's Harry Maguire sent off in the fourth minute for a desperate, lunging tackle. Alfreð Finnbogason's mighty injury time strike may have been enough to keep Augsburg in the German Cup were it not for a ham-fisted handball—resulting in a campaign-ending penalty—from their shaky backline. All in all? Icelanders are proving to be the big-game players every team needs. But we knew that already, didn't we? 🍷

"As a rain of ash floated down onto the pitch, the victorious horde waded back to the longship."

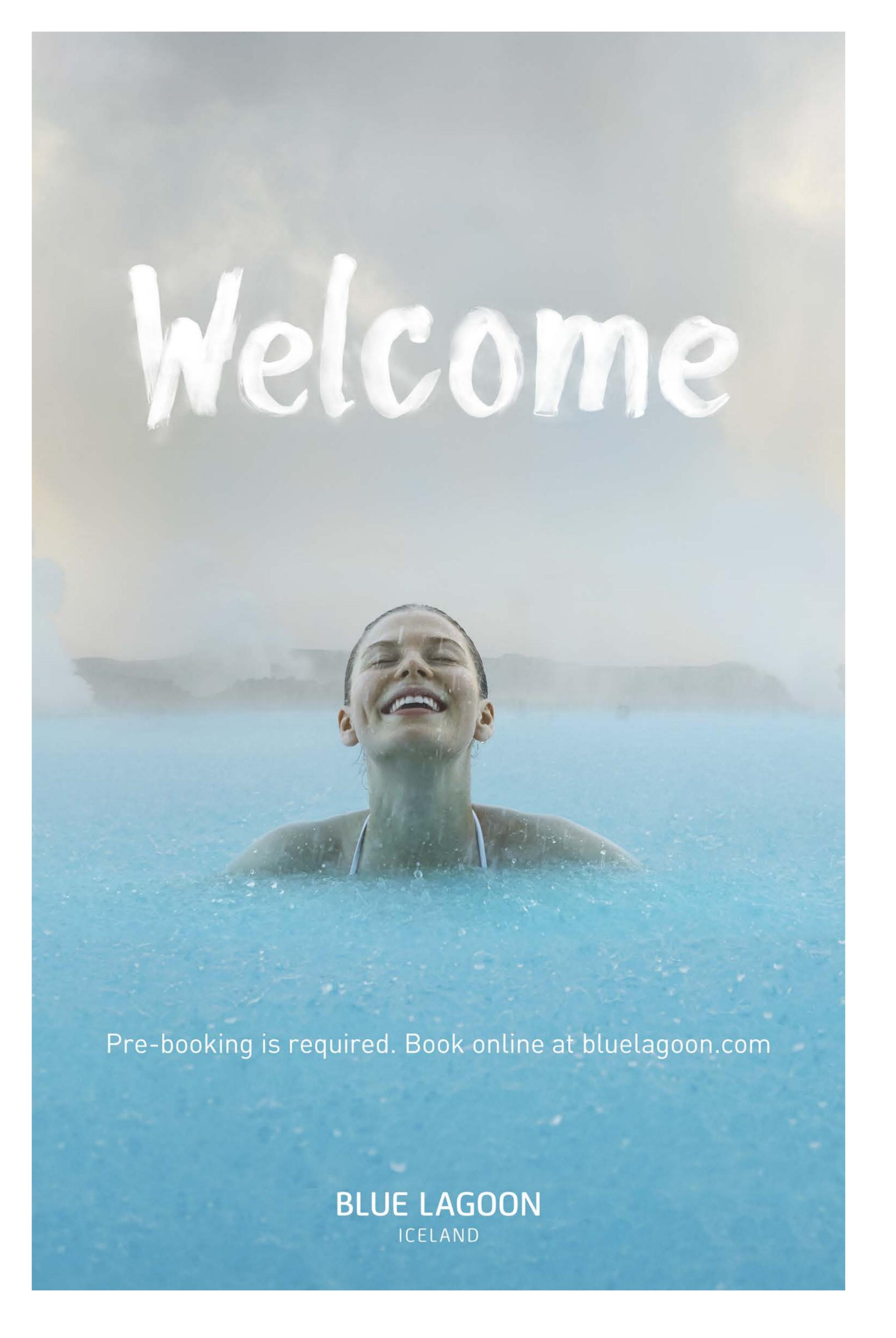
Follow our live-tweets on match-days on Twitter at [@rvkgrapevine](https://twitter.com/rvkgrapevine). Iceland's indomitable and unstoppable march to the Euro 2020 trophy will continue throughout 2019, as Aron, Gylfi, Jóhann Berg and the boys smite their way through all the continents of the world, laying waste to any team foolish enough to step into their terrible path to glory.



BREAKFAST FROM 7
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A woman with her eyes closed and a joyful smile is partially submerged in clear, vibrant blue water. The background shows a soft, hazy landscape with hills under a bright sky. The word "Welcome" is written in a large, white, brushstroke-style font across the upper portion of the image.

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Flashbacks

A detailed autopsy of the airline is still a ways off, but a general plotline has emerged since the airline surrendered its operating license.

WOW Air was founded in 2011. It rose from the ashes of IcelandExpress a year after Eyjafjallajökull halted flights across Europe and put Iceland on the map for many. Skúli Mogensen used his tech money to buy up the assets of the failed enterprise and the rebranded carrier took off quickly.

At its height, WOW Air carried more than a third of passengers travelling to or through Iceland. Its sudden absence is a huge, disruptive hole in the industry, but an irresistible opportunity for competitors. Within days, Icelandair announced it was leasing new planes and increasing service. It intends to expand even more once its new Boeing 737 Max 8 planes are cleared to fly. Dutch airline Transavia applied for some of WOW's slots and will start operating in July after jumping regulatory hoops. Hungary-based Wizz Air is also going to increase service, including daily flights to London. Coincidentally, Wizz's owners, Indigo Partners, twice negotiated to buy a stake in WOW Air.

From the ashes

Many observers have pointed out the similarities to the collapse of the island's banking sector in 2008. Like the banks that preceded it, WOW was led by executives with little to no knowledge or experience in the industry—only instead of fishermen running banks, it was nerds directing planes. WOW and the banks grew far too fast with high levels of debt. WOW was profitable in its first few years when it emulated the proven strategies of airlines such as Ryanair. In recent years, however, the company pivoted to long-haul routes and tiered seat classes. The overexpansion included failed routes to India and Israel. Hatari will have to make a transfer on route to Eurovision in Tel Aviv.

Skúli invested 4 billion ISK of his fortune in the venture; he may now lose everything, including his house. The company has started bankruptcy proceedings and its assets will be liquidated. Authorities hope to keep the property in Iceland.

Despite the epic—and still ongoing—failure, Skúli has made moves to launch a new airline, meeting with investors, applying for an airline operating licence and even coming up with a tentative name for the new endeavour: NewCo. WOW Air lost 22 million ISK last year, so NewCo may be a hard sell despite Skúli's acknowledgment of poor strategy and financing.



You will not find Orbital on this plane. Or anyone coming to Iceland, for that matter

Nature Abhors A Vacuum: In The Wake Of WOW

Another Icelandic industry overreaches

Words: The Reykjavik Grapevine and most of Iceland have been watching the struggles of WOW Air since last year as it scrambled to find investors. But time ran out in late March and the plucky purple airline has gone out of business. The brainchild of Icelandic tech entrepreneur Skúli Mogensen, WOW is the second Icelandic airline to file for bankruptcy in less than a year—Primera Air collapsed in October 2018.

Main Photo: Over 1,000 people lost their jobs when WOW tanked, amounting to the single largest layoff in Iceland's history. Arion Bank estimates the bankruptcy could cause more than a 15% reduction in visitors to Iceland in the short term, but that there will be no long-term impact.

Human cost

The weeks leading up to WOW's collapse were characterized by chaos, with investors repeatedly showing

interest and then backing out and talks of a partial buy-out by Icelandair coming and going.

On March 27th, a deal looked to be within reach and workers went to sleep cautiously optimistic. But with mounting debts, including to the company from which WOW leased their aircraft, March 28th marked the end.

WOW Air's 1,100 employees and contractors met the same fate as their former coworkers who were let go in December of last year. The ground services company Airport Associates gave notice to their employees as well—a layoff that could be avoided if other airlines can quickly fill up the void left by WOW's departure. Workers at the Duty Free and other shops at the airport also lost their jobs.

WOW passengers were left stranded, given only a few hours' notice of their flights' cancellations. Some passengers claim to have not been contacted at all by WOW, and either read about the

airline's closure in the news or upon turning up to check-in for their flight. The shock, frustration, and anger were visible when the Grapevine interviewed travellers at Keflavik International Airport on March 29th.

Economic ripples

According to state broadcaster RÚV, the demise of WOW is disproportionately affecting companies outside the capital region. They have seen many cancellations from foreign tour providers for the summer holidays. The tourism industry in those regions is seasonal and operators are smaller. They cannot easily withstand a significant disruption to their high season.

In the capital, the Sónar Reykjavik music festival was cancelled because many artists and attendees were booked on WOW. Many international fans are cancelling their trips to Iceland as a result; there have been many Airbnb cancellations.

The failure of WOW poured a bucket of cold water on labour talks. Unions were preparing for a general strike but accepted the latest compromise proposed by the state mediator. The VR union agreed to pay its laid-off members' wages because payday was only a few days away and the wait period for unemployment benefits is going to be long due to volume.

“WOW Air lost 22 million ISK last year.”

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How Deep You Dare To Dig

Skúli Sverrisson and Bára Gísladóttir have
mined the depths, and come back bearing gold

**“I fell in love with the idea
of music as a dangerous
activity, where you don’t
know what’s going
to happen.”**

Words: John Rogers
Photos: Rut Sigurðardóttir

Amidst the noise and heat of KEX Hostel in the middle of a bustling Airwaves afternoon, Skúli Sverrisson and Bárta Gísaladóttir took their seats for their first ever concert together. After a brief introduction from KEXPs' Kevin Cole, they started to play, each barely glancing at the other. As the sound filled the room, the air seemed to freeze. Skúli's face was still and concentrated; his fingers flickered lightly over his six-stringed bass, issuing forth a surprising noise like a faraway orchestra echoing through a large, watery space. Moments later, Bárta started gently bowing her double bass, staring into the distance as she alternately muted, held, pressed and released the strings, creating a quite startling sound—a dusty, distressed, incomplete note, as if the strings were moaning. The background conversation in the room melted away and the audience leaned in closer, suddenly transfixed by what was unfolding.

"That's great to hear," says Bárta, later, her expressive eyes open wide. "It was our first ever concert together and it was a hard show to play. It was loud when we arrived, and people were in the Airwaves mood, drinking and chilling just metres from the stage. We had to be a bit aggressive to be heard—it was very scary. But I was very surprised when I heard it. I don't understand how they isolated the sound—they managed to keep the very fine essence of the detail. It didn't become narrow in quality."

INSTANT CONNECTION

These two musicians should, in theory, contrast sharply. Skúli is a famed master collaborator with a gently immersive and atmospheric signature sound. Bárta is rougher with her instrument, alternately plucking, grabbing, and dragging the bow over the strings in a style that's in turn delicate, violent, and

willfully amusical. But when the two play together, their distinctive approaches overlap, melding and growing into something greater than the sum of its parts, and joining organically and seamlessly into a mesmerising whole.

They first came into contact when Bárta, during her academic studies in Milan, became frustrated with the lack of a performance element in her course. In search of an outlet, she enquired about holding a concert at the downtown Reykjavík venue Mengi, of which Skúli is one of the founders.

He was immediately captivated by Bárta's music. "There's an incredible discipline and precision in her work," he says. "And, at the other end, a sense of complete freedom—a leap of faith, somehow. And finding that balance is quite rare."

Skúli followed Bárta's progress as she went about her studies, releasing a series of solo records and performing in various ensembles along the way. "We started talking about doing something together," he says, "and ended up finally coming to the studio in Iðnó. We just set up the microphones and started playing."

SHIMMERING MOMENT

The two realised immediately that they were onto something special. "It was a really good feeling," says Bárta. "It was the feeling of something being right. I think our approach is quite similar, especially in the way of listening. It's a common thread in our work—extreme listening, and the music comes from that. It starts in the ears, before anywhere else."

The two didn't spend much time discussing what they would do in advance. "We both believe in the process of making music, I think," says Skúli. "How a sound is a sound, and it doesn't have to be within the framework of a composition. Just playing together already had a context. And the beauty of this kind of collaboration is the cycle of getting to know the person through the music, and then getting to know the music through the person."

For Bárta, that first session proved to be profound and formative. "It might sound dramatic, but it was one of the few moments in life where you really feel something magical happening," she smiles. "It was just a shimmering moment. I had no idea how we

"It might sound dramatic, but it was one of the few moments in life where you really feel something magical happening. A whole new world opened up to me."



would work. It's hard to explain with words. A whole new world opened up to me."

ORIGIN STORIES

The two musicians have arrived at the collaboration via very different paths. Skúli is a veteran musician with a long history of collaboration. His father was an amateur musician, giving him an early interest in records and musical instruments.

"I became interested in the music he was playing in the house," he recalls. "I sang in choirs as a kid, and then in the 80s I was in bands. I picked up the bass because my father had one. There was no more to the decision than that."

He found calm and solace in music from the start. "I really enjoyed the solitary aspect of practicing an instrument," he says. "At that time in Iceland, the music scene was quite small. As soon as I was able to play, I fairly quickly became a professional musician—which is fairly bizarre, looking back. I didn't know much."

Soon enough, the young bassist's talents were in demand. He played on 30 different records, and performed live jazz four nights a week with pianist Guðmundur Ingólfsson. He also mingled with the vibrant and burgeoning DIY scene. "I was fascinated by Peyr, and the beginning of things that are still going on, like Bad Taste Records and The Sugarcubes, which became Björk, Sigur Rós and múm—the foundation of creative Icelandic music. There was a manifesto of 'It doesn't matter what you know, but what you do,' and a lot of crossover with artists and writers. It was far from the world of the symphony—it was the idea that anyone can make music."

COMMUNITY IS EVERYTHING

Skúli's true love, however, was the wave of free jazz coming from the US. Musicians like Ornette Coleman, John Coltrane and Albert Ayler. He enrolled at the home of free jazz, at the time—Berklee College of Music. There he was exposed to a milieu of like-minded musicians who helped set the foundations of his outlook.

"I realised quickly that, in music and music-related activity, community is everything," he says. "It's having a conversation with other musicians and figuring out what to do through that conversation. Everybody is trying to understand something that nobody really understands. It's not just that you write something, and have someone play it—it's the product of a community. And collaboration is a form of listening—it's a conversation where that comes to the foreground."

THE WIDE WORLD

Like many of his contemporaries, Skúli migrated to New York City as a postgrad. He became involved in the formative stages of Blonde Redhead, which in turn led to a connection with John Lurie. "He introduced me to a lot of people in New York," says Skúli. "It was an important meeting."

To stay in the US, Skúli realised he'd need a dayjob. A fortuitous series of events led to a place in the band of guitarist Allan Holdsworth—a legendary figure in the jazz fusion scene of the time. "It was a solution for me in many ways," Skúli explains, "to be able to stay in the country and to learn from a master musician."

He went for an audition in LA, and a week later he was on the road, touring all over the world. The collaboration proved to be an invaluable learning experience. "I was very interested in how people develop a unique voice," he says. "Very few people can do that, but Allan did. I wanted to learn about the process—how do you get to that point where you play one note and everybody knows it's you?"

NEEDING AN ADDRESS

After several years of touring, Skúli started to transition back into working with various colleagues he'd met along the way. His interest in cross-disciplinary, artistic, genre-bending music led him to collaborate with people like Anthony Burr, Ryuichi Sakamoto and Laurie Anderson. "Working with Laurie was an amazing opportunity that involved all of those aspects—music, spoken word, film, theatre, and communicating in a creative way, on a high level," says Skúli. "The projects were on a big scale, but the work itself was very playful and creative."

He also started thinking about venues as spaces for collaboration. "I became interested in why music was always evolving in the city, and realised that, at any particular moment, there were a couple of small spaces where all the creativity happened, with music every night, different disciplines, different audiences, and social interactions. I started to realise that, for me, this is the most important part of music evolving in an urban environment."

After planting some seeds in Iceland with his 'Sería' album—which was performed as an ensemble that included Jóhann Jóhannsson, Hildur Guðnadóttir, Hilmar Jensson, and Skúli's future partner Ólöf Arnalds, opening doors for future collaborations—he finally moved back to Iceland after 25 years away.

"I realised that in Iceland there were not that many places for spontaneous performances," says Skúli. He and Ólöf started looking around for a space. "We met Bjarni Gaukur, who was just returned to Iceland and was interested in starting something with music culture. And that became Mengi, which has been a big part of my life in Iceland." He smiles, self-effacing as always. "The scene was already happening. It just needed an address."

UNIFIED SOUND

Fittingly, Bára and Skúli's album will come out via the Mengi label. The two have performed together several times at the Mengi space, improvising and developing their music before rapt and respectful audiences. "People were surprised about our collaboration at first, but we weren't," says Bára. "Skúli would like to do more dynamic stuff on his instrument than is possible—and now we can do that together. Even though both of our instruments are basses, they are very different. The double bass is more physical—you need to be physical to get the stuff out of it that you need to."

Bára finds collaboration and group performance to be beneficial to life as a musician. "I like working with other people generally," she says. "If you're composing alone, it can be quite a lonely thing. And I like that—but it's easy to get lost in it. It keeps you healthy to perform, in some sense. You can very easily get lost in something egocentric if you are always alone. It can make you unwilling to compromise or take in other influences."

DIGGING DEEPER

The collaboration with Skúli strikes a rare note of instinctive mutual understanding. "We have a lot in common," says Bára. "Our ideas in general—in music, and in life—are quite the same. This is a unified sound work that we have made together. To do that, you need to have something of the same origin, maybe. Most of the time you're working with very different perspectives, which is also amazing. But this is a little more rare."

"It's really all about the tendency to dig into something," she finishes. "We both seem to have that tendency to dig deeper into what's happening. It's like a tunnel and you're seeing how far you can get with a sound. It's a lot about how deep you dare to dig... and then, finding the right solution to get out of these places. It can be boring when everything is solved in a shimmering way and you can see the sunlight again. So we try to find different directions to find our way down, and up again."

"We both have a tendency to dig deeper into what's happening. It's like a tunnel, and you're seeing how far you can get with a sound."

THE ENERGY BEHIND

When asked to describe Bára's sound, Skúli hesitates, seeking the right words. "There are many ways to describe music, like 'beautiful' or 'aggressive'—but to me the most beautiful thing in music is when you hear individuality," he says, slowly. "On the surface, music might appear to be dark, or strange, but at the same time it's incredibly beautiful; there's some kind of attitude behind it that's beautiful. I like that idea of music, to ask: 'What is the energy behind it?'"

Skúli namechecks Italian composer Scelsi and Romanian composer Dumitrescu as reference points for Bára's work. "They focus on texture and the sound of the instrument, instead of being stuck inside of tonality and scales—almost like putting a microscope on a note, and inside you see harmonies and melodies," he explains. "When Bára plays one note, there are harmonies and melodies inside that note. She's a master of that. And to me that's incredibly moving."

SKIES AND HEAVENS

The album is, when we speak, in the final stages of mixing and mastering. A long-form quadruple album, it was culled from over four hours of improvised sessions. The working title is 'Caeli,' the Latin word for "skies" or "heavens."

"I felt like this music was related to something ritual, or religious," says Bára. "I'm not religious—or, maybe we all are in a way, but I don't believe in one religion. This magic I experienced—something I hadn't witnessed before—becomes religious, or spiritual. The song titles are in English, Latin, Icelandic, and Italian, and a lot of them are related to the heavens."

A DANGEROUS ACTIVITY

But with musicians so ready to adapt, listen, and improvise, the title may well change before the album's release.

"When I was in New York, I fell in love with the idea of music as a dangerous activity, where you don't know what's going to happen," says Skúli. "That's what I found in improvised music. Then I'd go to a heavily produced show, with a climax in the right place and the light came up—but it had no impact. I didn't feel like I was there, and I didn't feel the performers were there—because the structure had taken over. There was no witnessing something happening in the moment. And that's the ultimate beauty of live music."

"I think we both like to work in music without borders, free of genre," finishes Bára. "That's why I like the idea of the skies. It's like an unlimited area, and you don't know where it ends." 🍷

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Drop That Hip Hop

Cell7 Album Release Concert

April 12th - 22:00 - Húrra - 2-3,000 ISK

You can't talk about Icelandic hip hop without mentioning Cell7. One of the OG rappers in the country, the woman has finally returned from the rap-grave with a new album entitled 'Is Anyone Listening?' First off, yes Queen, we are listening. Second off, you don't know when the rappers will return subterranean, so grab this opportunity while you can. R+B goddess GDRN will open. **HJC**



The Earth... In Dance

SPOR

April 24th-28th - Various Times - Gerðuberg Culture House - 2,900 ISK

SPOR is an interactive dance performance for children, which explores the energy of the ocean, earth, space, as well as the energy that lives within ourselves. The show is put together by Bibí & Blaka, a group of artists from Norway, Finland, Greenland and the Faroe Islands. So grab the kids and get some well deserved rest from 'em. You'll have fun too. **AU**



Put Yo' Horns Up

Akranes Punk

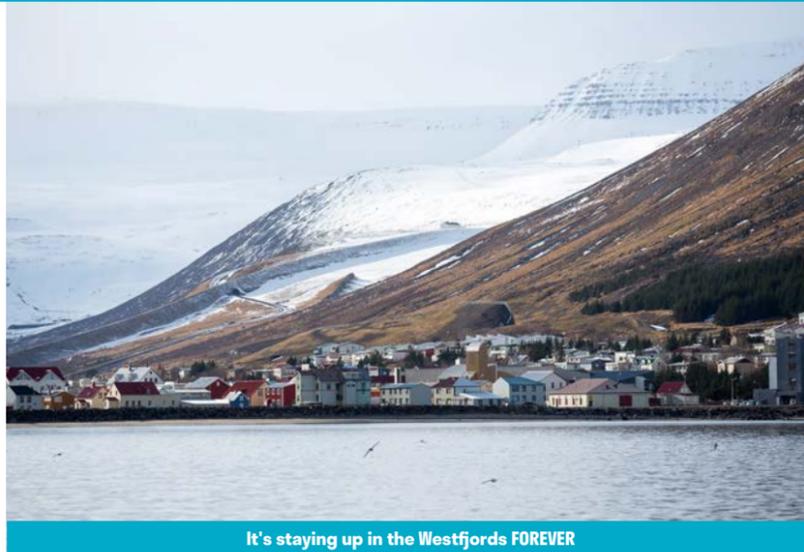
April 25th - 17:00 - Akranes Lighthouse - Free!

"Punk fucking rock" is how Snowed In describes their musical tendencies. Couple that sentiment with the fact that this event is being held at a damn lighthouse and you have a recipe for pure pönk success. Historical sites and anarchism... what's not to love? If you're not already packing up your car to get to Akranes, then let us remind you: the event is free. **SD**

CULTURE NEWS

Festival

Aldrei Fór Ég Suður takes places in Ísafjörður on April 19th & 20th. Get more info at aldrei.is



It's staying up in the Westfjords FOREVER

Ísafjörður Never Goes South

Aldrei Fór Ég Suður festival is back

Words: Aliya Uteuova

Photo: Art Bienick

Since 2004, April means one thing for the people of the Westfjords: the Aldrei Fór Ég Suður music festival.

Named after the Bubbi Morthens song of the same name, the name translates to "I never went south." The festival is held in Ísafjörður, a picturesque Westfjords town almost as far as one can get from the South Iceland tourist trail. What started off as a one-night concert has grown into a two-day extravaganza.

Just last month, the festival won the Music Event of the Year prize at the 2018 Icelandic Music Awards. "We're all really proud of it," says Kristján Fr. Halldórsson, one of the festival's organisers. "We love doing what we do—and doing this for fifteen years has been a privilege. We share the award with the almost 350 bands who've played the festival, our

great sponsors, and the people of the mighty Westfjords."

Small town awakening

Aldrei Fór Ég Suður festival was founded in 2003 by a ragtag bunch of Ísafjörður locals who thought it would be fun to bring musicians to perform way up north during the winter. Sixteen years later, it has grown into something far greater than a lark.

"It's a big reward for us to have people visiting from Reykjavík, who've maybe never visited other parts of Iceland aside from Kópavogur," says Kristján.

Indeed, the event proves that you don't have to stay in the capital to experience a great party. Locals love the event—the town of Ísafjörður is grateful

to the festival for putting it on the map. There's even a street named after it.

Ski party

Now held each year over the Easter long weekend, Aldrei coincides with the annual Ísafjörður skiing festival. The musical weekend goes hand in hand with a skiing adventure for many Icelandic families, creating a unique and celebratory atmosphere.

"The people here are very generous and good hosts," says Kristján. "Everybody is so helpful and willing to do stuff for the festival. We aren't a group of 20 people any more—we're a group of 3,500 people, all working to build up a good music festival for the whole family."

Eardrums ready

When asked which performer he looks forward to the most, Kristján says he's excited about every act. "I've seen them all, and they're brilliant. But to mention just one—I'd have to say Salóme Katrín. It will be her first stadium concert, with a big band. She is a super talent and we can't wait to see her perform."

This year's musical line-up also includes Jónas Sig—a party brass musician with political lyrical undertones—and JóiPé X Króli, the young hip-hop stars of the moment.

The varied line-up also includes Todmobile, a legendary Icelandic pop band that began in 1988, and Auðn, a black metal band that burst onto the scene in 2015. Breakout indie rockers Mammút will also be performing.

"We don't expect people to know every artist, because it's a blend of music," Kristján says. "But every band gets a wonderful reception."

So if you're in need of a snowy break from the city, make tracks for Ísafjörður this Easter—and don't forget your skis. **👉**

ELECTRIC DREAMS

Music

Plútó DJ crew at Bravó April 13th, DJ Dominatricks at Kaffibarinn April 24th, Bjarki at Bíó Paradís April 27th.



The Party Goes On

Three alternatives to cope with the sudden loss of Sónar Reykjavík 2019

Given the massive line-up, Sónar Reykjavík 2019 would have been just as great a treat as it has for the past six years. My condolences to all party people, dancers, musicians and, not least, the Sónar production crew—who I bet are just-about ready to move on, dig in and make next year's edition a blast. Never fear, dismayed party people, as a much-needed coping-mechanism, here are three events to seek out in lieu of Sónar in the next

couple of weeks.

April 13th: Plútó DJ crew at Bravó

Local DJ crew Plútó's events have slowly but surely become mainstays in Reykjavík's party scene. The group has performed their refined and bassy b2b2b2b2b sets in most popular bars and clubs in the city, and, on April 13th, their course is set for Bravó on Laugavegur 22. In a statement, the

collective said this will be their first party there and that adjustments are being made to Bravó's sound system.

April 24th: DJ Dominatricks at Kaffibarinn

DJ Dominatricks are a breath of fresh air in the local dance-music scene, and have made their mark with their unique take on live performance with their bass-heavy and pumped music selection and ever-evolving, delightfully frightful live-visuals. Their next set is at Kaffibarinn on April 24th, which also happens to be the eve of the first Day of Summer—a national holiday in Iceland. As a result, Kaffibarinn will have extended opening-hours, and you can sleep-in care-free.

April 27th: Bjarki at Bíó Paradís

A week after Sónar Reykjavík was cancelled, Bjarki announced he would be performing at local art-house cinema Bíó Paradís on April 27th. Bjarki just released his deeply personal album 'Happy Earthday'—Earth Day happens to be on April 22nd—and has a terrific track-record of audio-visual events like the parties held in collaboration with трим/Trip records around the Icelandic countryside. He closed last year's Sónar Festival with a bang (and lots of cucumbers). **👉**



Studio Brynjar and Veronika IRL

The Beauty Of The Process

Brynjar Sigurðarson and Veronika Sedlmair create their own path

Words: Hannah Jane Cohen Photos: Art Bicnick

use. “Circular breathing is difficult on the flute because you are blowing on the mouthpiece with varied force rather than into it,” Brynjar explains. “It’s really technical.” Technical, yes, and uncommon.

After a difficult search, they ended up connecting with four flautists from around Europe who were up for the challenge, and employed Icelandic composer Dráinn Hjalmarsson to create music for them. After an intensive retreat in the Westfjords with the group, the musicians were ready and the circular flute made its debut. “In the middle, it’s almost therapeutic,” Brynjar says. “It becomes a physical experience. You become a resonator. It’s quite beautiful.”

Exhibition

‘Reservation’ will be at Hafnarborg until May 26th, 2019.

Brynjar Sigurðarson and Veronika Sedlmair—spouses and masterminds behind Studio Brynjar & Veronika—define the word undefinable. Their projects run the gamut from hyper-realistic fake stones to 3D moulds to sound installations and one-of-a-kind instruments. While the two are often called designers, that label seems utterly limiting when put in conjunction with their work. They are simply creators.

For years, they’ve toiled away making bronze, glass, and everything in between out of their Marseille studio and recently were rewarded when Brynjar won the coveted Torsten & Wanja Söderbergs Prize. The two currently have an exhibit, ‘Reservation,’ at Hafnarborg,

which began as part of DesignMarch.

Five unicorns

To understand the peculiarity and, for lack of a better term, extremity of Brynjar and Veronika’s works, you need but look at one of their emblematic creations—an instrument called the circle flute.

The idea came to the two spontaneously one day: a circular flute played by four people surrounding the listener. They instantly jumped headfirst into the project, but soon found it was much more complicated than originally anticipated.

“Flute-makers are a dying species.

There are none in Germany and maybe four in France,” Veronika explains. From that pool, though, they had to find one that could manipulate the mechanisms of the flute into a circular shape and enlarge it without sacrificing the sound—not an easy task. That said, they eventually found a specialised maker in Paris. “This was where the design started. He invented these small ball joints. That was something new,” adds Brynjar.

From there, they had to find players, which proved to be just as difficult. In order to play the circular flute as Brynjar and Veronika desired, they’d have to find flautists who could do circular breathing—a technique flautists rarely

A beautiful mistake

The circular flute, though, is but one of the couple’s creations, and they have hundreds of similarly intricate and thought-out pieces. ‘Reservation’ is filled with these objects—each with a detailed story behind its inception. The exhibition is laid out in a large square room. On one wall lies a large mural of abstract shapes and perpendicular to that sits a long table piled with objects like a buffet. Walking with Brynjar along the length of the table, he points out a few pieces and explains their process.

On one corner lies a collection of miscellaneous see-through objects. “Here,

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INGÓLFSTORG, DOWN TOWN REYKJAVÍK





Where design becomes art

we were really fascinated by things that are semi-transparent,” Brynjar outlines. He picks up a piece of transparent plastic material and positions it next to a selection of glass sculptures rife with rough bubbly texture. To make these objects, he explains, the two had to study glass-making.

“When you pour hot glass into a mould, it releases air bubbles. The glass is like thick honey and it gets trapped,” Brynjar says. “In the glass scene, though, this would be considered a disaster, a terrible mistake.” He’s referring to the bubbly texture of the sculpture. “We spent two weeks preparing the plaster mould and we were just watching everything get destroyed,” he laughs. “But then we saw that there was beauty in it. Glass is a fascinating material.”

Lying next to the glass sculptures are a series of photographs displaying semi-transparent objects, all with the same shape. Looking closer, though, you realise that one is a jellyfish, one is a plastic bag—widely different, in both location and material, they share a motif.

‘Reservation’ is rife with these interconnected photos. Brynjar points to a series just down the line from the transparent images. “We see a lot of these natural textures,” he explains. The photos all share a nearly identical pattern, though it’s difficult to figure out exactly what each is. “This is stone. This is wood. This is ice. The shapes reappear over and over.”

Finding patterns

The creation of these matching photographs, Brynjar and Veronika explain, is purely accidental. The two take photos wherever they go and Brynjar painstakingly sorts through each one. “It’s kind of a self-documentation,” he says. “You learn

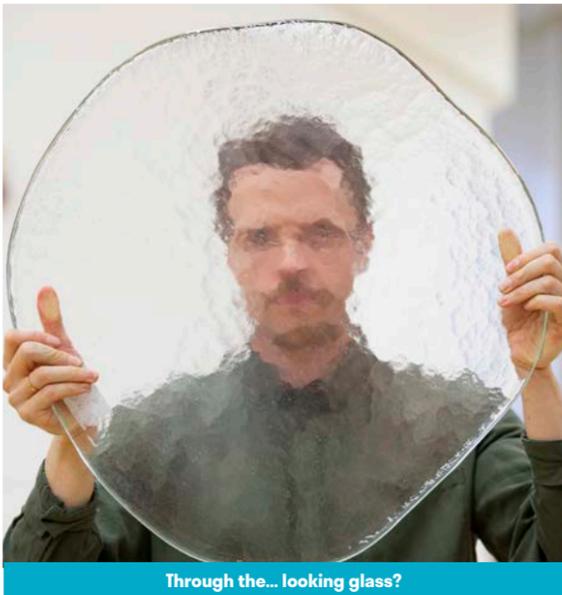
which become inspiration for a study, which then maybe leads into an object,” Veronika explains. “It’s not only about the moment of taking the photograph, but also coming back and arranging it, pairing photographs with each other. From there new things emerge.”

“It’s an unconscious process,” Brynjar emphasises as Veronika smiles. “It will be interesting to one day look back at the unfiltered images and see if you’d choose the same ones,” she adds. “You probably wouldn’t.”

Following the belly

At all times, both Veronika and Brynjar are remarkably humble. They hardly ever mention where they have exhibited certain pieces, even when it was at celebrated museums, focusing only on stories of the drama and calamity that befell the two while making them. Brynjar’s prize was, of course, welcome, but certainly didn’t go to the artist’s head.

In truth, he doesn’t say much about it. “It’s a great honour, just a bit crazy to think about it,” he says. “I guess you might feel a responsibility, you’d think, ‘well I’m not just some guy somewhere, now I have to be something.’ But what we try is just to keep on searching, keep on being curious, do self-initiated things.” Veronika nods. “We do what the belly says,” she adds. “And we will keep doing what the belly says.”



Through the... looking glass?

“In the glass scene, this would be considered a disaster, a terrible mistake. But we saw that there was beauty in it.”

about yourself when you look at 5 or 10,000 images. It’s been maybe 10 years I have been doing this intense photographing and you start seeing patterns.” He pauses. “That must mean that there is something in that which touches me.”

For both, taking photos is only step one of the process. “You capture some interesting scenes,



BREAKFAST, BRUNCH, LUNCH, DINNER

Your journey to the Golden Circle starts at Þrastalundur



Great place to see the northern lights!



Lovely Restaurant with a Stunning View! We stopped @ Þrastalundur on our way to Geysir (40 min away). Everything about this place was just magical - the food, the coffee, the view and the team. Highly recommend for anyone who wants to rest in a very picturesque scenery and enjoy truly Icelandic hospitality! - *Aga J. - Tripadvisor*.

Food was so good, we came back twice! We really enjoyed eating at Þrastalundur Restaurant. We tried the lamb soup, fresh brook trout, and leg of lamb. It was a Sunday, and they had a lovely two-piece band playing. The staff really made us feel at home, and gave us some travel suggestions for the Golden Circle. We enjoyed it so much, we came back the next night for pizza, soup, and beer. - *Kim H. - Tripadvisor*.

More than outstanding pizza Lovely restaurant situated in very scenic spot on a river bank. In summer one can see people fly fishing. The service was very good. Food was good and the atmosphere good. Will definitely go there a.s.a.p. Old but renovated in good taste. Brunch yummie. Thank you. I loved it - *Sigga Hallgr. - Tripadvisor*.

[f /thralundur](#)
[@thralundur](#)



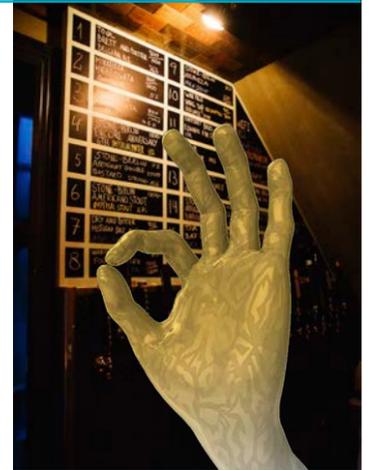
ÞRASTALUNDUR

SINCE 1928



“Kids and adults alike will have a literal whale of a time.”

This is what Superman’s apartment looks like



BEST OF REYKJAVÍK

Best Craft Bar

Winner: Mikkeller & Friends

Hverfisgata 12

The craft beer explosion finally reached Iceland in recent years, and Mikkeller & Friends has done a stellar job of bringing the cream of the crop to thirsty locals. From lip-curling sours to black-as-midnight stouts, solid house lagers and oddball passion fruit quintuple IPAs, Mikkeller is a haven for drinkers with a sense of adventure. “The selection is always changing,” said the panel. “You can sample what you want—the bartenders don’t judge you and give interesting tips. It’s a good place to learn about beer, and you can go there with friends, on a date, or for a solo drink.”

Nu-Skool Fun

Iceland’s new generation of technology-led museums

Words: John Rogers & Hannah Jane Cohen
Photos: Art Bicnick

There was a time when museums were carefully arranged collections of musty taxidermy and dusty antiquities. Recent years, however, have seen a revolution in the range of museum experiences on offer. Many contemporary museums now employ interactive displays and new technology to simultaneously educate and entertain. Iceland has its fair share of places to check out—whether you’re interested in whales, volcanoes, glaciers, or culture, there’s something for you.

followers. In the main hall, projected glacial vistas let you see the glaciers’ different shapes and sizes, while stop-motion videos of glacial retreat reveal how fragile these majestic phenomena are. There’s also an 8k aurora planetarium in case the Northern Lights prove elusive. **JR**



Wonders of Iceland

Perlan, Reykjavík

If stormy weather blows your glacier trip off course, visit the Wonders of Iceland museum. The impressive displays include a simulated ice tunnel, complete with frigid air temperatures and a selfie spot so realistic it’ll fool your Instagram



Whales of Iceland

Fiskislóð 23-25, Reykjavík

Whilst IRL whale watching is fun, it’s a seasonal activity. In the winter, there are fewer whales around, and sailing conditions might not be ideal. At such times, Whales of Iceland offers an indoor option with a huge display of life-sized model whales. You can meander between these oceanic giants, getting a different kind of understanding of just how vast they really are. Kids and

adults alike will have a literal whale of a time. **JR**



Tales of Iceland

Snorrabraut 37, Reykjavík

The Tales of Iceland museum endeavours to showcase Iceland through both the eyes of locals and foreigners through documentary shorts. On the first floor, watch videos detailing everything from foreign children whingeing about Icelandic weather to international artists getting to work deep in the countryside. Upstairs, a plethora of news video installations teaches you about Iceland’s cultural history, from the roots of Icelandic’s football fanaticism to the country’s historic domination in bridge. Expect to spend a few hours at this underrated gem. **HJC**



Lava Centre

Austurvegur 14, Hvalsöllum

Iceland’s landscape is both shaped and ravaged by its volcanic history. The Hvalsöllum Lava Centre peels back the thin mantle of the earth to reveal the systems that lie beneath. You’ll see visually appealing displays that show the different types of volcanoes that dot the horizon, impressive simulated eruptions, and a stunning model that shows the vast rift that lies right beneath the surface, leaving you with a new understanding of Iceland for your onward drive. **JR**



Eldheimar Volcano Museum

Heimaey, Westman Islands

Vestmannaeyjar—The Westman Islands—hit the worldwide news in 1973 when a volcano erupted almost directly under the sole town on the archipelago. Eldheimar is a striking museum built around some of the houses that were devastated by the eruption, during which the islands were completely evacuated. This dramatic passage of history is brought to life via newsreel footage, an alarming rumbling passageway, and an interactive exhibit showing the spread of lava over the island. **JR**



Runner Up: Skúli Craft Bar

Fógetagarður

This cosy drinking hole has a great selection of local and guest craft brews, with the option of a flight of beers for the indecisive or curious. “The staff are real beer nerds,” said the panel. “There are board games, good snacks and food vans out back. It has that dude energy, but it’s perfect for a quiet drink.”



Newcomer: Brewdog

Frakkastigur 8

The Brewdog empire’s Iceland outpost is an instant hit. “Sure, it’s a chain, but they have a really good beer selection,” said the panel. “The menu is great, and the staff are friendly and accommodating. They have both Brewdog and Icelandic beers, and Wings Wednesday.”

April 12th—April 25th

In Your Pocket

Reykjavík Map

Places We Like

Best Of Reykjavík

Perfect Day

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



“My favourite days are the ones that turn out to be amazing without any organisation.”

Words: Sólveig Matthildur & Sam Daniels Photo: Dean Kemball

Sólveig Matthildur Kristjánsdóttir

Sólveig Matthildur is an artist and a musician with an incredible resumé. Whether you know her from working with synth-punk band Kælan Mikla, as the co-founder of the MYRKFÆLNI magazine or from the Friyrkjan poetry group, there's a good chance you have seen this Icelandic superstar somewhere. We caught up with Sólveig to find out what her perfect day in Reykjavík would be..

First thing in the morning

I would wake up early and make a huge vegan breakfast for my family. Then I go to a swimming pool and pretend to swim but actually just lay in the hot tub for a long time and listen to the elderly people chat about nothing and everything.

Around lunchtime & the afternoon

Assuming it's summertime and the sun is shining, I would meet up with friends, go to Kolaportið,

stroll around, go to Bónus, and grab bananas. Then hit Ríkið and grab a bottle of bubbly and head over to Austurvöllur and just lie there and play cards, do Sudoku, draw, and hang around till dinner.

For dinner

After a bottle and banana, I can almost smell the vegan cheese balls Linnea is deep frying down at Veganæs. My favourite days are the ones that turn out to be amazing without any organisation. I have a tight schedule most days, but this is hypothetical, right? (At least I'm already spreading sparkles by assuming it's sunny). Well, whatever the weather is, I would definitely eat dinner at Veganæs.

In the evening

I would probably run right before closing back to Ríkið and grab more wine and walk towards the harbour. Enjoy the view, enjoy the constant changing colours of Esja, and draw something weird, beautiful or scary. When the evening starts to get colder I would check if there are

any concerts happening. Hopefully something in R6013, which is this amazing all-age venue in the basement of my friend's house downtown. If not there I would probably just head back to Veganæs because it's in Gaukurinn and there is always something going on there.

In the heat of the night

To be honest I would probably head back home before midnight. Because I don't like crowds and I get tired so early, but also because I live in Breiðholt. Or, I'd go to our rehearsal space and make loud music. But if I were to stay downtown I would like to have cocktails somewhere fancy like Burro, Apótekið, or some hotel bar and pretend to be rich and regret it the day after.

(Note: To be completely honest, my perfect day would be to escape Reykjavík with my whole family and friends. Go to Seljavallalaug or Þingvellir or drive around Snæfellsnes. Then come home in the evening and hang in a hot tub with a glass of wine.)



Bar & Restaurant
Hverfisgata 26



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Venue Finder

Venues	Museums & Galleries
The numbers on the right (i.e. E4) tell you position on the map on the next page	
Austur Austurstræti 7 D3	ART67 Laugavegur 67 F7
American Bar Austurstræti 8 D3	ASI Art Gallery Freyjugata 41 E6
Andrými Bergþorugata 20 G6	Aurora Reykjavík Grandagarður 2 B1
B5 Bankastræti 5 E4	Asgrímur Jónsson Museum Bergstaðastr. 74 G4
Bar Ananas Klappartígur 28 E5	Berg Contemporary Klappartígur 16 E5
Bió Paradís Hverfisgata 54 E5	The Culture House Hverfisgata 15 E5
Bjarni Fel Austurstræti 20 E4	The Einar Jónsson Museum Eiríksgröta G5
Bravó Laugavegur 22 E5	Ekkiens Bergstaðast. 25b F4
Boston Laugavegur 28b E5	Galleri List Skipholt 50A H10
Dillon Laugavegur 30 E5	Hafnarborg Strandgata 34, 220 D3
Dubliner Naustin 1-3 D3	Hitt Húsið Pósthússtræti 3-5 D4
English Pub Austurstræti 12 D3	Hverfisgalleri Hverfisgata 4 D4
Gaukurinn Tryggvagata 22 D3	i8 Gallery Tryggvagata 16 D3
Hard Rock Café Lækjargata 2a D3	Kjarvalsstaðir Flókagata 24 H8
Hressó Austurstræti 20 D3	Laugavegur 116 F8
Húrra Naustin D3	Kirsuberjatræð Vesturgata 4 D3
	Kling & Bang Grandagarður 20 A4
	Listastofan Hringbraut 119
	Living Art Museum Gránadarúr 20 A4
	Mokka Kaffi Skólavörðustígur 3A E5
	Museum of Design and Applied Art Garðatorg 1
	The National Gallery of Iceland Frikirkjuvegur 7
	The National Museum Sudurgata 41 G2
	The Nordic House Sturluggata 5 H2
	Hafnarhús Tryggvagata 17 D3
	Ásmundarsafn Sigtún Open daily 10-17
	Reykjavík City Library Tryggvagata 15 D3
	Árbæjarsafn Kistuhylur 4 Open daily 13-17
	The Settlement Exhibition Aðalstræti 16 D3
	Reykjavík Museum of Photography Tryggvagata 15 D3
	Saga Museum Grandagarður 2 B2
	Sigurjón Ólafsson Museum Laugarnestangi 70 Open Tu-Sun 14-17
	SÍM Hafnarstræti 16 D3
	Tveir Hrafnar Baldursgata 12 G4
	Wind & Weather Window Gallery Hverfisgata 37 E5

Vital Info



Useful Numbers

Emergency: 112
On-call doctors: 1770
Dental emergency: 575 0505
Taxi: Hreyfill: 588 5522 - BSR: 561 0000

Post Offices

The downtown post office has moved to Hagatorgi 1, open Mon-Fri 09:00-17:00.

Pharmacies

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

Opening Hours - Bars & Clubs

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

Opening Hours - Shops & Banks

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

Swimming Pools

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

Public Toilets

Public toilets in the centre can be found inside the green-poster covered towers located at Hlemmur, Ingólfstorg, by Hallgrímskirkja, by Reykjavík Art Museum, Lækjargata and by Eymundsson on Skólavörðustígur. Toilets can also be found inside the Reykjavík City Hall and the Reykjavík Library. **Public Transport**
Most buses run every 20-30 min
Fare: 460 ISK adults, 220 ISK children. Buses run from 07-24:00, and 10-04:30 on weekends. More info: www.bus.is.

A



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The Map

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

Dining

1. Grillmarkaðurinn

Lækjargata 2a

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

2. Hamborgarabúllan

Geirsgata 1

Hamborgarabúllan Tómasar is beloved among Icelanders for slinging honest, sweaty burgers to the masses. Would you not want to indulge in the meat options, try their chickpea-and-barley-based patties, which boast a texture that's very sumptuous. We approve!

3. Tapas Barinn

Vesturgata 3b

Tapas Barinn may not be faithful to the Spanish definition of a tapas bar, but what they do capture well is the atmosphere and liveliness of tapas. The selection is huge, spanning local (langoustine, puffin, lamb) as well as more global fare. And it's delicious. If you're looking for a place where the food and drinks keep coming and the service never falters, look no further.

4. Reykjavík Roasters

Kárastígur 1

With an in-house roaster, a shiny, handmade Synesso and a regularly trained staff, this place serves the best coffee in town. Drop by for some 24-hour-brewed Peruvian cold brew and a fragrant cinnamon scone; then pick your favourite record and people-watch in this fast-paced environment.

5. Sandholt

Laugavegur 36

Well-known for its sourdough bread, Sandholt has consistently delivered great baked goods since its inception. The laminated pastries are hands down the best in Iceland; try the buttery croissants or seasonal Danish pastries, locally known as "vínarbrauð" with rhubarb and raspberries, or the classic, vanilla custard.

6. Matur og Drykkur

Grandagarður 2

In how many ways can we say, "eat here"? Is it the whole cod head you

should get, or perhaps the double-smoked dried lamb, or the creamy halibut soup? Whatever you get, rest assured it'll have roots in Icelandic culinary history, elevated to fine dining standards. And do not leave without trying the fried-to-order kleinur.

7. Systir

Hverfisgata 12

This sibling restaurant for the Michelin-starred Dill serves up á la carte dishes in the new Nordic style, a specially curated natural wine list, and some excellent cocktails all for a great price. Pick up a five-course tasting menu for 5,990 ISK.

8. Taqueria la Poblana

Hlemmur Mathöll

Taqueria la Poblana serves "authentic Mexican tacos and other delicious fare from the region." Pick up soft homemade corn tortillas, fresh chili sauces, and a michelada crowned with spices to wash it down.

9. Apótek

Austurstræti 16

Even though Apótek is up there in price when it comes to dining, the two- and three-course lunch offer is great value for money and perfect for when you want to stretch that lunch hour to the tilt. Furthermore, with an awarded head mixologist at the counter, this place offers decent cocktails in their comfortable lounge bar.

10. Mandi

Veltusund 3b

Here you'll find the perfect lunch for a sunny day, the perfect meal after a night out, and the best bite for your hangover. Whatever it is you crave, the friendly staff of Mandi understands. No fries in town rival Mandi's, seasoned with chilli and garlic sauce. They also prepare the freshest hummus and tastiest shawarmas—just remember to ask for extra spice. They'll know what you mean.

Drinking

11. Kex Hostel

Skúlagata 28

Despite being a hostel bar, KEX Hostel kind of transcends that description, with an amazing sea view over Faxaflói and Mount Esja, beautiful décor and a large wraparound bar. It's especially fun if

they've got a live show booked, with the bonus of great food and a good beer selection.

12. Kiki Queer Bar

Laugavegur 22

If you're looking for Kiki, walk until you see the building that is entirely rainbow. The only dedicated queer bar in Iceland, Kiki is beloved by all the local gays, lesbians and in-betweens. There, find drag shows, queer concerts, and hot sweaty dance floors every weekend night. They also have glitter shots for 500 ISK.

13. Loft

Bankastræti 7a

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

14. Kaffibarinn

Bergstaðastræti 1

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

15. Gaukurinn

Tryggvagata 22

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

16. Miami

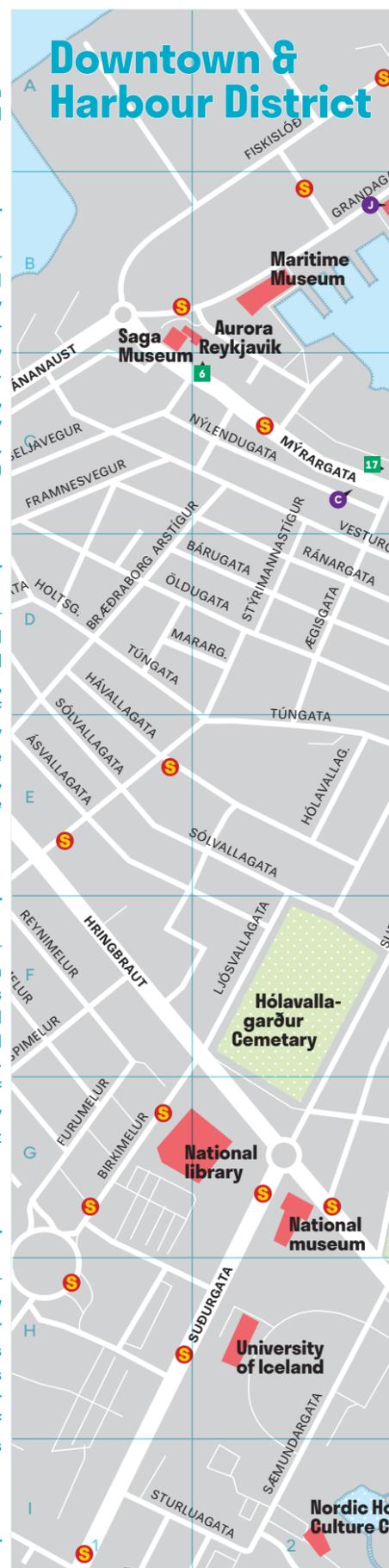
Hverfisgata 33

Reykjavík's new out-and-proud theme bar takes on the Magic City of the '80s. With a sharp aesthetic, Miami serves up pure vice with a splash of cosmopolitanism and a dedicated ping-pong room in the basement. It's pricey, but it has a good happy hour, the cocktail menu was crafted by mixology veterans, and the wine and champagne list is well-curated.

17. Slippbarinn

Mýrargata 2

This standard go-to bar for cocktails holds its own as far as the mixing game goes, with a unique menu and highly skilled bartenders to shake them up. The bar itself is a beautifully designed space with a gorgeous view of the Old Harbour.



18. Bastard Brew & Food

Vegamótastígur 4

This rooftop bar is located on the top of the cavernous Gamla Bíó theatre. It has loads of seating with soft furniture to luxuriate on, a view across the harbour, cocktails, and all the sun you could wish for.

Shopping

19. Spúútnik

Laugavegur 28b

This well-curated clothing emporium is more like a secondhand clothing boutique than a charity shop. It's expensive but it's all imported stuff



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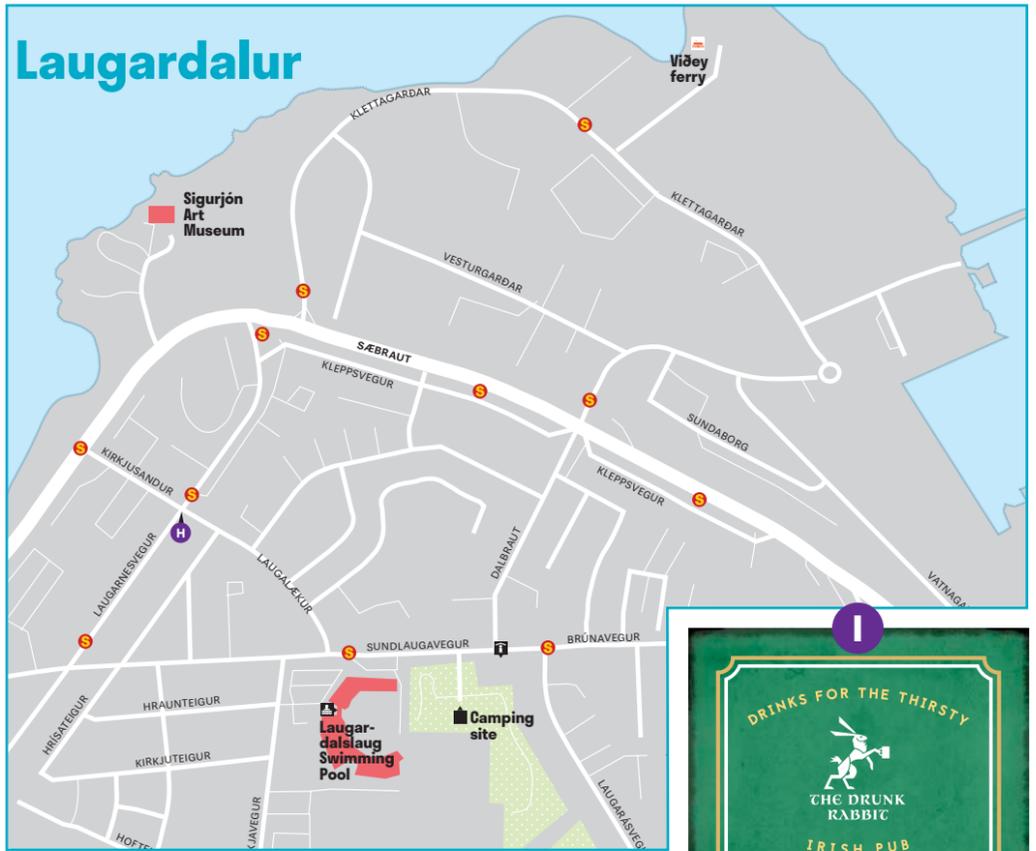
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New In Town



Wasteland
Ingólfsstræti 5

You can literally never have enough shopping venues for gently-used clothing and, as fate would have it, a new second-hand shop has opened up on Pínghóltsstræti. Wasteland Reykjavík is actually a franchise originating in Denmark, and while their official opening day is May 4th, they will be having special introductory hours from April 12th to 14th. Swing by and fashion your own unique look to wow them all this spring. **AF**

you won't find anywhere else.

20. Fischer

Fischersund

More art installation than regular store, the "Sigur Rós shop" is an aesthetic environment with a soothing soundtrack, sweet scents floating in the air, and a natural, earthy colour palette. They sell a range of amazing things, from hand-picked herbal tea, to artworks, records, and custom herbal scents.

21. Bókin

Klapparástígur 25-27

Bókin is the kind of place you'd imagine an eccentric genius spends his afternoons. They have a great

selection of used books and rare Icelandic publications. It's the best place for a treasure hunt or simply to get lost in a quiet, dusty maze.

22. Lucky Records

Rauðarárstígur 10

Lucky Records is probably the biggest record shop in Iceland, with shelves upon shelves of new and used vinyl and CDs on offer. They have a small stage where local and visiting bands sometimes perform, and they stock classics and limited editions.

23. Farmers And Friends

Hólmaslóð 2 & Laugavegur 37

If you want to pick up an Icelandic sweater, peruse the Farmers Market

outlet. Their wares combine Nordic style with a fresh aesthetic, providing you with a modern take on traditional pieces.

24. Tulipop

Skólavörðustígur 43

Tulipop serves up everything from lamps to wallets all covered in the cutest monsters you'll ever see. The Icelandic brand's flagship store is an explosion of pastels and neons. Stop here for gifts, souvenirs, or just a little adorable pick-me-up.

25. Yeoman Boutique

Skólavörðustígur 22b

Fashion designer Hildur Yeoman's boutique is a must-see. As well as her

own womenswear—characterised by flowing shapes made with colourful, busy prints—the store features work by an assortment of Hildur's fellow designers, as well as shoes, jewellery, French tea and other trinkets.

26. Rauðhetta & Úlfurinn

Skólavörðustígur 8

In a sense Rauðhetta & Úlfurinn is a Reykjavík classic. It's been around for over a decade, and the service is congenial without being overbearing. People are loyal to their favourite hairdresser, meaning some of them have long waiting lists, but pop in and try your luck.

HÚRRA REYKJAVÍK

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- COMMON PROJECTS DROLE DE MONSIEUR EYTYS
- FILLING PIECES HAN KJOBENHAVN HERON PRESTON
- NIKE SPORTSWEAR NORSE PROJECTS PALM ANGELS
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Music



The brothers grim

Event Horizon

The brothers of Andy Svarthol complete their musical education

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

Album

[Listen to 'Mörur' on Spotify now.](#)

Take the legendary artist Andy Warhol, change three letters in the last name so it becomes a play on the Icelandic word for black hole, and you have the unconventional duo Andy Svarthol. Comprising brothers Egill and Bjarki Hreinn Viðarsson, the band have spent the last three years chipping away at their debut album, 'Mörur,' which came out in the beginning of April.

A psychedelic soft-rock work, 'Mörur' is reminiscent of '60s bands like The Zombies and The Beach Boys. Add to that complicated harmonies and unexpected chord progressions, and you could easily assume you're listening to jazz veterans or, at the very least, studied composers.

Learning the ropes

But you aren't. Actually, neither brother has any formal music training. In fact, while most musicians learn how to play before starting a band, both Egill and Bjarki did the opposite, more or less learning to play and record through Andy Svarthol.

While Egill was previously in a band, he found his musical education really kicked into gear when he started working on the album with his brother. From learning to play his instruments to learning how to sing and record music, the album process has been about "learning the ropes."

Bjarki, the younger sibling, also came into the band with absolutely no musical experience. He essentially picked up an instrument after joining Andy Svarthol, and even jokes that the most difficult part of making 'Mörur' was just learning how to play the guitar. "It's been a learning process," he says. "This release is kind of a graduation for the both of us."

The first gig

But—even with their inexperience—the boys have sounded like anything but amateurs since their inception. In 2016, the two released their first single "Irena Sirena," and soon after played their first gig at that year's KexPort. Not only was the widely attended, live-streamed concert Andy Svarthol's debut, it was also Bjarki's first performance ever.

"We went straight into the deep end of the pool," he says, laughing. Egill smiles. "I'm really proud of Bjarki. My first gig was terrifying too, and that was just a rock concert at a café," he says. "Now for him, having this be his first gig..." He gives a panicked expression.

Nightmares

The album title refers to creatures found in old Norse folklore called Mares, who would sit on unsuspecting people's chests while they slept, causing them nightmares. While Egill didn't initially want to give the album a title, he found the concept of Mares tied into the theme

"It's been a learning process. The release is kind of a graduation for the both of us."

of the work. "Egill's lyrics are often about things he's afraid of," says Bjarki.

But the sound of the album is anything but fearful. Egill is particularly fond of the first and last songs. "They are funny," he says. "Not in the lyrics—just in the sounds. It's kind of ridiculous. I like how it evolves."

After spending three years working on the same songs, both are anxious to work on new material, especially now that they know what they are doing. "It'll be easier this time, for sure," Bjarki says, before he bursts out laughing. "But we have to follow this album through, I guess. We spent three years on it." 🇮🇸

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Peace on earth says JFDR

MUSIC NEWS Iceland Airwaves has announced the latest batch of names for the 2019 lineup.

Icelandic acts include folk-pop musician **Ólöf Arnalds**, ever-popular songstress **JFDR**, and the welcome return of **Sin Fang's** seven-piece folk band **Seabear**. They'll be joined by some international names such as **Girl in Red**, **Pottery**, **Pip Blom** and **Penelope Isles**. Those living outside of Iceland also don't need to feel left out, as the event sponsor Icelandair offers packages with flights and festival tickets. You won't want to miss out on what is shaping up to be the hottest music event of 2019. Tickets are on sale now. **SD**



No Sónar this year, thanks WOW!

Sónar Reykjavík 2019 has been cancelled. The organisers released a statement encouraging ticket holders to seek a refund, and to look into their passenger rights at WOW Air. A statement from the organisers read, in part, "Last Thursday, Icelandic airline WOW Air abruptly ceased operations. As a result, the travel plans of up to half of all the Sónar Reykjavík ticket-holders and numerous artists have been severely affected or cancelled. In light of this, and given the short amount of time until the festival, we are faced with no other choice but to announce its cancellation for this year." We hope to see the festival return in 2020. **AF**



This LP is 20. Feel old yet?

There's been a lot going on in the **Sigur Rós** camp lately. The band hit the headlines when they were accused of tax fraud, and made an appearance in a Reykjavík court to hear and deny the charges. The case is ongoing. In other news, their breakthrough album 'Ágætis Byrjun' is turning 20, and the band will reissue it for the occasion with a 7-disc vinyl box set featuring demos, rarities, live recordings, and a hardback book of imagery, artwork ideas, sheet music, and other curiosities. It's available on order on their website and comes out on June 21st. **JR**

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- 18/4 DRAG-SÚGUR DRAG LAB MONTHLY EXPERIMENTAL DRAG SHOW
- 19/4 QUEER PARTY WITH DJ VILLILJÓSS
- 20/4 MOSKVÍT, BRUÐL AND MORE
- 21/4 HELIUM KARAOKE PARTY
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HAPPY HOUR
14-21

VÍKING
Létíól

Our Picks



★ The Reykjavik Blues Festival 2019

April 13th-18th - Hilton Nordica - 5,990-11,990 ISK

Yo listen up, here's a story about a little festival filled with blues songs. All day and all night everything you will see and hear will be blues, sweet blues, inside and outside. Ok, we're done with that song. The Reykjavik Blues Festival is a yearly event that brings the

smooth and mellow melodies of some amazing blues artists to the city. This year is shaping up to be even bigger and bolder than ever and, of course, if the concerts are not enough for you then the after-hours club events will most certainly hit the spot. The main concerts take place at the Hilton Nordica and will feature artists such as Emil Arvidsson, Joe Louis Walker and the Blue Ice Band, Uncle John Jr. and many more. **SD**



★ Guðrún Óskarsdóttir

April 14th - 20:00 - Ásmundarsalur - 2,500 ISK

As it is said: one can always use a bit of harpsichord in the spring. Get your fix here. **HJC**



★ DJ Sin Fang

April 20th - 22:00 - Mikkeller & Friends - Free!

Get your dancing shoes ready for the sexy-lo-fi-indie-pop set by Sindri Már Sigfússon a.k.a. Sin Fang. Sin Fang founded the popular folk band Seabear and his 2016 album 'Spaceland' is worth checking out, too. If you like that, don't miss this. Seriously. **AU**



★ Stage Dive Festival

April 25th - 21:00 - Prikið - Free!

Stage Dive is known for bringing the best of underground Reykjavik hip-hop. It's producers night. **HJC**



★ MSEA Release Concert

April 18th - 20:30 - IÐNÓ - 1,500 ISK

Presenting the mysterious MSEA, who uses the natural and digital worlds to create an electronic collage of pop sound. Whether that means auto-tuned bird calls and/or textual synths is unclear, but you can gain some insight at this album release concert. Cue the animal noises. **HJC**

April 12th—April 25th

Concerts & Nightlife

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

Friday April 12th

★ Cell7 Album Release Concert

22:00 Húrra
Dúndurfréttir - The Wall: Pink Floyd Tribute Concert!
19:30 Harpa
DJ Naadei & Gervisykur
22:00 Prikið
Hexia De Mix & Marbendill
22:00 Boston
Alanis Morissette Cover Show
21:00 Hard Rock Café
DJ Óli Dóri
22:00 Bravó
Pink Iceland's Queer Fridays: Soffía Ósk
21:00 Pink Iceland
Atomstation / Pungsig / Tófa / Drulla
21:00 Gaukurinn
GG Blues
22:00 Dillon
DJ KGB
22:00 Kaffibarinn
Kristinn Kristinsson - Module
21:00 Mengi
DJ Thaison
22:00 Húrra
DJ Elsa BJE
23:00 Paloma
DJ Byssukisi
22:00 Mikkeller & Friends

Saturday April 13th

★ The Reykjavik Blues Festiafl 2019

16:00 Borgarbókasafnið
Dúndurfréttir - The Wall: Pink Floyd Tribute Concert!
19:30 Harpa
DJ Spegill
22:00 Prikið
Plútó: All Nighter
22:00 Bravó
Þorbjörg Ósk / Skoffin / Baldur & Linur Orri
18:00 R6013
Unnur Birna & Björn Thoroddsen
20:30 Hard Rock Café
DJ Matt Anderson
22:00 Kaffibarinn
KBG Soundsystem
22:00 Boston
Foreign Monkeys Album Release Concert
22:00 Gaukurinn
Babies Ball!

22:00 Húrra
Library Blues Concert
16:00 Grófin Culture House
Guðmundur Steinn Gunnarsson 'Einvaldsóður' Release Party
21:00 Mengi
DJ Alexandra Baldursdóttir
22:00 Mikkeller & Friends
DJ Battlestar X Fusion Groove
23:30 Húrra
Omotrack
21:00 Stúdentakjallarinn

Sunday April 14th

Icelandic Opera: La Traviata
20:00 Harpa
Sunday Jazz: Sigríður Thorlacius
20:00 Bryggjan Brugghús
DJ Fonetik Symbol
22:00 Bravó
DJ Terrordisco
22:00 Kaffibarinn
★ Guðrún Óskarsdóttir
20:00 Ásmundarsalur
Trio Nordica
20:00 Salurinn

Monday April 15th

MonJazz
21:00 Húrra
The Proclaimers
20:30 Harpa
DJ John BRNLV
22:00 Kaffibarinn

Tuesday April 16th

Karaoke Party!
21:00 Gaukurinn
DJ Katla
22:00 Kaffibarinn
★ The Reykjavik Blues Festiafl 2019
20:00 Hilton Nordica Hotel

Wednesday April 17th

Múlinn Jazz Club: Kurt Weill - From Berlin To Broadway
21:00 Harpa
Don Lockwood Band
21:00 Slippbarinn
Party Karaoke With Þórunn Antonía
21:00 Sæta Svinið
Wednesday Jazz Night
22:00 Miami

DJ Big Baby & Björn Valur

22:00 Prikið
Pan The Man
22:00 Boston
Smengi #4
16:00 Mengi
DJ Marbendill & Hexia
22:00 Húrra

Girolamo & Fecarotta

21:00 Mengi
DJ Valdi
22:00 Húrra
TTT x Mike The Jacket
23:00 Paloma
Mozart Requiem
18:00 Langholtið



What is Kristinn Kristinsson thinking about? Something deep, we assume

DJ Styrmir Hansson

22:00 Bravó
DJ Gunni Ewok
22:00 Kaffibarinn
★ The Reykjavik Blues Festiafl 2019
20:00 Hilton Nordica Hotel

Thursday April 18th

Jesus Christ Superstar
19:30 Harpa
DJ Kári
22:00 Miami
Skýr Day: Godchilla + Curver = Goddaver
21:00 Mengi
DJ Melly Motherfunker
22:00 Prikið
★ MSEA Release Concert
20:30 IÐNÓ
DJ Valdi
22:00 Bravó
DJ Árni Sveins
22:00 Kaffibarinn
Herbert Guðmundsson
22:00 Miami
★ The Reykjavik Blues Festiafl 2019
20:00 Hilton Nordica Hotel

Friday April 19th

101 Savage Special
22:00 Prikið
Formaður & Snáðinn Bash
22:00 Bravó
DJ Berglind Festival
22:00 Mikkeller & Friends
Mosi DJ Set
22:00 Boston
Jesus & The Gender Benders
Queer Party
00:00 Gaukurinn
DJ Frimann
22:00 Kaffibarinn
Mark The Messenger
21:00 Hard Rock Café
Instance: Pedersen / Magnason /

Saturday April 20th

Lucy In Blue Album Release Concert
21:00 Húrra
DJ Snorri Ástráðs
22:00 Prikið
DJ Gunni Ewok
22:00 Bravó
DJ Bricks Hipp-Hopp Jam #2
22:00 Boston
DJ Aggalá
22:00 Kaffibarinn
Moskvit / Bruði & More
22:00 Gaukurinn
DJ Motherfunker
23:30 Húrra
★ DJ Sin Fang
22:00 Mikkeller & Friends

Sunday April 21st

Sunday Jazz
20:00 Bryggjan Brugghús
DJ Young Nazareth
22:00 Prikið
DJ Ísar Logi
22:00 Bravó
DJ Sonur Sæll
22:00 Kaffibarinn
Helium Karaoke Party!
00:00 Gaukurinn
DJ Símon FKNHNSM
22:00 Húrra
Á móti sól
23:30 Bryggjan Brugghús

Monday April 22nd

MonJazz
21:00 Húrra
lowercase night
21:00 Prikið
DJ Frosty
22:00 Kaffibarinn

Tuesday April 23rd

Karaoke Party!
21:00 Gaukurinn
DJ Orang Volante
22:00 Bravó
DJ Pilsner
22:00 Kaffibarinn

Wednesday April 24th

Don Lockwood Band
21:00 Slippbarinn
Party Karaoke With Þórunn Antonía
21:00 Sæta Svinið
Wednesday Jazz Night
22:00 Miami
Múlinn Jazz Club: Mambolitos
21:00 Harpa
DJ SURA
22:00 Prikið
DJ Dægurlög
22:00 Bravó
DJ Dominatricks
22:00 Kaffibarinn
ÍRiis / IDK IDA & ZAAR
22:00 Gaukurinn
DJ Davið Roach
22:00 Húrra

Thursday April 25th

★ Akranes Punk
17:00 Akranes Lighthouse
★ Stage Dive Festival: BNGRBOY / Lord Pusshwhip / Izleifur & DJ Dominatricks
21:00 Prikið
DJ Naadei
22:00 Bravó
Martin Stephenson
21:00 Dillon
DJ Introbeatz
22:00 Kaffibarinn
KGB Soundsystem
22:00 Miami
David Bowie Cover Session
21:00 Petersen svítan
Kjartan Sveinsson & Skúli Sverrisson
21:00 Mengi



★ For music listings from April 25th on, check out happening.grapevine.is or our app Appening, available on iOS and Android

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Music



MSEA: do we pronounce it M-sea, or M-say-ah? We just don't know

Odes To Escapism: The Sound Universe Of MSEA

Her EP, 'Hiding Under Things,' mesmerises and unsettles

Words: **Andie Fontaine** Photo: **Art Bicnick**

Album and concert

'Hiding Under Things' will be available for sale on April 18th, and you can pre-order it on Bandcamp. She will also be performing on this day at Iðnó, with KRÍA and Oyama, along with an art installation

Maria-Carmela Raso, better known as MSEA, is a soft-spoken, self-deprecating musician originally from Canada. But her EP, 'Hiding Under Things,' belies a whole other side to the artist. Her lush, atmospheric compositions are deceptive. Just as the wash of keyboards and her ethereal voice draw you in, you begin to feel a gently unsettling undercurrent to the harmonies. At times, it feels as though the slightest vibration could shatter the whole thing into a million pieces, but MSEA maintains the delicate tension of her pieces from start to finish.

"Making music started as a way to comfort myself as a child, which the EP title is kind of about," she tells us. "It's an ode to escapism. I'd write lyrics in my bed and sing myself to sleep when I was about 11 or 12 years old."

A reflective moment

The past is a major theme of the EP, as MSEA attests. "The sound universe of the EP is related to the past," she says. "I tried to distance myself a lot from home when I first moved away. I've been away for 11 years now. I needed to distance myself for a long time, and now the more I'm away, the more I look back thinking about things. This EP is the sound universe of my youth. I think that's why there's this beauty, but also these uncomfortable moments."

While she has only been living in Iceland for two years now, the EP features some remarkable local talent, including Albert Finnbógason of JFDR and Sóley fame. In many ways, necessity dictated the form this music took.

"When I first moved here, I was used to playing with a band like I did in Toronto. I was writing score styles. But then I moved here and didn't know any musicians, so I switched to electronic." She made friends in the Reykjavik music scene along the way, and her songs have become a blend of her production and the input of others,

including Albert, who added other instruments. "It's been a really nice collaborative process."

How composing is like going to the gym

"It gets so lonesome to perform alone on stage," she says. "It'd be nice to play with a band. You don't feel the same energy alone that you do with a band with you. But I like switching it up."

The creative process is often a matter of sheer willpower for her, especially as she must find time to compose, record and produce around her already busy day job schedule. As intense a process as making music can be, the payoffs are enormous.

"I think I go through waves of an intense need for creativity, where all I want to do is be at home with my computer and keyboard," she says. "I guess it's kind of like going to the gym. You can think about it for a long time and then once you start doing it, you're like, 'Oh, this isn't so bad!'"

"Experimental, independent artists are a strong and highly welcome presence."

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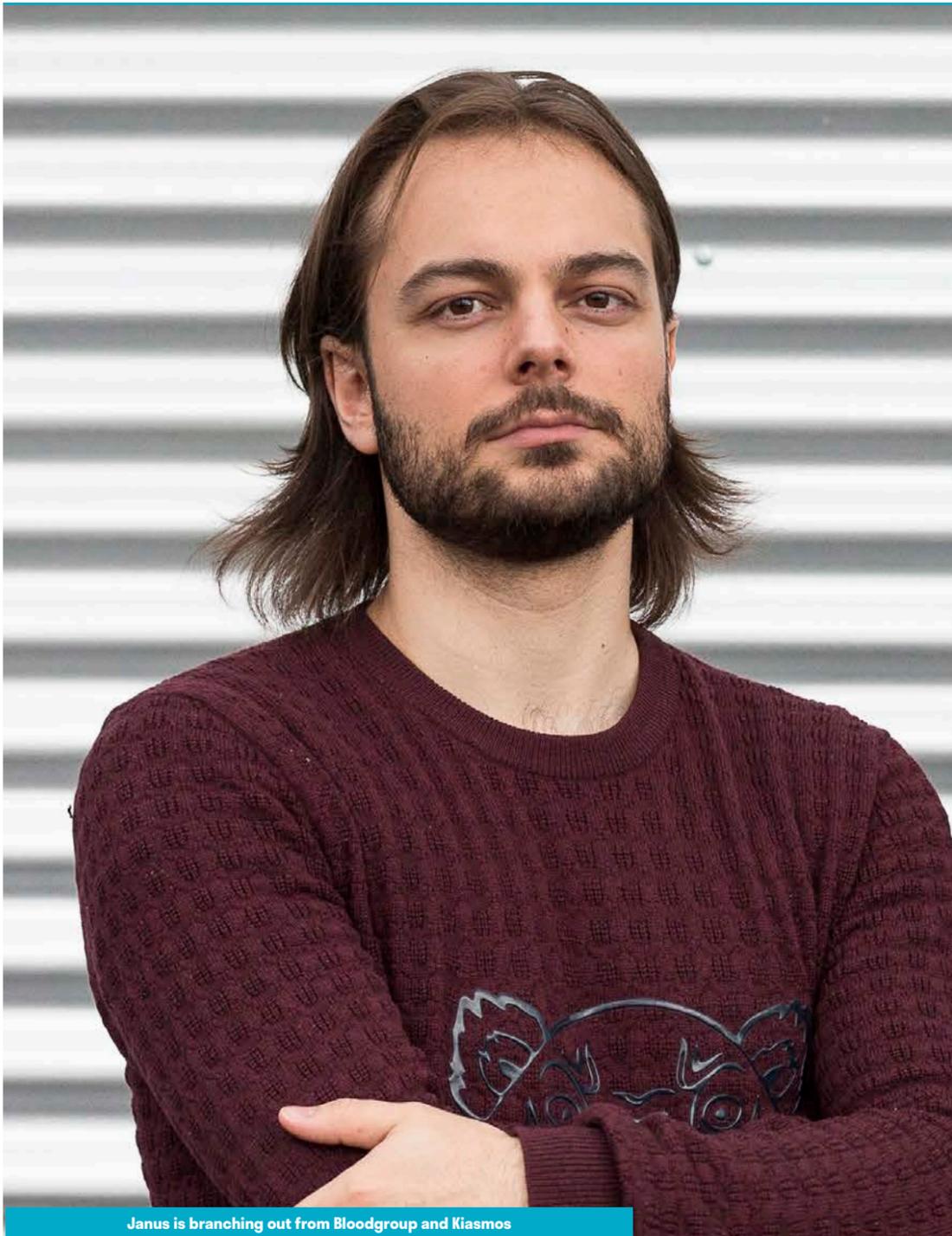


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Janus is branching out from Bloodgroup and Kiasmos

Time To Emerge

Janus Rasmussen opens up about going it alone

Words: Rex Beckett Photo: Art Bienick

Album

Janus Rasmussen's debut album 'Vin' came out March 29th. He is currently on tour in Europe

It can take time to step out on one's own. For Janus Rasmussen, it took years as a member of Kiasmos and Bloodgroup before finding his legs to go solo. The Faroese-born musician and producer recently found the footing to emerge with his first album, 'Vin.'

After building his dream studio in Reykjavik's old harbour, Rasmus felt he owed it to himself to finally embark on a solo effort. "There were no more excuses to come up with," he says. "It's kind of scary because I've always been in bands or been in the background. I think it was just a matter of time and having the courage."

Everything together

Written over a year and a half, the album reflects the dream environment he created for himself with sweeping, evocative, naturalistic melodies and tones over crisp, soothing beats. "I've produced a

lot of different kinds of music over time, everything from electronic to folk to rock, so I just wanted to bring everything into this project," he says. "I just want to be really true to myself and I guess that's easier when you're doing it completely on your own, because it's the only thing you can be."

Finding the sonic queues was an exploratory process that went into the personal as it went forward, but Janus mainly allowed himself to follow the ideas as they went. "I don't sit down and think I'm gonna write a song about the moon or anything like that," he laughs. "But it becomes really personal. It becomes a big part of your life so you have a lot of doubts and ups and downs."

Not overthinking

He did not go through the process entirely alone, calling upon supportive people to act as sounding boards in the studio. "I would sometimes have a friend over and someone to work with in the studio just to push me along when I was stuck," he says.

"I sometimes forget what I'm

doing. I start a song and I kind of get bored of it before it even takes off. If someone's in the room with me they will encourage me to keep going, when I probably would have stopped after ten minutes."

This transition from being a band member and feeding off the back and forth to putting his own name on something was both scary and empowering. "It surprised me how much easier it got towards the end of the process," he says. "I feel like the last few songs of the album are always the most fun. You're just working quicker, using less, not overthinking things too much." The songs on the album impart this seemingly effortless energy and ultimately feel transporting.

Sad because ideas

Janus is now touring the album through Europe, although having just put out his first album he is already itching to write a second. "At the end of an album you're so inspired," he says. "I'm kind of sad right now because I have so many ideas and I just want to write more music." Now that he has found his own feet, there is sure to be more. ♡

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Forgoing The Blank Canvas

Flétta Design Studio turns mundane
materials into objects of beauty

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

Flétta Design Studio is a little over one year old, but has already received more attention and acclaim than many studios achieve in a decade. The duo behind Flétta—Birta Rós Brynjólfssdóttir and Hrefna Sigurðardóttir—take materials that would normally accumulate dust on shelves or in drawers and turn them into treasures.

And a candlestick maker

The two met in design school, and started collaborating in 2014. Their first work involved mapping thrown away and recycled materials from manufacturing projects around the city. It was a match made in heaven, they explain, that eventually evolved into Flétta.

In early 2018, the studio released their debut project, 'Mínú-tustjakar,' which recently won Product Of The Year at the 2019 Reykjavík Grapevine Design Awards. The studio created a series of candlesticks, each made by hand in just one minute. In doing so, they blurred the lines between

hand-made and mass-produced, critiquing modern industrial society in a playful way. The panel determining the awards called it, "unique and cost-effective," and "bullseye when it comes to what people will pay for things."

Finally a trophy

Their next effort was an open studio at Ásmundarsalur entitled 'Trophy,' where the duo spent a month publicly dismantling and repurposing trophies. The results of their labour were then presented as part of DesignMarch.

"A trophy is a tricky object,"

"A trophy is an illusion of a value that doesn't really have any itself. It's mainly plastic in reality."

Birta explains as she sits surrounded by stacks of marble bases and hundreds of golden plastic goblets. "It's an illusion of a value that doesn't really have any itself. It's mainly plastic in reality." Hrefna nods in agreement. She's heavily pregnant, only days away from giving birth. "We've never won a trophy in our lives," she says, laughing. "So they're strange to us. By taking them apart, we thought about all the feelings behind them—what

it means to people to receive these objects and that, even though they represent something, they still gave them to us to dismantle."

Screws to figurines

The trophies were donated by the dozens from sports clubs around the country, and also given personally from numerous families and athletes. They run the gamut from national golf championships to participation awards at equestrian tournaments.

After breaking them apart piece by piece, from the screws to the figurines, Birta and Hrefna transform them into everything from delicate hanging lights to ornate end tables. They're beautiful in an almost Rococo way, going far beyond being just a symbol of the ideology of the project into gorgeous design objects in their own right. At the same time, they collaborated on a series of denim rugs made out of recycled jeans from the Red Cross along with fashion designer Steinunn Eyja Halldórsdóttir.

Value in the forgotten

This focus on using thrown away and recycled materials is at the heart of Flétta's work. "It's an ongoing theme," says Birta. "There is something wholly different that comes out when you start not with a blank canvas. You have to design something out of something that is already something."

Their Trophy exhibit was only step one in a longer endeavour, they explain. They'll continue to collect and remake. "We give objects a role and purpose," Hrefna emphasises. "By putting them into a new context, we find new materiality." Birta nods. "We're creating new meaning. 🐦

Our Picks



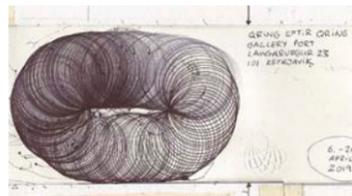
Sticks And Stones...

★ **Janice Kerbel**

Until May 25th - i8 Gallery

Kerbel's large silkscreen prints put verbs and nouns into the focus of the piece like it's a portrait.

These aren't your average words though, Janice's picks are pretty brutal—think jab, grab, head butt, barge, straddle, and more. With this, her pieces evoke thoughts of chaotic fights and strict commandments. What is the difference between the basic scrawl of the word on canvas and the physicality of what they represent? What do they make you visualise? We can't tell you the answer to this, you'll have to find out for yourself. Also on display are large prints of synchronised swimmers—yes, they still exist—and so much more. **HJC**



★ **QRING EFTIR QRING**

Until April 20th - Gallery Port

Journey back to 2014 into an unnamed office in Laugavegur. There, Narfi picked up a

ballpoint pen and began drawing patterns, which eventually became this exhibit. Some are large, some small, some logical, some chaotic. **HJC**



★ **Sharp Places**

Until April 27th - Listastofan

Nostalgia is quite possibly the most powerful emotion in our arsenal. Sculptor Carissa Baktay will re-

awaken that with childish objects consisting of glass thread and horse hair: A cat's cradle, a fort, and more. **HJC**



★ **'Finding Vivian Maier' Matinee**

April 13th - 18:00 - Andrymi

Imagine finding a suitcase in a storage unit containing 150,000 negatives. These treasures unrav-

elled the secret life of street photographer Vivian Dorothy Maier, a nanny who secretly photographed the world. **HJC**

April 12th—April 25th

Art Listings

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

Opening

EINAR JÓNSSON MUSEUM

Intermission—A Temporary Interference

This exhibition is a collaborative work between the University of Iceland, Iceland University of the Arts, and The Einar Jónsson Museum. In it, a diverse group of artists offer 10 different points of view in response to Einar Jónsson, his works, and the museum. There will be two artist talks at 14:00 on April 20th and 27th.

- Opens on April 13th, 2019
- Runs until April 28th, 2019

Ongoing

NATIONAL GALLERY OF ICELAND

Treasures Of A Nation

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

- Runs until December 31st, 2019

Violin Power I

Steina is one of the pioneers of multimedia and video art, having experimented with electronic sound, stroboscopic light, and video in the late '60s. Here, come see her first autonomous work 'Violin Power I'.

- Runs until May 1st, 2019

EINAR JÓNSSON MUSEUM

Permanent Exhibition

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

THE ÁSGRÍMUR JÓNSSON COLLECTION

Korríó and Dillidó

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

- Runs until April 30th, 2019

ÁRBÆR OPEN AIR MUSEM

Daily Guided Tours

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

REYKJAVÍK CITY MUSEUM

Settlement Sagas

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

REYKJAVÍK ART MUSEUM - ÁSMUNDARSAFN

Ásmundur Sveinsson: Under the Same Sky - Art In Public Space

Ásmundarsafn is named after sculptor Ásmundur Sveinsson. This new permanent exhibition presents the artist in a new light. What dialogue does his works provoke?

- Runs until December 31st, 2019

Brynhildur Þorgeirsdóttir: Natural Elements

Beloved Icelandic sculptor Brynhildur Þorgeirsdóttir presents a new exhibit of her pivotal work.

- Runs until June 10th, 2019

REYKJAVÍK MUSEUM OF PHOTOGRAPHY ...now

Páll Stefánsson has spent 37 years as a traveller and photographer. Here, he captures the silence of the present. From refugees to endless glaciers to random strangers, he explores everything from discrimination to the inevitability of nature in a momentary glance.

- Runs until May 12th, 2019

Sonja Margrét Ólafsdóttir - Roots

Sonja Margrét Ólafsdóttir's photographs show everyday scenes and places but also have an air of mystery: Where are these places? Who are these people and what connects these images?

- Runs until June 10th, 2019

NATIONAL MUSEUM OF ICELAND

Discovering Iceland's Monasteries

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

- Runs until May 26th, 2019

Artists' Books

Familiarise yourself with the books of Icelandic artists. You'll find examples of printmaking dating all the way back to the latter part of the 19th century.

- Runs until June 2nd, 2019

REYKJAVÍK MARITIME MUSEUM

Fish & Folk

Name a better duo than fish and Iceland. You can't. So come learn about the history of Icelandic fisheries from rowing boats to monstrous motor boats.

Melckmeyt 1659

Melckmeyt was a Dutch merchant ship that crashed near Flatey Island

in 1659. Explore the wreck here.

NORDIC HOUSE

So Nice To Hear That You Are Doing Well

This exhibition focuses on Roy Andersson's cinematographic work and artistic process. Almost all of Andersson's scenes are brought to life in studios, against carefully crafted backdrops, using the classic trompe-l'œil ('deceive the eye') technique - where painted imagery is used to imitate reality.

- Runs until May 1st, 2019

REYKJAVÍK ART MUSEUM - HAFNARHÚS

Erró: Black & White

Here, historical leaders, Manga characters, and animated figures are put side by side in exclusively black and white works—a first for the artist.

- Runs until April 25th, 2019

Anna Guðjónsdóttir: Pars Pro Toto

Here, Anna Guðjónsdóttir questions the boundary between the original and the copy. Two-dimensional painted surfaces and three-dimensional real spaces collide.

- Runs until May 19th, 2019

D36 Steinunn Önnudóttir

Steinunn explores the materiality of paintings in her works. The D-Series exhibits up-and-coming artists, of which Steinunn is the 36th.

- Runs until April 28th, 2019

Now Nordic

The international design platform Adorno presents a landmark exhibition of contemporary design from the five Nordic countries, aiming to showcase the commonalities and contrasts between the modern design cultures of Norway, Finland, Sweden, Denmark and Iceland.

- Runs until May 26th, 2019

REYKJAVÍK ART MUSEUM - KJARVALSSTAÐIR

Jóhannes S. Kjarval: ...author of great aspirations

Kjarval was one of the pioneers of Icelandic art and is uniquely credited with making modern Icelanders appreciate it more. Come see a special exhibit based on his poetry.

- Runs until April 28th, 2019

Eyborg Guðmundsdóttir: Circle, Square and Line

In this retrospective, experience the abstract geometric art of Eyborg Guðmundsdóttir. Called Op-Art, Eyborg's paintings are based on the primary qualities of art—shapes.

- Runs until April 28th, 2019

SIGURJÓN ÓLAFSSON MUSEUM

Connections

To celebrate the 13th anniversary of the museum, this exhibition presents 13 artists in dialogue with Sigurjón and his art.

- Runs until October 6th, 2019

WIND AND WEATHER WINDOW GALLERY

MYTHISTORIA -Chapter III - The Great Whale

Mythistoria, in Latin, means a fabulous narrative and tall tale. Artist Tanja Thorjussen takes this and combines it with underwater sea creatures, forming, well, a whale of a work of cut-out drawings and ink.

- Runs until April 27th, 2019

HAFNARBORG

Reservation

Here, rural, urban, and cultural areas are connected in an attempt to forge new relationships between environments—all through mixed-media art, of course. The exhibit is presented as part of Design March.

- Runs until May 19th, 2019

LIVING ART MUSEUM

Everything Is Great

Arna Óttarsdóttir uses shades of pink, from crabapple jelly to shrimp cocktail, within her tapestries to create a visceral experience where everything is great. Or is it?

- Runs until April 28th, 2019

MUSEUM OF DESIGN AND APPLIED ART

Weather Workshop

Artist Shu Yi opens up a conversation on Iceland's ever-changing weather by transforming weather data into visual forms in the entrance of the Design Museum.

- Runs until June 2nd, 2019

URBAN SHAPE

Architect Paolo Gianfrancesco used data from Open Street Map to celebrate cities. The constant interplay of people and their environment will be revealed before your very eyes.

- Runs until September 8th, 2019

KLING OG BANG

Sensible Structures

This exhibition explores the conceptual relationships that occur in the parenthesis between the visual and the verbal through the work of Kristinn Már Pálmason, Bryndís Hrönn Ragnarsdóttir and the late Fluxus artist Ludwig Gosewitz.

- Runs until May 26th, 2019

LISTASALUR MOSFELLSÆJAR

Hamur

Hildur Ása Henrysdóttir puts the framework women are forced to reside in on display—a story about the plight of a woman born at the peak of pornography and public worship.

- Runs until April 26th, 2019



GALLERÍ FOLD

EGGCENTRICS//Edward Fuglø

'Eggcentrics' uses North Atlantic seabird eggs to tell the stories of classical mythology figures. A hint of collage, cartoon and pop-art mix together with surrealist elements, graphic forms and bright colours in Fuglø's works. Don't miss this one.

- Runs until April 27th, 2019

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Film

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These two are fixing up 'Sóley' for you (not the musician)

Finding Sóley

Famed cult Icelandic movie gets a shape-up

Words: Þórður Ingi Jónsson Photos: Ómar Sverrisson

Movie

Support the 'Sóley' restoration
efforts via the [Karolina Fund
website](#).

The 1982 Icelandic art-house film 'Sóley' (also known as 'The Hidden People of the Shadowy Rocks') has long been lost, save for a few bootleg copies floating around. The film was directed by the enigmatic artist Róska in collaboration with her husband, Manrico Pavelotoni. Róska is one of the most important Icelandic artists of the 20th century—she was a leader of the avant-garde art scene during the baby boomer era, a multi-talented artist, and a staunch communist. 'Sóley' is a legendary film that draws heavily on Icelandic folk stories and mythology—as well as the left-wing politics of the time.

Lost negative

The film's negative is lost, but now filmmakers Þorbjörg Jónsdóttir and Lee Lorenzo Lynch are working full force to try and restore the film. Þorbjörg—who happens to be Róska's niece—and Lee have launched a crowdfunding campaign on Karolina Fund to pay for a full digital clean-up of the film's video and audio, as well as full colour and subtitle correction. The couple recently collaborated with the Icelandic Film Museum on scanning the film in 6k resolution, but the only copy that was available was an exhibition print from the museum.

"That was quite a substantial job," says Lee. "Getting the film scanned was great. It looks beauti-

ful, and it's the first time the film has ever been transferred to any form of high definition. It always had a sort of DIY feel to it and it was shot on 16mm, so it's always



gonna feel sort of like a punk film. It was really nice to collaborate with the Icelandic Film Museum on this."

Next gen

'Sóley' was one of the few films directed by a woman in Iceland at the time and one of the very few feature-length art-house films made in the country. It was Róska's only feature film, but she worked on many documentaries and short films as well, even working with Jean-Luc Godard in Italy for a time. Róska was often con-

"Any time you forge a new path, it's gonna take time for people to catch up."

troversial with the critics in Iceland, but now newer generations are discovering the important work she did.

"She was a controversial art-

ist when she was alive," Þorbjörg says. "However, the young generation now is getting to know her through her work, though they didn't know her personally. Sometimes we're better off appreciating the work for the work itself when there's a little bit of distance."

Still relevant

"I think the film is still really relevant," she continues. "It's politi-

cal and it stands up for the small guy." Lee adds: "Any time you forge a new path, it's gonna take time for people to catch up with that. When we screened 'Sóley' at IDNÓ on March 25th, a lot of younger people came, as well as some of my students, and we were actually surprised at how much the younger generation of Icelanders liked the film. It was heartwarming."

The couple encourages everyone to consider making a contribution to their Karolina Fund page. "The film totally belongs out there, representing Icelandic film history within the larger canon of world cinema," says Þorbjörg. "Being a female director as well as a visual artist, what Róska was doing was super progressive."

[gpv.is/film](#)
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Various Events



Let's all say it together: PIVOT!

Friday April 12th

Friday Party!: 'Cocktail' Screening
20:00 Bíó Paradís

Saturday April 13th

Northern Laughs: Comedy Show
21:00 Secret Cellar
How To Become Icelandic In 60 Minutes
19:00 Harpa
Icelandic Sagas: The Greatest Hits
19:30 Harpa
★ **'Finding Vivian Maier' Matinee**
18:00 Andrými

Sunday April 14th

HANS.mov [night]: 'Repo! The Genetic Opera' Screening
21:00 Gaukurinn
Guided Tour In English
11:00 National Museum Of Iceland
Yoga
12:00 Loft
Black Sundays!: 'The Evil Dead'
18:00 Bíó Paradís
Seat Filler: Iceland's Only Free Game Show!
23:30 Secret Cellar
Gloria Hole: Think You've Got Talent?
21:00 Kiki Queer Bar
Party Bingo With Sigga Kling
21:00 Sæta Svinið

Monday April 15th

Stand-Up Comedy (in English!)
21:00 Gaukurinn
Friends Pub Quiz
20:00 Stúdentakjallarinn
The Night's Watch Party: Game of Thrones Season 8 Screening
20:00 Loft

Tuesday April 16th

Funniest Four: Comedy Show
21:00 The Secret Cellar
Icelandic Sagas: The Greatest Hits
19:30 Harpa

Wednesday April 17th

Open Mic Stand-Up Comedy
21:00 The Secret Cellar

Thursday April 18th

My Voices Have Tourettes
21:00 The Secret Cellar
Drag-Súgur: Drag Lab!
21:00 Gaukurinn

Friday April 19th

What's the (Power)Point?: PowerPoint Comedy Night
20:00 Loft
Friday Party!: 'Jesus Christ Superstar'
20:00 Bíó Paradís

Saturday April 20th

Northern Laughs: Comedy Show
21:00 Secret Cellar
Icelandic Sagas: The Greatest Hits
19:30 Harpa

Sunday April 21st

Yoga
12:00 Loft
Seat Filler: Iceland's Only Free Game Show!
23:30 Secret Cellar
Gloria Hole: Think You've Got Talent?
21:00 Kiki Queer Bar
Party Bingo With Sigga Kling
21:00 Sæta Svinið

Monday April 22nd

Stand-Up Comedy (in English!)
21:00 Gaukurinn
The Night's Watch Party: Game of Thrones Season 8 Screening
20:00 Loft
Miami Open Ping Pong Tournament
20:00 Miami

Tuesday April 23rd

Funniest Four: Comedy Show
21:00 The Secret Cellar

Wednesday April 24th

Open Mic Stand-Up Comedy
21:00 The Secret Cellar
How To Become Icelandic In 60 Minutes
19:00 Harpa
Icelandic Sagas: The Greatest Hits
19:30 Harpa
★ **SPOR**
17:00 Gerðuberg Culture House

Thursday April 25th

My Voices Have Tourettes
21:00 The Secret Cellar
Krowdwerk: Comedy On The Spot
20:00 Hard Rock Café

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Quiet mayhem

From Johnny Ryan's Overly Sick Cartoons To The Moomins

Hugleikur tells us what inspired him to be an artist.

Words: **Hugleikur Dagsson & Valur Grettisson** Photo: **Art Bicnick**

Hugleikur Dagsson is one of Iceland's most loved and, perhaps in some ways, notorious artists. His comics are brutal and hilarious in their simplicity. His books have been translated for global audiences and have impacted the comic scene in Iceland in a legendary way. He has also been an important part of The Reykjavik Grapevine's story as he was once, one of Grapevine illustrators. But here it is—what impacted and shaped this fantastic artist.



Monty Python

The ending of 'The Holy Grail' was an eye opening experience. The camera man was killed and then nothing. Not even end credits. I didn't know this was allowed. By putting structure and storytelling in the back seat and putting the joke behind the wheel, Monty taught me the beauty of rule breaking.

I'm aiming for in my own comedy stylings

Favourite work: 'The Meaning of Life.' The live organ transplants scene triggered something within me.



Sarah Silverman

Eddie Izzard and Bill Hicks were my first stand-up comedy crushes. But Silverman was my first love. Her combination of darkness and kindness is exactly what I'm aiming for in my own comedy stylings. She manages to be super woke and super un-PC at the same time. In an age where many people think PC culture is killing comedy, she's a reminder that humour doesn't work that way.

Favourite work: It's a tie between 'A Speck of Dust,' (stand-up special) and the short lived 'Sarah Silverman Programme.' Oh, and her performance in 'Wreck it Ralph!' I love the fact that someone who regularly tells trump to go eat shit on Twitter is also a part time Disney princess.



Tove Jansson

I've always been fascinated by world building. Stan Lee and Tolkien play an important part in my general geekdom, but Jansson is my personal favourite. Looking at the detailed map of Moominland in the first pages of every Moomin book sparked my interest in fantasy, which has only grown stronger. Favourite work: 'Comet in Moominland.' It's a children's book about the end of the world. Probably had a huge part in me writing my own apocalyptic graphic novel series, 'Endir.'

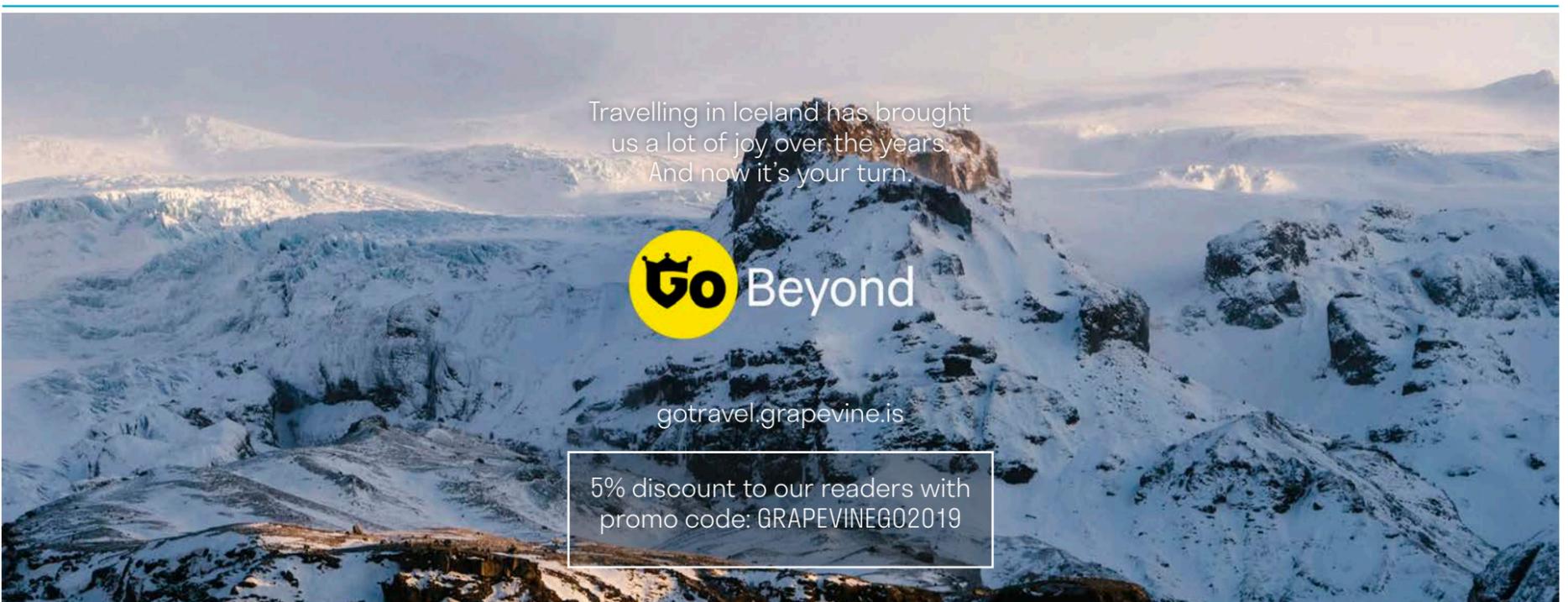


Johnny Ryan

I had already started doing my overly sick cartoons when I discovered Johnny Ryan's overly sick cartoons. He has been my immoral compass since then. If Johnny can do it, I can do it. Having said that, he does delve into territories even I wouldn't dare to enter. The only time I'm offended by Ryan's work is when I don't find it offensive enough. Favourite work: 'The Prison Pit' series. It's a black metal space opera where every character is the scum of the universe.

Tvíhöfði

I started listening to Jón Gnarr and Sigurjón Kjartansson when they had a radio show called Heimsendir ("World's End") in the early '90s. Later they became Tvíhöfði, the most popular comedy radio duo in Iceland. After repeatedly winning their movie trivia game they hired me as a film critic and then later as an animator for their TV show. I learned a lot from being in their presence. They are my comedy parents. Jón is the mom. Favorite work: Whenever they're on the radio. That's my favourite.



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ISK.

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Every day from
17:00 to 19:00.
Beer 800 ISK,
Wine 800 ISK.

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

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BRUGGHÚS**
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Wine 1,050 ISK.

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Beer 700 ISK.

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

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

GEIRI SMART
Every day from
16:00 to 18:00.
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Wine 600 ISK,
Cocktails 1,200
ISK.

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Wine 700 ISK.

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750 ISK.

KAFFIBRENNSLAN
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Wine 750 ISK.

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Wine 800 ISK.

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Wine 750 ISK.

KEX HOSTEL
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Shots 600 ISK.

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Beer 750 ISK,
Wine 750 ISK.

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18:00 to 21:00.
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Wine 800 ISK,
Shots 500 ISK,
Cocktails 1,500
ISK.

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Cocktails 1,500
ISK

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Beer 500 ISK,
Wine 800 ISK,
Cocktails 1,000
ISK.

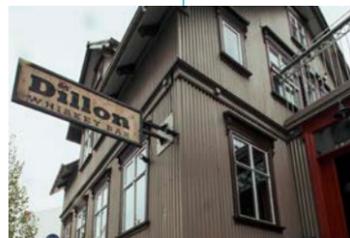
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Every day from
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Beer 645 ISK,
Wine 745 ISK.

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Every day from
16:00 to 18:00.
Beer 600 ISK,
Wine 700 ISK,
Cocktails 1,500
ISK.

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Every day from
12:00 to 19:35.
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Wine 800 ISK.

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Avocado fries -
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Lobster sushi,
ribs & more -
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**1,500 ISK
And Under**

**Hamborgara-
búlla Tómasar**
Tuesdays-All day
Burger, french
fries & soda -
1,390 ISK

Gló
Every day-All day
Bowl of the
month - 1,290 ISK
Vegan option

Shalimar
Monday - Friday
12:00 - 14:30
Curry - 1,290 ISK
Vegan option

Sæta svinið
Every day 15-18
Chicken wings -
1,190 ISK
"Dirty" fries -
1,390 ISK

Solon
Monday - Friday
11:00 - 14:30
Ceasar salad -
1,490 ISK

Lemon
Every day
16:00 - 21:00
2f1 Juice +
sandwich
1,095 ISK
Vegan option

**Uppsalir - Bar
and cafe**
Every day 11-14
Burger & fries -
1,390 ISK
Vegan option

**2,000 ISK
And Under**

Essensia
Every day-All day
Lunch-catch of
the day - 1,980 ISK

**Bryggjan
Brugghús**
Monday - Friday
11:30 - 15:00
Dish of the day
soup & bread -
1,690 ISK

Solon
Monday - Friday
11:00 - 14:30
Fish of the day -
1,990 ISK

Matarkjallarinn
Monday - Friday
11:30 - 15:00
Fisherman's fish
soup -1,990 ISK

**5,000 ISK
And Under**

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11:30 - 16:00
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lunch -3,390 ISK
Three course
lunch - 4,390 ISK

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Hakan Günday

Sensibility Is A Muscle

Turkish author Hakan Günday brings his love of language to the Reykjavík International Literary Festival

Words: Björn Halldórsson Photo: Selen Ozer Günday

International Reykjavik Literary festival

Hakan Günday will be one of the authors taking part in the International Reykjavik Literary Festival that takes place between the 24th to the 27th of April 2019.

With his eighth novel, 'More,' published by Arcade, Hakan Günday entered the relatively small group of contemporary Turkish authors whose work is available in English translation. His standing in that group was cemented when an earlier work, 'The Few,' was published in translation last fall. Günday is one of the many international authors who will be attending the Reykjavík International Literary festival this April. A sustainable state of evil 'More' is narrated by a boy named Gaza, who from childhood takes part in his family's bloody business of human trafficking. The novel offers a dark and poignant look

at the ongoing refugee crisis and is filled with disturbing scenes of violence and callousness. "I'm more concerned with how people get used to violence than I am with violence itself," Günday explains. "I find that far more dangerous and horrifying. My characters are lost in a vicious cycle, living with permanent violence yet unaware of their situation. They're living in a sustainable state of evil."

For the love of words

Despite its violent imagery, Günday's writing is also filled with evidence of his love language. The names of his books and characters often contain elaborate word games that may sadly become lost in translation. "My favourite book is the Turkish dictionary," Günday says. "It contains thousands of words that are waiting for their stories to be told. In Turkey, and everywhere else where

"My characters are lost in a vicious cycle; living with permanent violence yet unaware of their situation"

populism reigns, words are the first things that the authorities target. The first act of an authoritarian regime is to write its own dictionary, changing the meaning of words in order to control our communication. I want to do my best to remind my readers of the true meaning of words."

Fighting man's natural tendencies

Perhaps due to Turkey's centuries old poetic traditions, the novel form was a relative latecomer in Turkish literature. Early novelists were influenced by translations of Russian and European literature—Günday himself lists French novelist Louis-Ferdinand Celine's 'Journey to the End of the Night' as an early inspiration. "That book showed me how man has a natural tendency to become merciless and dumb," he reminisces. "You have to accept that first if you want to change your nature." He also mentions the influence of Turkish writer Oğuz Atay, a pioneer of the Turkish novel form who wrote several complex psychological novels in the 1970s.

Forcing yourself to stay awake

Looking back, Günday says he can see a common thread in these early inspirations: "These writers were trying to tell us that sensibility is a muscle. If you train that muscle then you might be able to stay awake. Otherwise you allow society and the authorities to put you to sleep. If they put you to sleep, your dreams will never be your own. You will be left with the dreams of those that put you to sleep."



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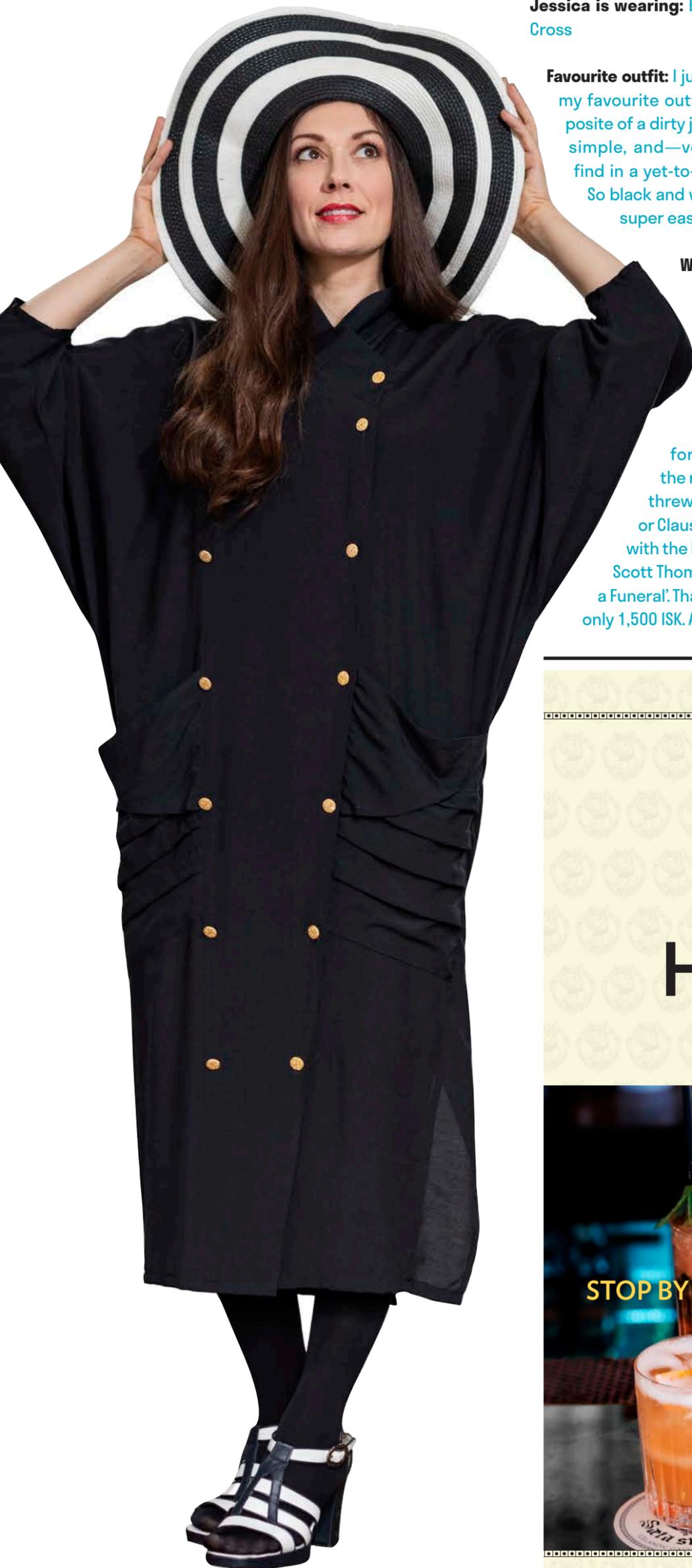
Open daily

Words: Hannah Jane Cohen & Jessica Bowe
Photo: Art Bicnick

FANCIES is where we talk to Reykjavik's most fashion-forward figures about style

Jessica Bowe

Jessica Bowe (40) is a copywriter and woman about town known for her 'StrætóGlam' style.



Jessica is wearing: Everything from the Red Cross

Favourite outfit: I just moved a week ago, so my favourite outfit today is the total opposite of a dirty jogging outfit, refined yet simple, and—very important—easy to find in a yet-to-be organised wardrobe. So black and white it is. Plus, this hat is super easy to locate in a mess.

What makes it special? Every part of this ensemble, excluding undergarments of course, is from the local Red Cross shops. This dress cost less than a cocktail, yet it's so right for drinking a cocktail. On the rack at the store, it sort of threw off 80s art gallery owner or Claus Noemi vibes. Then paired with the hat, it morphs into Kristen Scott Thomas in 'Four Weddings and a Funeral'. That's a lot of references for only 1,500 ISK. And it has pockets!

Describe your style in five words: Olsen twins' lost triplet sister. If I can add a few words, the one who did not inherit a TV fortune, which is, I guess, why I'm a bus rider.

Least favourite trend: When I grew up, fanny packs were a thing and I just cannot bring myself to wear those now because it brings back memories of Midwest awkwardness PTSD. Mom jeans and dad shoes too. My parents wore this stuff—and not to be stylish. I can't.

Lusting after: For my 40th birthday party, I had a glitter-fest. If I could move up several income brackets, I'd get one of those insane sequin jumpsuits from Halpern Studio London and go back in time to redo my birthday in that jumpsuit. The little Cher inside me would come out.

StrætóGlam Tips: It's all about attitude. Toughen yourself up with a dead-eyed bitch face. Winter time? The best thing you can do to be glam in wintertime on Strætó is to get ice cleats for your shoes. You can even get special ones for high heels. They work. ♡

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Food

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Here's to not building that wall between 101 and Höfði

Making 110 Great Again

Mathöll Höfða has opened its doors

Words: Shruthi Basappa, John Rogers & A. Rawlings
Photo: Art Bicnick



Flatbakan

FOOD HALL

Visit Mathöll Höfða at Bildshöfði 9, Reykjavík 110. Visit the website at mathollhofda.is.

Reykjavík is a speedy city—the latest measurements show it can accelerate from 0-3 food halls in as many years. The newest kid on the block is Mathöll Höfða, located in a tucked away commercial-industrial area in the Reykjavík 110 postcode—a seeming victory for

suburban couples and families tired of schlepping to 101 for fancy food. The nine stalls serve a wide range of offerings in an airy interior, from the “upper class street food” of the Gastro Truck to the attractive New Nordic cuisine of Hipstur, Indian food from Indican, and East Iceland craft brews from the Beljandi Bar, amongst others. We skipped breakfast, and dropped by one sunny lunchtime to try them out.

“Hipstur’s food is breezy, fresh, herbaceous and moreish.”

With a large oven featuring a wood-fired, gas-assisted flame and a spinning plate, Flatbakan’s pizzas take only two minutes to bake. Alongside traditional pepperoni and so forth, they pride themselves on their array of vegan options—the “Perfect One” combines convincing vegan cheese, spicy tomato sauce, basil, dates, and salted peanuts. The tomato sauce dominates the taste—a running theme—with the dates providing a suitable chewiness for the otherwise soft nosh. For carnivores, the olive-laden spicy meat option with pepper cheese would kill any hang-over dead.



Hipstur

The freshest stand on the block is Hipstur, run by an Icelandic-German couple who previously owned a restaurant in Norway before their recent relocation to Iceland. Their food is breezy, grown-up and fresh. The Swedish-style shrimp sandwiches on lightly toasted brioche are herbaceous and moreish. The vegetarian mushroom bread is touted as their bestseller, with good reason; the toasted sourdough is easy to cut but toothy enough to support the lightly sautéed portobello and chestnut mushrooms, commingling with verdant greens and fresh dill. Hipstur's dishes are tasty, colourful street-food craftsmanship, and worth the trip to Höfði alone. *Our Pick: Mushroom bread & shrimp roll*

Sætir Snúður

Icelanders love pastries and doughnuts, so Sætir Snúður proved an instant hit. Fresh from the oven, we're presented with four warm, gooey flavours, one of which is introduced in charming Icelandic-accented English as having "sexed almonds." While the snúður scent is delectable and each bun scooped to the gods with drools of enticing icing, the first bite sadly unearthed a dry bun. The deep, sticky nutella frosting subsumed the almonds—so, in the end, we couldn't quite tell if they'd been sexed or not. It's early days, but this isn't yet up there with the mouth-watering masterworks of Brauð & Co. or Sandholt.

Culiacan

Reykjavik has a relative dearth of Mexican food, but Culiacan—who also run an outpost on Suðurlandsbraut—has been around since long before the others. In fact, it's no exaggeration to say most Icelanders got their first taste of Tex-Mex food here. Our plates arrive heaped with satisfyingly vast portions, including a stuffed-to-bursting burrito, crisp and cheesy quesadillas and spicy nachos. In true Icelandic-palette style, everything is sauced to high heaven, making it a knife and fork affair. However, the joyous zip,

zest and festive spice of top-notch Mexican cuisine is only hinted at here. Note: our interns happily devoured the tray of leftovers back at the office, pronouncing it their favourite by far.



Indican

Tucked away in the far corner of the food hall is Indican, serving colourful curries and Indian-fusion street food sides. The butter chicken was warming and authentically spiced, and the vegetarian bean and chickpea curry was a highlight—although they seem to be fond of putting kasuri methi garnish on every dish, perhaps to excess. The boneless chicken wings were tasty, and carried some garam masala flavour; the cauliflower version gave the vegetarian among us the opportunity of a lifetime to taste wing-sauce and see what the fuss is about. The verdict? Sticky, messy, and moreish. *Our pick: Butter chicken & vegetable curry*



Gastro Truck

No food hall would be complete without a burger joint. At Mathöll Höfða that's Gastro Truck, the original branch of which is stationed at Grandi Mathöll. One of the more popular stands, their sticky chicken-burger and fries combo is substantial, crispy and delicious, marred only by a slathering of sauce that resulted in the burger disintegrating, and some sloppy bun shrapnel left in the tray. The meat-free version was also a sauce explosion, but the vegan patty made up for it—a tasty and moist-but-firm

revelation that scored top marks. *Our pick: Chicken or vegan burger & fries*



Svangi Mangi

This buffet-style traditional joint promises "no bullshit" Icelandic food. Our plate arrives heaped with bearnaise-laden meat, some pickled cabbage and basic veggies. A small plokkfiskur tart is quite delicious, but the meat proved chewy, and the cabbage sharply pungent and acidic. Looking around the packed hall, however, this meal is clearly popular with locals. Perhaps to locals, we ruminated, this is comfort food "like grandma used to make"—but it seems grandma has her off days. *Our Pick: Plokkfiskur tartlet*



Beljandi Bar

Another harbinger of Iceland's craft beer revolution is the arrival of this lauded East Iceland craft brewery in Reykjavik. Beljandi's beers are already sought after on the taps of discerning craft pubs around the capital, but now you can try their whole range at their very own bar. It opens at 2pm daily—if your visit should happily coincide, skip the basic beers available elsewhere and make a beeline for Beljandi. *Our Pick: Spaði IPA & Beljandi pale ale*

Read an extended review at grapevine.is/food.



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Travel

The Happiest Place In Iceland

Move over Disneyland—Grindavik is here

Words: Sam Daniels Photos: Art Bienick



Distance from Reykjavik:
52 km

How to get there:
Take Route 41 towards the airport then Route 43

Car provided by:
gocarrental.is

It was your typical kind of early spring day in Iceland. The sky was grey, and the windscreen wipers were doing double time as we drove through the snowy, rainy Icelandic countryside. It was shaping up to be a miserable day on the Reykjanes Peninsula.

Our destination was the small town of Grindavik, which, according to a recent Gallup poll run by the Directorate of Health, is home to the happiest people in Iceland, which itself is the fourth happiest country in the world. But there was no way that people would be happy in weather like this, right?

That's when it happened. Just as we passed the Blue Lagoon and headed into town, we seemed to cross an invisible line, and the clouds parted to reveal a dazzling blue sky. The rumours must be true. Move over Disneyland—there's a new "Happiest Place on Earth."

Under the cover

Upon arrival, you would be forgiven for thinking that there's nothing particularly special about Grindavik. The buildings are plain, there are no large shops and the streets are quiet.

As we stepped out of the car, I wondered what could be so special about the place. The air had a salty aroma, likely coming from the harbour—but it was no fresher than other seaside towns. There were, of course, picturesque mountains dominating the horizon—but then, Iceland is a mountainous country.

It quickly became apparent that Grindavik marches to the beat of its own drum. The days unfold at their own pace. People are never late; nor are they early. They arrive precisely when they intend to. However, if you dare to flip past the cover of this book, you'll find more on offer than first impressions suggest.

Be our guest

The first surprise was Hja Höllu ("Chez Halla," roughly translated). This charming little restaurant is owned and run by Halla María Svansdóttir, and serves food that's both incredibly healthy and incredibly delicious.

We asked Halla for her menu recommendations and her eyes lit up as she explained the various options. Before we knew it, our plans for a simple breakfast had turned into an attrac-

tive tasting menu with an open-faced beef sandwich, a homemade burger (my personal favourite), and not one but two varieties of freshly caught oven-baked fish.

This set the tone for the day. Grindavik is the town that welcomes you with open arms, and puts a smile on your face. The meal finished perfectly when a member of staff rushed out after us as we left, brandishing a brown bag full of packed lunch items for the day—a little parting gift from Halla.

Love thy neighbour

With a full stomach, and the snowy drive now a distant memory, we set out to explore the town and try to learn more about what makes it so special. We spoke to some locals and quickly discovered a common theme in the answers that we received—"community."

For most people, what seemed to make living in Grindavik so special was their fellow residents. It's the kind of place where all the residents know each other and genuinely care about each other's wellbeing.

Another running theme was nature, and rightfully so. No matter

which way you look you in Grindavik, there's a stunning view of the nearby mountains, the seemingly endless mossy fields, or the raw power of the sea. Grindavik is the perfect place to get lost in Icelandic nature.

A parting gift

It could have been a placebo effect, or the amazing food, or the welcoming people, but the time we spent in Grindavik had a noticeably positive effect on our mood. We left with quite heavy hearts. However, the town had one more parting gift in store.

As we made one final stop on the way out of town, we were greeted with a quite peculiar sight—a large hole in the ground, with a set of stairs leading down into the darkness. It turned out that we'd stumbled across a lava cave called Dollan—a spacious cavern with walls covered in moss and giant icicles.

It was a perfect way to end the day and a perfect analogy for Grindavik in general. Some places may not seem inspiring at first, but if you take the time to look below the surface, then you might just find something to smile about. ☺



The happiest street in Iceland, maybe



Halla is happy!

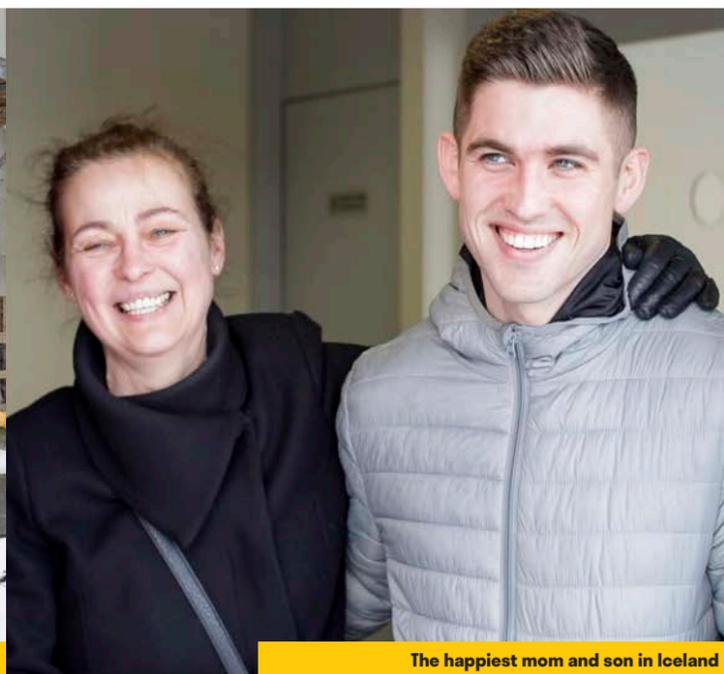


A view the happiest harbour

“Things seem to happen in their own perfectly intended way in Grindavík. People in the town are never late; nor are they early. They arrive precisely when they intend to.”



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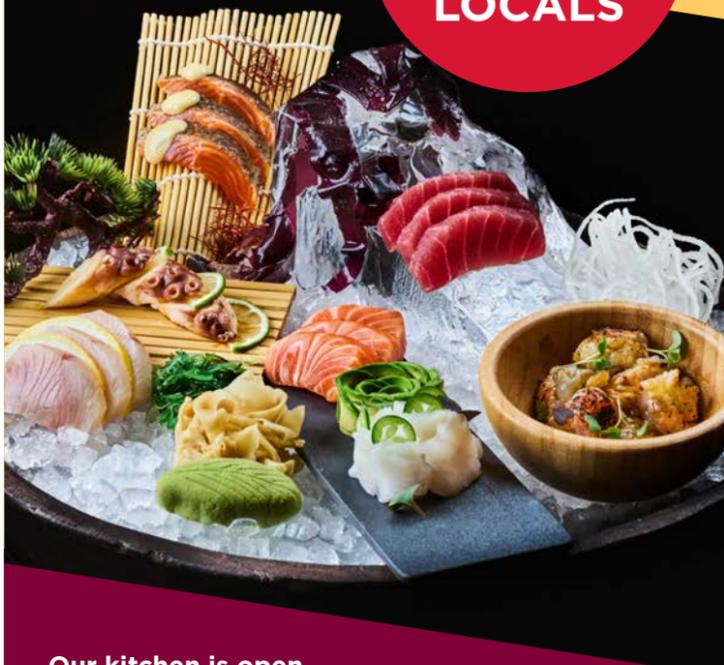
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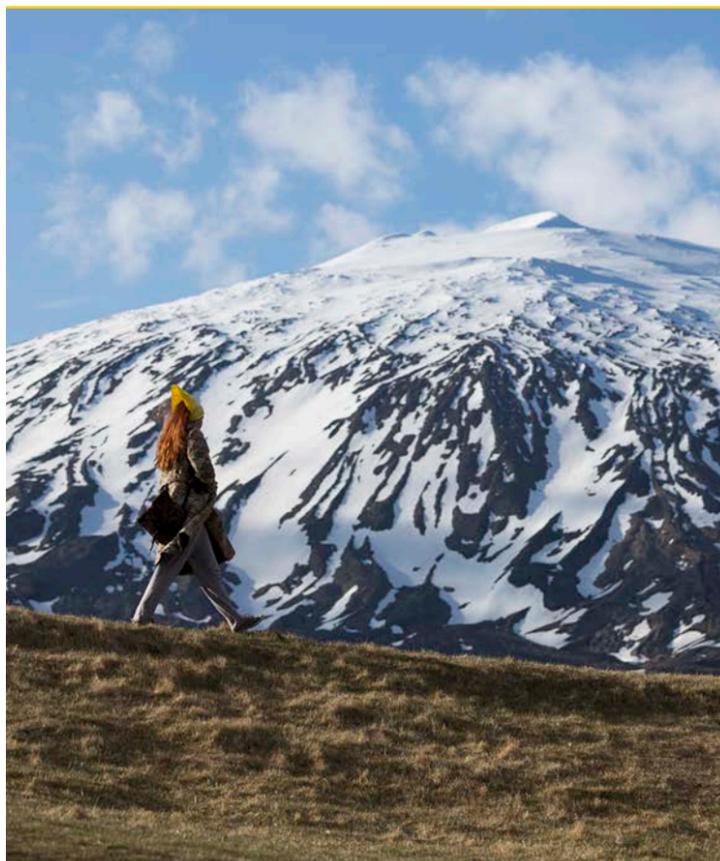
Travel

Distance from Reykjavik: 238 km

How to get there: Route One North, then Route 54 from Borgarnes

Car provided by: goarrental.is

Accommodation provided by: hotelbudir.is



Under the glacier

ROAD TRIP

Snæfellsnes

Words: **John Rogers** Photos: **John Rogers & Art Bicnick**

Just a couple of hours from Reykjavik lies Snæfellsnes—a long volcanic peninsula containing a wide array of wonders, from black beaches to towering waterfalls, lava fields, and the mystical Snæfellsjökull glacier. You can make it there and back in a long day trip, but we'd recommend spending two or three nights in the area to take it all in.

Visit:

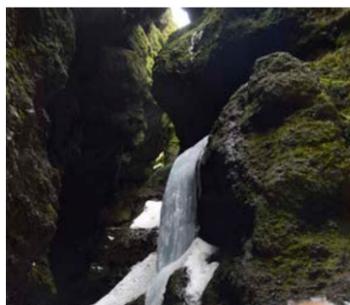
Ölkelduvatn Mineral Spring & Ytri-Tunga



These two different but equally interesting spots are on the peninsula's south coast. At Ytri-Tunga, you can park and walk down to the beach to see—if you're lucky—a seal colony. A few kilometres away is the Ölkelduvatn spring. A humble tap in a patch of farmland, the metallic, slightly sparkling drinking water is said to have health benefits.

Drive:

Rauðgeldsgjá



This narrow, serpentine canyon can be difficult to reach during winter—you'll see footprints leading over a steep snow bank to get there. But once inside, it quickly becomes apparent why people made the effort. Birds wheel high above, nesting in the bulging rock walls of the crevice, which has a stream bubbling down its centre. Just be careful, it's slippery.

Stay:

Hótel Búðir / Freezer Hostel



For those seeking some luxury, Hótel Búðir is a hotel in a nature reserve on the southern coast of the peninsula. Those on a budget can stay on the northern side at the Freezer Hostel in Rif, which also has a theatre and a cosy bar. Freezer also operates apartments in Hellissandur via AirBnB—their popular studio apartments are particularly nice, with big windows looking out over the ocean.

Visit:

Hellnar

There are a few villages dotted around the edge of the peninsula, but Hellnar is possibly the prettiest. Down a dirt track and a steep bank, the rocky, boulder-strewn beach has a huge tidal cavern, where the frothing ocean crashes in, surrounded by stunning rock formations. In summer, there's a picturesque hike along the coast



line to nearby Arnarstapi. Not far away, other notable stops are the Londrangar sea stacks and the eerie, wreckage-strewn Djúpálónssandur.

Eat:

Bjargsteinn



On Grundarfjörður harbour you'll find this wonderful tucked-away eatery. Don't let the humble exterior fool you: inside lies a time capsule of Icelandic history with a view out to Kirkjufell. The restaurant serves ambitious renditions of traditional Icelandic fare—try the seafood soup, served in a mini crockpot, which comes teeming with fresh scallops. The veggie options are good, too.

Tours:

Vatnshellir & Viking Sushi



LanThere are a few adventurous excursions on offer in the area. On the southern edge of Snæfellsnes like the 8,000 year old Vatnshellir lava tube, complete with rock formations, colourful seams, stalagmites and more. Up north in Stykkishólmur, you can embark on a tasty journey with the Viking Sushi boat tour, where fresh scallops and urchins are dredged up and served fresh, right before your eyes.

Swim:

Stykkishólmur Pool

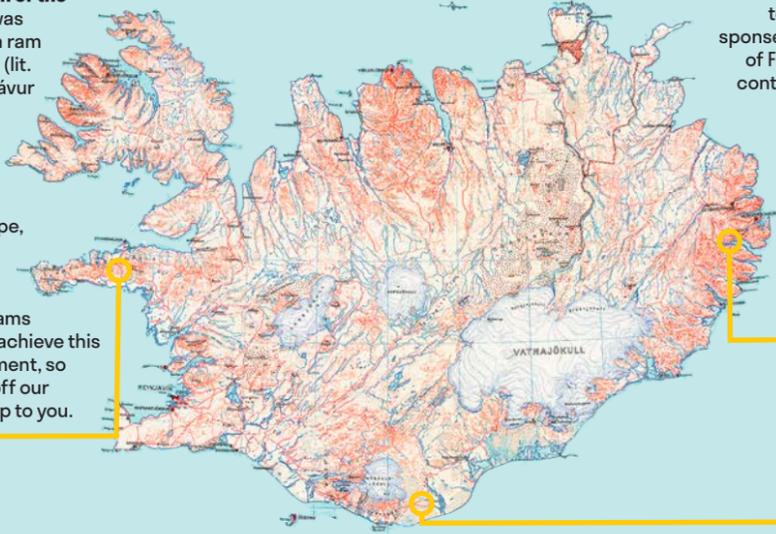


There are a few pools in small towns around Snæfellsnes, but Stykkishólmur pool jumps out from the pack. With the properties of the mineral-rich water displayed proudly on an information board by the hot pots, you can luxuriate knowing the water is doing you good. And who knows, maybe the slide will be open. The nearby Volcano Museum is an unlikely location to see works by Hokusai and Andy Warhol. 🍷

Island Life

Hot news from the cold Icelandic countryside

Words: **Andie Fontaine**



In Snæfellsnes, the coveted **Breeding Ram of the Year Award** was awarded to a ram called Mávur (lit. "seagull"). Mávur was recognised for his strong health, respectable physical shape, and the diligence of his activities. Not all rams can hope to achieve this accomplishment, so Mávur, we doff our collective cap to you.

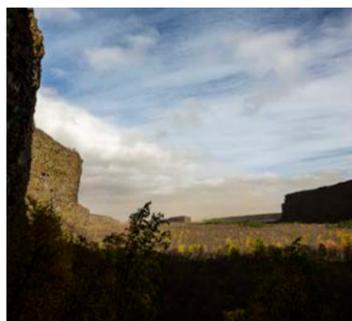
Some residents of the East Iceland town of **Reyðafjörður** have complained that **NATO fighter jets** performing drills in the area have been too loud. In response, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs contends that the flights have always been above the minimum altitude and followed regulations. So that settles that, we suppose.

Seems every top news story out of South Iceland is about speeding, and this occasion is no exception. Police recently stopped **two cars travelling at 163KPH** in Mýrdalssandur. Most likely inspired by any number of car commercials filmed there.



Best Of Iceland

A selection of winners from our Best Of Iceland travel magazine



North: Best Road Trip
The Diamond Circle
Around Mývatn

This 260 km circuit in the north-east of Iceland is a similar concept to the Golden Circle, but with more stops. It includes classic sights like Góðafoss and Dettifoss, as well as the area around Lake Mývatn, the stunning Ásbyrgi canyon and Dimmuborgir. This is not a circuit you can complete in one day. Hike as much as you can and enjoy a classic Icelandic camping experience.



East: Best Café
Salt
Egilsstaðir

Out in the East, seasonal opening times can be patchy and inconvenient, but Egilsstaðir's café-bar Salt has you covered. Whatever the time of year, you can hole up in this spacious and comfortable dining room and tuck into something from the surprisingly massive and diverse menu, which has everything from curries to pizzas to local meat and fish dishes, and more besides.



South: Best Museum
LAVA Centre
Hvolsvöllur

Deceptively light and cheery on the outside, this interactive museum is a brilliantly constructed immersive volcanic experience. Combining rich scientific research, bold industrial design and incredible artistry, its informative and interactive displays provide some truly unique insights into the volcanic history of Iceland. The centre also features a film, a nice gift shop, and a great café.



Hressingarskálinn (Hressó) is a Classical Bistro, located in the heart of the city at Austurstræti 20

Food is served from 10 until 22 every day. On Thursday, Friday and Saturday nights, after the kitchen closes Hressó heats up with **live music**. Weekends, **DJs** keep the party going until morning, with no cover charge

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WELL, YOU ASKED

Double Duvet Dilemmas

Words: Sam Daniels

Why oh why do double duvets exist and how do couples manage to sleep while sharing one? I mean, come on, sufficiently tucking a duvet between your legs and being able to stretch out one leg from underneath EQUALLY ON BOTH sides is a must!

Ok so first of all, I am on your side. Sharing a double duvet with another human being is the WORST! But questioning their existence completely? Clearly, you have never enjoyed turning yourself into a human burrito in the snug warmth of a double duvet!

Is the sea a sentient being?

I reached out to the sea for a comment on this but all I got back was a small wave...

If the earth is flat where the hell is everything?

The Earth IS flat... but you have to remember it is still a disk and everything you know and love is where it always was.

Where is the disk you ask? It sits on the back of four giant elephants. Where are the elephants? They ride on a giant turtle flying through space! What gender is the turtle? Nobody knows.

How do you apply to the BDSM scene? Asking for a friend.

Your "friend" will, of course, need to go to the Þjóðskrá Íslands registry office and complete the relevant application forms. Your whips, chains, and leather suit will arrive in the mail 3-6 months later along with your new BDSM identity card. Alternatively, you could make sure to be seen very publicly reading '50 Shades of Grey' and hope that someone takes you under their wing.

Send your unsolvable (UNTIL NOW) problems to editor@grapevine.is or tweet us at [@rukgrapevine](https://twitter.com/rukgrapevine).

WAR OF THE NERDS

American Career Politician Gets Permabanned From EVE Online

Inside information a bridge too far for developers

Words: Andie Fontaine Photo: Brisc Rubal

Brian Schoeneman, a lawyer and career politician working as a lobbyist in Virginia, U.S., also served on the Council of Stellar Management (CSM), the elected representative body of the EVE Online universe, under the name Brisc Rubal.

That is, until he was permabanned from the game and was unseated from the CSM for, in the developers' words, "sharing confidential information with a member of his alliance that was later used by another alliance member

to conduct illicit in-game transactions."

Treachery and subterfuge are the bread and butter of EVE Online, but the CSM is not like the rest of the game. This closed body operates in direct communication with EVE Online developers, and agree to a binding non-disclosure agreement. Other members of CSM tipped off the developers about Rubal's alleged insider information dealings.

For the record, Schoeneman/Rubal denies all the allegations



Techno-krat doing his thing.

made against him, taking to Reddit (naturally) to air his side of the story. He stated in part, "I will fight these false allegations, restore my reputation and seek all avenues for recourse available to me for these reckless actions."

Kotaku points out that Schoeneman/Rubal has referenced his meatspace political career as a campaign point for why he should serve on the CSM on many occasions. He even made a campaign video that we could describe here in print, but it honestly must be

seen to be believed. Put this paper down now and search for "Elect Brisc Rubal to CSM" on YouTube. We'll wait.

Schoeneman/Rubal is appealing the ban decision. Two other players, who received Rubal's inside information, were given one-year bans for making use of the intel Rubal gave them. However, due to the sensitive and confidential nature of the scandal, players not in the loop may never know what really happened.

CITY SHOT by Art Bicnick



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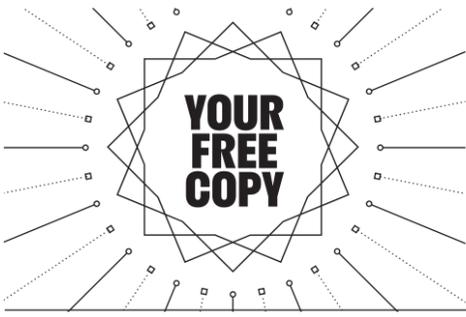
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LAST WORDS

Open Your Window To The Drama

Words: **Gunnar Hrafn Jónsson**
Photo: **Art Bienick**

Living in downtown Reykjavík has its drawbacks. A lot of people who live in the area never get tired of complaining about the noise from drunkards on weekends and the constant shuffling of Airbnb patrons in the early hours, on all days of the week.

I have lived smack dab in the middle of the “problem area” for extended periods but recently moved to a quiet residential neighbourhood. And let me tell you, I miss it. There is something to be said for being in the midst of a whirlpool of life and activity rather than a tranquil offshoot from it. But to be honest, the best thing about living downtown is the microstories.

If you live on the ground floor and keep your window open it transforms your daily existence at home into a series of dramatic and comic vignettes from the lives of strangers. A lot of these tend to be foreign voices, from all over the globe, expressing a variety of sentiments that only leave you wanting more as you catch a sentence or two of context-free conversation.

“I’m pretty sure that’s illegal here, you’re fucking crazy man!” an American male in his twenties blurted into my life as I stood by the kitchen counter one evening. “Chill out, dude!” another voice implored him. And they were gone as suddenly as they arrived.

Another night someone called out in Icelandic: “This cocaine is fucking awesome! Do you think anyone can see us doing it here?” - no, you’re good, just keep shouting about it in the street. And it’s just after midnight on a Tuesday, so, congratulations on those life choices.

But it’s not all about nefarious or illegal activity, a lot of it is just people having heated arguments about love and spilled beer. Often there is crying. You get a lot of lost tourists as well, including an American couple in their fifties who stopped to admire the house I was in and remarked: “In America we consider aluminum siding tacky but here they have it on all the nicest houses! Take a picture of me with this one!” 🇺🇸

DAY TOURS

WE GUIDE IN 10 LANGUAGES

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