A new wave of politically-engaged DIY music culture is sweeping over Reykjavík. Read the story of the Post-dreifing collective on P.19
First

The DIY Society

EDITORIAL

There is something anti-establishment about Post-dreifing, the collective of bands occupying out cover that believe that music is inherently political. These musicians are not making bedroom pop on their computers like so many in the same wave around the world, but playing rock and roll, punk, guitar-driven indie and so forth.

Their DIY attitude perhaps has its roots deep in the punk scene of the eighties, when young people, hating facism and a society that’s not keeping up with the times, picked up instruments, not really knowing what to do. That alone was a revolution: to play without really know- ing how is a lot of them new, though. And who could blame them, they just wanted to scream something at society and tell everyone to go fuck themselves. Punk, in my opinion, is definitely one of the most important music scenes in history; they dragged the wagon forward, literally screaming.

The next DIY moment was perhaps in Seattle in the nineties, when Kurt Cobain found a channel for his root-lessness through an electric guitar. The grunge scene came to the fore and captured the emptiness and the sarcasm of generation X in a powerful way.

But when I think about a movement like the Post-dreifing, I don’t really think about the music. I think about the society they are building around the music. Around their ideas. And perhaps this is the interesting core of the Iceland-ic DIY today. Not everyone is striving to score a deal with a record company and become a rock star. Some just want to experiment with society.

You can find a complex revolution in that idea. Post-dreifing feels like the music industry is capitalist and super-market-style profit oriented, like they told Raykjavik Grapevine in an inter- view last year. They just want to create an alternative space for art in a time where everything seems so scattered, or a product of a huge record label in the US. And they are building a new society along the way.

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LAVA Centre is an award-winning, interactive exhibition on Icelandic volcanoes and earthquakes. Learn about the most active Icelandic volcanoes and see all the latest eruptions in 4K. Lava Centre is a mandatory stop on your Golden Circle or South Coast adventure.

The Grunge Scene

The grunge scene came to the fore and captured the emptiness and the sarcasm of generation X in a powerful way.

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The Slide of A Bird

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Open every day
9:00 - 19:00

LAVA Centre is an award-winning, interactive exhibition on Icelandic volcanoes and earthquakes. Learn about the most active Icelandic volcanoes and see all the latest eruptions in 4K. Lava Centre is a mandatory stop on your Golden Circle or South Coast adventure.
Icelanders will not hunt any whales this summer for the first time in 17 years.

**What Are Icelanders Talking About?**

Whales, sugar and an army base

**NEWS**

Words: Andie Fontaine/Valur Grettisson  Photo: Art Bioniek

The lack of any real market for whale meat has prompted Iceland's whalers to forego the hunt this season, for the first time since 2003. The Icelandic National Broadcast station, RÚV, reports that this applies not only to endangered fin whales, but also to the far more plentiful minke whales.

Gunnar Bergmann Jónsson, a minke whales and the CEO of whaling company IP Útgerð, said that his company would skip whaling to focus on sea cucumbers instead. The company will, however, import minke whale meat from Norway to meet what little demand there is in Iceland for it, and will likely begin hunting minke whales again in the spring of 2020.

After previous attempts led to lukewarm results, the Directorate of Health is taking another stab at a sugar tax, which could be 5% or higher.

There have long been calls for the government to establish a sugar tax. According to a 2013 report from the Directorate of Health, about 22% of adult Icelanders have a BMI of 30 or greater, and 5% of children are overweight. This, among other findings, the Directorate says, leads them to the conclusion that greater measures must be taken to get Icelanders to eat healthier. A higher tax on foods high in sugar—such as candy and soft drinks—has been one proposed way to do that.

"The last time this was tried, the price of soft drinks only went up by about 1 ISK per litre, while at the same time the price of chocolate decreased," assistant director Kjar- tan Hannes Njálsson told reporters. "Now we are proposing a 20% increase, which consumers would actually feel the effects of, while the 5% hike did not in any way go far enough."

According to a declassified 2020 fiscal budget report from the US Department of Defense, the US military plans to spend some $77 million USD on the Keflavík Naval Base. This will include some $18 million USD towards upgrading the airfield’s “dangerous cargo pad,” a paved area for the loading and unloading of explosives and other hazardous cargo, $7 million USD for beddown site prep, referring to launching areas for military aircraft, and the remaining $32 million USD to expand the park- ing apron, the area where military aircraft are parked when not preparing for take-off. A proposal currently on the table with the Parliamentary Budget Committee suggests repurposing some 300 million ISK from the 600 million ISK the Icelandic government originally slated for international aid and direct it instead towards helping the US build up the base.

**Cartoon**

Elin Elísabet

**101 Reykjavík**

**Grapevine.is**

**360 3600**

**101 Reykjavík**

**Hafnarstræti 15,**

** Landsprent ehf. in**

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Krispy Kreme Bids Adieu

Another doughnut chain departs from our fair shores

After barely three years in operation, Krispy Kreme will be leaving Iceland. There are three main locations of the American doughnut chain—Kringlan, Sk efan and Smáralind. The first two locations shuttered their doors on July 1st, but the Smáralind location will remain open until October 1st. The reason for the decision, Viðar Brink, the director of operations for Krispy Kreme, told reporters that the decision weighed heavily upon management. “The vast majority [of our staff] have been with us since we opened in November 2016 and performed fantastically,” he told reporters. “They deserve high praise for their work,” adding that he had seldom encountered such a hard-working team in his career.

The doughnut index

Krispy Kreme announced their arrival to Iceland in July 2016. At that time, Dunkin’ Donuts had been in operation in Iceland for nearly a year. However, the market for doughnuts was apparently overestimated. While both chains enjoyed an initial burst of success, Dunkin’ Donuts was the first to buckle, closing up shop earlier this year. Like Krispy Kreme today, Dunkin’ Donuts also cited high operational costs and little demand as the reasons behind their departure.

No need to worry, though. Icelanders love pastries, and there is still a wide variety of (arguably better) old timey baked goods that you can still buy at countless locations around the country.

A great team

Viðar Brink, the director of operations for Krispy Kreme, told reporters that fish appears commonly in traditional fare. Plokkfiskur is served at the recipe at its essence. Plokkfiskur is about making the most of straightforward ingredients and providing something hearty and nourishing for hard-working people. Simple cooking the dish so that passionate fans of fish and Icelandic politics can have a go at the recipe at home. For those who would rather have their meals made for them, Plokkfiskur is served in a number of restaurants around Reykjavík. Make sure you find somewhere that serves it with traditional, slightly sweet, Icelandic rye bread so you can mop up every last bit.

Knutur H. Einarsson

Food of Iceland

While Iceland has a hard-earned reputation for questionable foodstuffs, there are some things that we unquestionably do well.

Plokkfiskur

Plokkfiskur a comforting fish stew, is one of these dishes. As an island nation, Icelanders have always had access to high quality, fresh seafood; and so it’s unsurprising that fish appears commonly in traditional fare. Plokkfiskur, which literally translates as plucked fish, is made with either cod or haddock, milk, potatoes and onions. More modern versions of the recipe may include the addition of curry powder, chives or a bechamel sauce on top but, at its essence, Plokkfiskur is about making the most of straightforward ingredients and providing something hearty and nourishing for hard-working people. Simple and satisfying, many would argue that Plokkfiskur is the best way to enjoy the catch of the day.

Individuals who fall into this category include current President, Sigmundur Th. Jökul- nessson. Sigmundur, like every good Icelander boy, obviously claims his mother’s recipe is the best. But never fear, you too can try this president’s favourite food—his wife has filmed his mother-in-law with her famous cooking the dish. So that passionate fans of fish and Icelandic politics can have a go at the recipe at home.

For those who would rather have their meals made for them, Plokkfiskur is served in a number of restaurants around Reykjavík. Make sure you find somewhere that serves it with traditional, slightly sweet, Icelandic rye bread so you can mop up every last bit.

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Uprise-Down Rakes And White Sheep

A sampling of Icelandic weather superstitions

It’s long been established that if there’s one sure-fire way to start a conversation in Iceland, all you need do is say “how about this weather?” The weather is seriously important in this country, so it’s unsurprising that there are so many superstitions about it. Some are of foreign origin, some are homegrown, but they all have much a part of the Icelandic pantheon of superstitions.

What dreams may come

The main concern of almost all of these superstitions is foul weather, both how to predict it and how to avoid it. As on so many other occasions, dreams are used in this case for divination.

For example, if you dream of white sheep, snow can be expected to come soon. In another superstition, most common amongst fishermen, there is the occasion of being visited by the dead in one’s dream. A passed-on relative might warn you of an upcoming storm or, less precisely, if the departed is angry or otherwise agitated, stormy weather is then definitely on its way and it would be a bad idea to go to sea.

Mind your rake

While science has yet to devise a way to dependably and accurately control the weather (unless you count cloud seeding, which really just hastens the inevitable), superstitions have long imbued people with the power to drastically alter the weather in the most innocuous ways.

One of the most common and persistent weather superstitions of this nature involves the common rake. It is inadvisable to leave a rake in the yard with the prongs pointed skywards, and not just because you could induce some Sideshow Bob hilarity—you could also literally make it rain. Which is pretty rude in a country that already gets its fair share.

Upside-Down Rakes And White Sheep

Words:
A sampling of Icelandic weather superstitions

Andie Fontaine

Photo:
Art Bicnick

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MEMBER OF ICEWHALE – THE ICELANDIC WHALE WATCHING ASSOCIATION
It’s the summer fallow season, when cottongrass blows through the air, and the only sound anyone wants to hear is ice falling into a glass, and Iceland’s brave smitters take some time off from humiliating England, saving penalties from Messi, and repelling mobs of angry Turks. However, there’s still plenty of news to report, from weddings, to transfers, injuries, and online travails. Here’s your latest roundup of the goings on in Camp Smite.

The invasion of Italy

If you follow Iceland’s footballing internationals on Instagram, you’ll have noticed that Gylfi Sigurdsson got married this June when your entire feed was overtaken with shiny-faced, gel-coiffed, orange-tanned smitters in beach-sneakers and blazers.

Taking a break from his trade-mark darting runs, fiery inswinging shots, laser-guided free kicks and skied penalties, Gylfi “the twinkle toed maister” and the rambunctious holingy horde romped over to Lake Como for the ceremony. Gylfi was duly wed to model Aléna Ivarsdottr in a ceremony that unnamed insiders called “an Ásatrú extravaganza,” including horns of mead and invocations of Freyja and Frigg under a streaming man-made waterfall pouring the tears of Gylfi’s smaught enemies over the assembled throng, who partied like it was 1999. Also unconfirmed were rumors of height-ened security at local museums and vaults; indeed, the presence of so many plunder-curious Vikings in one place is enough to send a shiver down the spine of any sensible Italian noble. Afterwards, Gylfi and Alexandra set sail for the Maldives, Singapore and Bali on their honeymoon, and the horse snark away on the longship under cover of darkness, vanishing creepily from whence they came.

Rúrik’s Insta-million

In other football romance news, Rúrik Gíslason is no longer a member of the Instagram millionaire club. “Sexy” Rúrik went viral during Iceland’s ill-fated inaugural World Cup run, despite playing for just a few minutes. His flowing locks and caggy features managed to captivate a large online audience, who immediately started stalking him on Instagram, sending his follower count rapidly up through the hundreds of thousands to the magic million mark. It turned out most of this new army of fans were women from South America, putting Rúrik in the unlikely position of being an influencer of young Peruvian ladies. It also led to some lucrative modelling contracts that have, by all accounts, far outpaced Rúrik’s income as a sportsman.

However, Rúrik recently made the faux-pas of revealing himself to be a human person. He stride boldly forth with his beautiful belle and conquer the world at the aforementioned wedding, prompting an immediate drop of over 8,000 followers, who presum-ably went into mourning, beating their pillows and crying rivers of mascara like windows in a floodwave. Will they forgive Sexy Rúrik? Or will he stride boldly forth with his beautiful belle and conquer the world regardless? Tune in next issue to find out.

Holiday boot camp

No sooner is one season over, than another begins. After the festivi-ties of Gýfystokk and some holi-days back in the motherland—the smitters have been reporting for pre-season training at their clubs. Some are staying put. Jóhann “The Berg” Guðmundsson posted a classic tourist pic of himself at the Seljalandsfoss waterfall before getting back to the business of improving on his injury-smitten 2018/19 campaign as he rejoins Premier League stragglers Burnley. Alfred “The Arctic Fox in the Box” Finnbogason is recovering from a tendon injury and hoping to cement his rightful place as Augsburg’s top striker. Aron Gunnarsson, as previ-ously reported, is heading from Cardiff to Qatar for Al Arabi; and star player Gylfi will remain at Everton.

Others are moving to new battle-fields. Arí Skúlason has signed a two-year contract at KV Oostende, where he’ll play as an attacking left-back. Things are less sure for Birkiur “Horror Hoes” Hjartarson, who was pictured comring on his kit on a horse-riding trip in Akureyri recently. After a torrid period of bench-warming at newly promoted Aston Villa, he could be seeking to re-establish himself as a first team regular—although rumours abound about his future. All will be revealed in due course.

Follow our live tweets on Euro qualification matchdays on Twitter at @rvkgrapevine. Iceland’s indomitable and unstoppable march to the Euro 2020 trophy will continue throughout 2019, as Alex, Gýfi, Johanna 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.
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BLUE LAGOON
ICELAND
Reykjavík city councilperson and municipal chair of the Centre Party Vigdís Hauksdóttir has been accused of bullying her Chief of Staff, Helga Björg Ragnarsdóttir, after the latter was herself accused of bullying a staff member, who subsequently sued the city last year.

Helga Björg’s complaint revolved around Vigdís’s behavior in a public discussion where the councillor repeatedly misstated her staffer had bullied a former employee. This has led to an official complaint to the anti-bullying team, who have required that Vigdís participate in a formal procedure in investigating Helga Björg’s allegations. This is the first time an official has tried to force an elected official into this kind of investigation. But unsurprisingly, Vigdís has refused to participate, stating that there are no legal grounds for it. And she has a point.

“This is the city hall inquisition,” she wrote on her Facebook page, adding that Helga Björg could go to court if she wants to settle the issue.

City Councillor Accused Of Bullying: “This Is War”
Controversial councillor Vigdís Hauksdóttir faces accusations of bullying

Words: Valur Grettisson Photos: Art Bioniek

The city—and therefore the taxpayers—fronted the bill for the subsequent trial surrounding the reprimand, which amounted to over one million ISK. The trial’s condemnation of Helga Björg was unusually harsh. The documents stated that the chief of staff’s conduct was condescending and that she treated her staff member like an “... animal in a circus that should stand and sit as she pleased.” But it was clear that she did not bully the staff member—only that the reprimand was unlawful.

A culture of bullying
In consequence, the Centre Party and members of the Independence Party officially complained at a City board meeting that they had serious concerns about the behaviour described in the verdict of the district court. They claimed that it was thus necessary to evaluate Helga Björg’s future within City Hall.

The People’s Party and the Socialist Party subsequently lodged a complaint that there was actually an overwhelming culture of bullying allowed in the workplace. Vigdís, in particular, repeatedly highlighted this belief in public discussions.

The Chief Administrative Officer of City Hall, Stefán Eiríksson, disputed these claims. The court’s verdict was not about bullying, he emphasised, but was actually about administrative actions and the legality of them. Though this
was correct, the person that the case involved—a.k.a. the guy that Helga Björg had reprimanded—said repeatedly in his statements for the court that she had bullied him.

In an unprecedented move, Helga Björg responded to these allegations in an open letter on the City’s webpage, demand—
ing that the presidium look into these matters and establish an investigative committee to explore whether or not she had been a bully. She also said that the misstatements of various councillors were serious and hurtful.

I am no circus animal!

There wasn’t much subsequent news about the case until a few weeks ago when Helga Björg’s attorney served Vigdís a 100-page statement accusing the Centre Party leader of bullying. Vigdís was far from humble about the statement and took to Facebook to vent, writing, “Congratulations, the inquisition of the City Hall has begun. I am an elected official and work in the mandate of my voters. Someone is obsessed here. I am no circus animal.”

Later, Vigdís said in an interview at RUV that she met this woman, Helga Björg, at three meetings in total. “The fact that she is accusing me of bullying her is obviously absolutely insane,” she said.

Vigdís then added that her only crime was that of defending the staff member who was reprimanded. “And that is part of my duty,” she added. Vigdís also said that she refused completely to comply with the anti-bullying committee. “There is no legal ground for this. If these people want to talk to me, I suggest the courtroom.”

What if she says no?

It’s not clear what’s going to happen next. Kolbrún Baldersdóttir, a council member for the Centre Party, and a psychiatrist that used to specialise in bullying, said that there was no way to force Vigdís into the investigation.

In an interview with radio station Bylgjan, she said, “You can’t reprimand or fire an elected official. Besides it’s not possible to force people to participate in an investigation like this if they don’t want to participate in it. So if one thinks that the individual has done something wrong, the only way is the courtroom.”

This is war

Vigdís’s reactions have been harsh and she’s now on a warpath. Her latest addition to the argument was on Facebook, where she asked, “How much will this circus cost the taxpayers?” She repeated that it was impossible for her to bully a woman that she had barely met. She then added: “This is a war of officials against an electorate. If they have something to say, they can go to court.”

She then said that she is seriously considering a libel case but didn’t disclose against who or for what exactly. It seems the odd dispute of bullying in City Hall is far from over, and might have just begun.

“Amazing experience 10/10, would book again!”

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In an interview with radio station Bylgjan, she said, “You can’t reprimand or fire an elected official. Besides it’s not possible to force people to participate in an investigation like this if they don’t want to participate in it. So if one thinks that the individual has done something wrong, the only way is the courtroom.”

This is war

Vigdís’s reactions have been harsh and she’s now on a warpath. Her latest addition to the argument was on Facebook, where she asked, “How much will this circus cost the taxpayers?” She repeated that it was impossible for her to bully a woman that she had barely met. She then added: “This is a war of officials against an electorate. If they have something to say, they can go to court.”

She then said that she is seriously considering a libel case but didn’t disclose against who or for what exactly. It seems the odd dispute of bullying in City Hall is far from over, and might have just begun.

“How much will this circus cost the taxpayers?“
Songs Of The Dammed: Reprise

A community grapples with the meaning of “progress”

Words: Andie Fontaine
Photos: Art Bionick

A struggling community

Dammed: Reprise
Andie Fontaine
Art Bicnick
Photos:
Words:

One of the many beautiful falls which may disappear

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Árneshreppur (pop. 53), a village on the northern shore of the Westfjords, has for the past year now been a flashpoint for some of the bigger questions to eclipse the countryside, and democracy, how urbanisation continues to eclipse the countryside, and balancing industrial progress with the preservation of the nation’s unique and unspoiled wilderness.

Hvalárvíkurjón, a project involving multiple dams being constructed on the Hvalá river, is either a blessing that will bring power, infrastructure and jobs to this struggling community, or a needless money sink that would benefit a foreign company but do nothing to save Árneshreppur. It depends on who you ask.

When the Grapevine visited this community last year, opinions were sharply divided. Over the past month, however, opposition to the project has been growing, and has even manifested itself in the form of direct action.

The show must go on

Construction of the project falls mostly upon the shoulders of VesturVerk, a contracting company owned by the power company HS Orka and the investment company Glöma (HS Orka, in turn, is majority controlled by Magma Energy Sweden A.B.). As Hvalárvíkurjón’s fruition depends on VesturVerk, the company has been a local point of contentment.

One of the most contentious subjects surrounding the project is the question of what the landowners where the construction is to take place have to say. In point of fact, the majority of landowners in Drangavík, where the bulk of the development has been slated, filed an appeal to the Ministry of the Environment to halt construction. Snæbjörn Gudmundsson, a spokesperson for these landowners, told RÚV that their ownership of the land can be traced back to 1895, and that they will never allow VesturVerk to go ahead with construction. This would seem to scuttle any plans for development but, as history often teaches us, it is monumentally difficult to halt development once a company has set their sights on completing a project. True to form, it was then unsurprising when RÚV later reported that VesturVerk had opted to go ahead with construction anyway.

Country roads

While many international readers associate protest in Iceland with Reykjavík in particular, there is in fact a long history of direct action in rural Iceland as well, from the mysterious dynamiting of a small dam on the Laxá river in 1970 to local resistance to the Kárahnjúkar dam project in the early 21st century. Continuing this sacred tradition is Elias Svarar Kristinsson. This man, who lives in Árneshreppur, believes that Hvalárvíkurjón will destroy the natural beauty of the region, and so when he learned that VesturVerk was ignoring due process and moving forward with construction, he took matters into his own hands.

Part of this involved physically putting himself between construction equipment and the area where the backhoes and bulldozers want to go. He had a surprisingly courteous exchange with a backhoe driver, who eventually did stand down, with Elias telling Stundin, “He took this with an incredible amount of calm. He said: ‘I don’t intend to work tonight, so I’m stopping and maybe it’s best that I stop. He was a polite guy, but I was maybe more wound up.’”

What do the people want?

When a development project of this scale is pitched as something that will benefit the community, it stands to reason that what the people actually want should matter. However, who counts as “the people” can be an entirely different story.

A Gallup poll from last May showed that 40.9% of respondents favoured the project, while 31.4% were against it. However, this was a national poll, with many (if not most) of these opinions coming from people who do not even live in Árneshreppur.

As mentioned above, the majority of local landowners are against the project. In addition, in late June representatives of the Icelandic Environment Association submitted a petition of over 5,400 signatures to the Ministry of the Environment, calling upon the institution to expedite the declaration of the Drangajökull glacier region, where the construction is slated to take place, as a protected area.

What good will it do?

The benefits of the project are difficult to calculate definitively, but the National Planning Agency did weigh in on the subject.

By their estimation, Hvalárvíkurjón would increase revenue for the region. Beyond that, the agency painted a fairly grim picture. They determined that the project would have a negative impact on the environment, an uncertain effect on plant and sea life, create zero jobs, and have a negative effect on tourism.

We must bear in mind that there is considerable support for the project in Árneshreppur. Some of these locals regard opposition to being the work of outsiders imposing their romanticised view of the countryside onto the people who have to live there; people who desperately need a stable source of power to keep the community alive.

That said, the regional will of the people of Árneshreppur is anything but unanimous, and as it stands now, whether the project will continue to go forward is in the hands of national institutions.
At Soulflow Comedy, a new show happening every Monday night at Gaukurinn, everyone is included. The weekly event, which will showcase exclusively women and queer performers, is causing a shockwave in the Reykjavík comedy scene. “Comedy can feel really intimidating,” says Kimi Tayler, one of the organisers. “What we all want is a space where people can feel like they’ll be supported.”

The core of our souls

“Soulflow came from our hearts, deep from the core of our souls,” says Krúz Estée, another one of the organisers, lounging on a couch at the venue. Katrín Björk, the third organiser, nods. “We’re always trying to encourage more women and queer people to be a part of the comedy scene here,” she chimes in. “And when Gaukurinn, which is a really friendly and progressive place, approached us, it seemed like a good platform.”

It may seem surprising that nothing like this has ever been done before in Reykjavík, but Kimi emphasises that, in many ways, the comedy scene here is not as diverse as you’d expect it to be. “I came here five years ago after doing comedy in London and, when I was starting out I was shocked at how limited it was,” she says. “I met comedian Jono Duffy, and he was presenting himself as the only gay comedian in Iceland. I couldn’t believe that was the case, but it really was. That’s partly because Iceland’s comedy scene is so young of course—it’s moving at a pace, but there’s still a way to go.”

New talent, safe spaces

Apart from providing a welcoming space for women and queer comedians, Soulflow also aims to help amateur comedians get onstage. “It can be a bit intimidating to get into comedy here,” explains Katrín. “There are a lot of comedy shows where everyone’s been doing it for a very long time and there’s not much visibility for people trying it out for the first time, so as an audience member you start to think it’s impossible. It’s going to be one of our main aims to help a lot of people to try it out.”

Their first show, which takes place on July 15th, will certainly provide plenty of opportunities for new comedians. In the first half, there will be improv games where the stage will open up to anyone in the audience who desires to show their stuff. Seasoned comedians will be on hand to answer any questions or concerns from the newbies. “When you’re starting out, you want a safe space,” says Kimi. “If we can create something like that, it would be really special, and it’s what we would have wanted when we were starting out.”

A diverse form

In the long term, the group is interested in moving beyond the traditional stand-up comedy you’ll usually find in Reykjavík. “Comedy is such a diverse form,” explains Kimi. “But it can sometimes get stuck as just being stand-up comedy. We’ve got an opportunity here to really diversify and bring in many more kinds of comedy, such as musical comedy, or character or sketch comedy.”

This diversity is reflected in the very make-up of the group. “I’m a weird one! I haven’t ever done stand-up,” laughs Krúz. “However, I do something called freestyle rap and do rap battles and a lot of quick-witted bullshit. This is a passion project for me in a way, because I love this place and love the concept so much.”

Every kind of response

The comedy scene in Reykjavík is still small and with Soulflow now taking the prime Monday night slot at Gaukurinn, there’s still a question of whether or not they could get some less than positive responses. Katrín laughs when asked about this. “I hope we get every kind of response!” she says. “We want to open up a lot more doors and windows,” says Krúz reflectively. “It’s Reykjavík in 2019, and there are still no women or queer shows, and considering there is comedy available every evening here, it’s about time there was some visibility for us.”

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22nd/ 23rd June  Björn Steinar Sólbergsson, organist at Hallgrímskirkja, Reykjavik
29th/ 30th June  Mattias Wager, organist at Stockholm Cathedral, Sweden
6th/ 7th July  Johannes Skoog, concert organist, Sweden
13th/ 14th July  Johannes Zeiner, Austria, 1st prize winner at the Chartres International Organ Competition 2018
20th/ 21st July  Yves Rechtsteiner, concert organist, France
27th/ 28th July  Isabelle Demers, Canadian concert organist and organ professor, USA
3rd/ 4th August  Lára Brynildis Eggertsdóttir, organist at Hjallakirkja Kópavogur, Iceland
10th/ 11th August  Susannah Carlsson, organist at Lund Cathedral, Sweden
17th/ 18th August  Johannes Geffert, concert organist from Bonn, Germany
25th August  Mattias Wager, organist at Stockholm Cathedral, Sweden

LUNCHTIME CONCERTS WITH ICELANDIC ORGANISTS - THURSDAYS AT 12 NOON

27th June  Tudi Ráhni, organist at Ísafjörður Church
4th July  Guðmundur Sigurðsson, organist at Hafrnarfjörður Church
11th July  Eyþór Örbergson, organist at Blönduós Church
18th July  Jon Bjarnason, organist at Skálholt Cathedral with Vilhjálmur Ingólfsson and Ólafur Jóhann Sigurðsson, trumpets.
25th July  Ágúst Ólafsson, organist at Reykjavik, with 3 baritone singers: 冲本仁, 玄井逸, 和 松本英树.
1st August  Steinar Logi Helgason, organist at Hafnarfjörður Church
8th August  Guðný Einarsdóttir, organist at Hafnarfjörður Church
15th August  Kitty Kovacs, organist at Landakirkja, Westman Islands
22nd August  Eyþór Ólafsson, organist at Akureyri Church

LUNCHTIME CONCERTS WEDNESDAYS AT 12 NOON WITH SCHOLA CANTORUM
PRIZE WINNING CHAMBER CHOIR OF HALLGRÍMSKIRKJA

Schola Cantorum chamber choir of Hallgrimskirkja is celebrating its 11th season of the popular Wednesdays Lunchtime Summer Concert this summer. The choir sings various beautiful music from their repertoire, both Icelandic choral pearls as well as famous choral works by Byrd, Bruchner, Mendelssohn and more, occasionally accompanied by the great Klais organ. Conductor is Hörður Áskelsson, Music Director of Hallgrimskirkja. Coffee and tea served after the concert.

LUNCHTIME CONCERTS WEDNESDAYS AT 12 NOON WITH SCHOLA CANTORUM
PRIZE WINNING CHAMBER CHOIR OF HALLGRÍMSKIRKJA

Ticket sales at the entrance 1 hr before the concerts and online www.midi.is

Artistic Director: Hörður Áskelsson Music Director of Hallgrimskirkja/
Guest Artistic Director 2019: Mattias Wager, organist at Stockholm Cathedral.
Manager: Inga Rós Ingólfsdóttir
Concert Manager 2019: Sólbjörg Björnsdóttir

LISTVINAFELAG.IS  SCHOLACANTORUM.IS
In a bright sunlit living room lined with antique furniture and tchotchkes, a group of friends are gathered around a large wooden table, pouring coffee and delighting over the theme song to The Price Is Right. More people arrive in a casual open-door-policy manner, making themselves right at home. The seven who are here are but a tiny fraction of the members of Post-dreifing, a sprawling music and art collective that is rallying grassroots, underground artists. Incidentally, they are also igniting a resurgence of indie rock and weird music in the Reykjavík music scene. And they are doing it together.

Post-dreifing is mainly focused on creating a platform for young musicians and artists to support each other and collaborate in terms of creating music, releasing projects and organizing events. They operate as an egalitarian democracy and therefore do not consider any individual to be the founder or leader of the group. Although only a handful of them are here to meet, they make it clear that none of them speak unilaterally for the group.

Started with a bang

Formed in late 2017, Post-dreifing came together after a crazy concert called Lovely Great Time in an old studio space in Grandi. Over ten bands played, including GRÍSA, Korter í Flog, asdfhg., Umer Consumer, and Bagdad Brothers. They each played a ten minute set with
“We’re all young, we’re all idealistic. Whatev-er we do, or whatever the impact, we’re just making friends along the way.”

ramshackle gear, but the impact of the show had a lasting effect on the people involved. “That was the first Post-dreifing show,” says Johannes Bjarki Bjarkason, of the band Sköffin. “Well, it wasn’t really a Post-dreifing show, but it formed out of that.” Shortly thereafter, things started to bubble. Born at a time when the local musical landscape was mainly dominated by hip hop, Post-dreifing was formed by a loose group of friends performing in guitar-based indie bands, minimal electronic artists, and teenage riot grrl punks. However, the collective never aimed to define itself in terms of any specific style, but rather on values of self-sufficiency, anti-capitalism and collaboration. “I don’t think Post-dreifing has an aesthetic,” says Hjúlmur Karlsson, a member of the band Sideproject. “At least not, ‘here’s hip hop and this is what’s popular, let’s focus on this.’ It just started as a group of friends wanting to release music together.”

The common thread that ties them together is a focus on creating and playing music and supporting other people doing the same as opposed to selling or generating profit. You snooze you lose democracy “It has roots in anarchism of evaluating and approving new projects, which is done in general meetings where anyone involved in Post-dreifing in any way shape or form has the opportunity to take part. “It’s not really a decision-making process,” says Aubuhn Orri Sigmundsson, bassist in Milkhouse and Sköffin. “Someone has an idea and we comment on that, and if we’re strongly opposed to it, if it clashes with our core values, of course there’s gonna be a discussion. Maybe we just don’t do it. But that’s never happened before.” “We meet up and then the people who have shown up are part of the decision making,” says Ida Schuffen Juhl, known as IDK IDA. “Everyone always has the opportunity to be part of it, but if you choose not to come then we don’t have to wait for that person to respond.” However, they do try to stay organized and professional, keeping minutes of their meetings and posting them for all members to read and, if necessary, voice opposition to.

Haters back off As for the aforementioned core values, everyone in the collective has their own opinions and views, but they agree on Post-dreifing’s general stance: Don’t Be An Asshole.

“I think the core basic values are anarchist, anti-capitalist, pro-feminist, all of this,” says Aubuhn. “As long as you don’t hate a certain group of people for no reason, I’d say it’s human decency and just basic kindness of being a person. I think that translates really well into the whole group. I think everyone really shares those ideals. We haven’t ever had to say no to someone wanting to take part in Post-dreifing because they don’t have those ideals; we don’t appeal to such people.”

In fact, many members of the Post-dreifing family have been involved in recent movement of peaceful protests against the deportation of refugees from Iceland. A few have been tear-gassed and detained by police in these demonstrations. “Not every individual participates in all of these movements, but I think that at its most basic, Post-dreifing is anti-oppression,” says Johannes. “Whether that be oppression from the state, oppression from markets, or cultural oppression.”

The group is currently working on updating their manifesto to incorporate their ethics and values. “What we have talked a lot about was that we agree that art is inherently political,” says Ida, in regards to the re-drafting of said manifesto. Snæbjörn continues: “I heard a guy in an interview once say, ‘All music is political because it comes from the environment and the environment is political.’”

Build the stage The collective’s goal, though, is primarily artistic. Their purpose is building and sustaining this platform they have created. For many of the emerging artists, this means being given a space to play live where they were unable to before. For others it means reaching out to new audiences and connecting with other communities. “I played my first gigs through a friend group that are the same people who are in Post-dreifing, but it was just a smaller friend group back then,” says Áthi Finnsdóttir, of Sideproject. “I personally never had a gig before Post-dreifing. “The band I was in before was pretty big at the time and we would usually get an audience, but it was always the same audience,” says Jóhannes. “We would never grow into any sort of mainstream. We had a song on the radio for two days but we always stayed really underground. When Post-dreifing started up we hadn’t played a show in a really long time. But because every one of us is in the collective, when we came back on the scene we filled the entirety of Húrra just because of this huge backing.”

The collective are as active as possible in creating live events, despite the shrinking number of venues to play in the city. Over 2018, they held a brief concert series at Bravó called Sma í tanna, where they built the stage by hand out of wood pallets. They credit the DIY basement venue R6013 and its founder, Egír Sindri Bjarnason, as being instrumental to Post-dreifing, as the two started to take off around the same time. Still, one single venue is insufficient.

Soundtrack for beer sales The main problem is, except for R6013 there are no places to play,” says Hjúlmur. “There’s Mýggh, which is really good, but because of how it operates concerts are expensive there. Also, just this connection of alcohol and music. Music just being this thing when people go out to party. You can’t play a concert unless the bar thinks it’s going to get a profit, so you’re just a soundtrack for beer sales.”

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that’s just been used to fund releases and gigs. Another thing is that anyone who releases through Post-dreifing can decide if they just want to donate the money to Post-dreifing. I think some of the bands do that.

This non-profit recycling system has been very effective for them so far and they believe that if they continue this way, it will be sustainable. “If we keep doing it the way we’re doing now and we stick to the same core values, then it’s always going to keep going, no matter what,” says Aubunn. “I think we can go broke, I think we could go into debt, and none of that would matter because we would still be making music. We’re not recording this is fancy studios. We’re doing this on very simple, self-sufficient ways, which means that we’re never gonna have to stop this while we still hold the same core values we do now.”

The need to generate some money in order to fund their endeavours can come into conflict with their values, however. “It’s very difficult being anti-capitalist and advertising it, because we live in a capitalist society, so we have to take part in it of course,” says Aubunn. “We can’t spend money to make music, give everyone the music and then spend money to make music and give everyone the music. Cause we don’t give anyone a salary. No one in Post-dreifing has ever received a dollar for their work. And nobody expects it.”

A poet who has published three books as part of the collective. She has done readings at notable events including the ‘One To Watch’ at the Grapevine Music Awards earlier this year. A new album, ‘Glimmerheimi’, came out recently.

SSýnajón Ólafsdóttir

Every indie label needs a weird Gaiso-core chip-tune, auto-tune-tico pop? Right?

Post-dreifing’s Hátíðni festival takes place July 5-7th in Borðøyri, northwest Iceland. Tickets are 3,000 ISK. For more information about the collective, visit post-dreifing.is
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Ah, Langa. A week of workshops, a weekend of concerts, and people having a lovely time talking about how artists will inherit the earth and capitalism will die. We’re out here for it. With a vibrant and interesting programme, there’s something for everyone—from songwriting classes and workshops on improv to things we sure as hell can’t describe in under 70 words in a box in a magazine.

Over the past 35 years, Eistnaflug has grown from a tiny one-room DIY shin-dig to one of the biggest festivals in Iceland. This year, though, in honour of its 15th anniversary, the Neskaupstaður metal festival is going back to its roots. It’s scaling down, returning to its original venue (the smaller Egilsbúð community centre), and focusing whole-heartedly on showcasing a mix of large international headliners and newer Icelandic acts. While smaller, the horizon for the festival is—in contrast to its music—bright as all hell.

Jónbjörn feels his inspiration comes from all over, and he likes having personal side-projects to keep him inspired. “Sometimes a visit to my hometown (Húsafellur in the Westfjords) or travelling around Iceland really does it for me. Other times it’s my experiences from different clubs in Berlin,” he explains. “Speaking to like-minded people about music and their work also makes me excited about making something interesting myself.”

Having been away from Reykjavík for a few years, Jónbjörn can see exactly how it has grown:“I miss the larger cities. Berlin. The main difference is that most venues in Iceland have a broad audience, so there is no place for dance music only,” he says. “Shout-out to Kaffihúrin and Sónar festival, but I think what Reykjavík needs now is a small, raw and versatile club for all kinds of dance music.”

This year, Jónbjörn has performed in Helsinki, Vienna and Tbilisi. He recently started making dance edits of pop songs—like Páll Óskar’s 1996 euro dance hit ‘Ég Er Bundinn’ available as a free download on Bandcamp. “I’m working on loads of original music and I’ll be uploading very soon,” he says. “Then I’ll play at my favourite club in Berlin, Zur Wilden Renate, on August and before moving back to Reykjavík later that month.”

Lucky 15

Eistnaflug 2019 goes back to basics

Over the past 35 years, Eistnaflug has grown from a tiny one-room DIY shin-dig to one of the biggest festivals in Iceland. This year, though, in honour of its 15th anniversary, the Neskaupstaður metal festival is going back to its roots. It’s scaling down, returning to its original venue (the smaller Egilsbúð community centre), and focusing whole-heartedly on showcasing a mix of large international headliners and newer Icelandic acts. While smaller, the horizon for the festival is—in contrast to its music—bright as all hell.

Small & sweaty

“It’s been fun watching it change,” General Manager Magný Rós Sigurðardóttir says, sitting back in a conference room in the National Library—perhaps an uncharacteristic locale for a metalhead. “When I started going, it was a small festival of Icelandic bands, and having that morph into bands like Re: Hemoto and Messuggah playing in Neskaupstaður, it’s surreal.”

Eistnaflug, it must be said, not only put Neskaupstaður on the map, but it also put Icelandic metal on the international circuit. The festival, the first dedicated metal event in the country, is single-handedly responsible for bringing foreign metal journalists to Iceland and pointing them to up-and-coming acts. Many bands got their start there at the raucous party.

This year, though, it’s quieting down. “We’re going back to basics,” Magný explains. “We’re going back to Egilsbúð for a small and sweaty Eist-naflug.” It was fun to have huge crowds and big bands, Magný emphasises, this iteration will be more personal. “Now nobody can hide away somewhere; you’ll be able to sit in the grass outside the venue and speak to everyone.”

Black metal, viking metal

Magný is particularly excited by the newer Icelandic bands on the roster. She names doom metal mavens Morfolith—who recently won Iceland’s Wacken Metal Battle 2019—as a particular favourite. Another standout are the power metal breakout stars of Paladin. “That’s a new band, but looking at the crowd during the first ever Paladin concert, they were having so much fun,” Magný reminisces. “You had all kinds of metalheads singing along with their fists in the air—the black metal, viking metal, death metal people— I’m looking forward to that.

For more established acts, Magný recommends catching Auðn, Úrfaður and Sleight of Hand.

Though it’s first and foremost a metal festival, that doesn’t mean there aren’t some good ol’ fashion partying. This year, a glitter-festooned version will be championed by none other than the King of Icelandic pop, Páll Öskar. “He’s playing on Saturday night,” Magný exclaims. “Then everyone will be dancing.” She grins. “At least, I will be!“

The audible and visual subsistence of music is undeniable, Jónbjörn Finnbo- gason—also known as Jón and half of house music label Lagaffe Tales— is a creative who works within both worlds as a music producer, DJ, label manager, promoter and designer. He currently works at digital agency Dark Arts of Digital in Berlin, specializing in social media and digital marketing for record labels and musicians. “In my spare time, I do the designs, AMR and label management for Lagaffe Tales, which I started back in 2012 with my good friend Víttur Birgís,” Jónbjörn explains. “I also started working on my solo project again after a three year hiatus around the time I moved to Berlin.”
“Guð er tíl?” Translated, the question becomes, “Does God exist?” It’s a thought many face at one point or another, but not one you’d expect to find hanging on the walls of a church. But stop by Hellnakirkja church in the tiny Snæfellsnes hamlet of Hellnar, and you’ll find that sentence carved in silver on a circular emblem presented starkly on the southern wall of the church. Created by Ragnar Kjartansson—arguably Iceland’s most famous visual artist, who is currently on exhibition at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City—the provocative work is one of the hundreds of pieces you’ll find scattered around the Snæfellsnes peninsula this summer as part of the ‘Nr. 3 Umhverfing’ exhibition.

Starting small, ending big
“We started with a small exhibition in 2017,” co-curator Ragnhildur Stefánsdóttir explains, sitting back in the Breiðablik Community Centre, which is more or less the beginning of the ‘Nr. 3 Umhverfing’ exhibition trail. The Centre is filled with posters—71 in all—representing each of the artists involved. “We thought we’d travel around Iceland with small exhibitions, one every year, and make a small book about it. Everything was small,” she continues, smiling. “We had 14 artists the first year, then we moved to Egilsstaðir the second year and had 37 artists.” They’ve almost doubled that number this year, and transformed what was a small exhibition into a road trip that spans an entire peninsula. Almost every area of Snæfellsnes—from barns to restaurants to swimming pools—contains an exhibition. There are 71 technical centres, usually towns, but each centre contains up to seven individual locations—many of them alternative spaces—for exhibitions that contain more than one artist’s work. It’s a doozy of an undertaking.

Connecting the countryside
Along with presenting a wide range of works in unusual spaces, ‘Nr. 3 Umhverfing’ seeks wholeheartedly to feature artists that have a connection to the area. Currently, every artist featured in this series of exhibitions is tied to Snæfellsnes in some way, whether it’s through residence, ancestry, or even just past work.

“They have roots here,” Ragnhildur explains. “They have been raised here or maybe their ancestors were. In fact, two of the artists’ fathers were priests in Snæfellsnes.”

The only artists featured that are not directly tied to the region are the curators themselves: Ragnhildur, Anna Eyjólfsdóttir, and Þórdís Alda Sigurðardóttir. “But, you know,” she jokes. “I am from the Westfjords, so maybe some of my ancestors are from here.”

All forms present
Another tenet of ‘Nr. 3 Umhverfing’ is variety. “We have people from very different backgrounds, some are unknown and some are world famous,” she says. “And Umhverfing spans all the art forms: paintings, drawings, sculptures, videos, and even sound.”

By sound, she’s referring to Megas’ contribution to the series, which involves radio station FM 105.1 perpetually broadcasting a sound mixture combined with spoken word. “What is so important here is that Megas has his piece in the air,” Ragnhildur enthuses.

A Flood Of Feeling
‘Nr. 3 Umhverfing’ fills the Snæfellsnes countryside with art...
You can listen to it, and you are always experiencing art. The exhibition is in the air. It’s everywhere.

A barn of wonder
Staðarstaður, a tiny village in the south of Snæfellsnes, is one of the closest centres of ‘Nr. 3 Umhverfing’ to Breiðablik. Turning onto a small dirt road, the unassuming town is but a few buildings and a cemetery. In front of the largest structure, a paper sign reads, “Art exhibition.” Inside, a dilapidated barn, complete with a smattering of chickens bumbling away in the corner greets you, but once you climb into a side room, the exhibition ‘Slitvindar’ hits you in full force.

Soundtracked by the delicate notes of a piano, ‘Slitvindar’ is composed of one installation—a glittering shower of white feather-like beings suspended from the ceiling—as well as a series of drawings delicately adorning the battered walls. One displays a red chair, while a work next to it reads, “Þessi stóll var víst blár,” meaning, “This chair was once blue.” The overall effect is heart-stopping. Who could have known that inside this crumbling edifice lies world-class art?

The room, Ragnhildur explains, is a family effort, with the installation created by Jón Sigurpálsson, the drawings by his son, Gunnar Jónsson, and a video installation by his daughter, Rannveig Jónsdóttir. The piano is actually played by his wife too, though she’s uncredited in the exhibition.

Vestiges of prayer
Outside, the Staðarstaðurbær cemetery holds the next piece of ‘Nr. 3 Umhverfing.’ Blink and you could miss it, but a short ways into the grassy bumps lies a sculpture only a few centimetres above the ground. It vaguely resembles a sigil or rune, at first view, but it’s actually a combination of Icelandic letters created by priest of Staðarstaður, Arnaldur Mání.

“Arnaldur puts this sculpture in places where churches, prayer houses, or just places where people used to meet to pray used to be,” Ragnhildur says, mentioning to the surrounding cemetery. “Now, maybe nothing is there anymore, but he’s researched and even sometimes knows where the altar was.” Arnaldur’s sculptures now dot the Snæfellsnes peninsula, marking the vestiges of Iceland’s once widespread religion. The pieces manage at once to be both chilling and heartwarming. In some locations, only grass remains of what was once the most important centres of society.

But Staðarstaður is but one centre out of 13, and these artists just a few out of 71. Each is as complicated, intriguing, and wrenching as the Staðarstaður pieces and one could easily spend a weekend driving around to see them all. “Everybody is very positive to have this big exhibition here,” Ragnhildur concludes with a smile, getting back into the car to hurry along to the next centre. “Snæfellsnes is very happy right now.”

Who said a barn can’t be a venue?
Best of Reykjavík

Flavour Of
The Month
The freshest arrivals in 101

Reykjavík changes as rapidly as the weather, with fresh things popping up at all times. This summer has been no exception, with new bars, stores, restaurants and galleries shak- ing up the capital’s landscape with young blood and refreshing ideas. To keep you in-the-know, here are the newest spots you shouldn’t miss.

Tacason
Mádajaråurninn
Tacos—and street food gen- erally—are the flavour of the month in Reykjavík, and the spanking new Tacason food truck combines the two. Started as a new business venture by three taco-obsessed friends, Tacason is most often sta- tioned at Mádajaråurninn near Tjörnin. They serve four types of filling—chicken, chilli con carne, pork and vegetarian—in homemade corn and coriander shells. It’s good, hearty stuff that won’t break the bank.

Myrkraórek Gallery
Skólavörðustígur 3
Stocking everything from paint- ings to prints to recycled jewel- ry, Myrkraórek Gallery is a true hole-in-the-wall treasure for those looking to stock up on the edgier artists of Reykjavík. Cur- rently showing YYNGRII, Sólveig Pálsvöldottir, Hjálmar Vestergaard, Sunna Shahnam Hálfdardóttir, and Síl Stefánsson, the gallery/store is a jumbled feast for the eyes with artwork covering near- ly every available piece of wall. You can also get a photo amidst the neon green lamps downstairs in the Northern Lights Studio.

Kasbah
Saígasta 7b
With an I-want-to-live-here-vibe, Kasbah is a chic little Mo- roccan cafe-restaurant where the old Café Haiti used to be. A family-run business, their in- tention to deliver authentic Mo- roccan food is clearly defined early days, but their house-made wara pastry briouaté, the hearty harira and assorted accom- pani- ments are fast gaining patrons. Delicately spiced, aromatic and edging on the sweet and savoury, Kasbah’s menu has something for vegans, meat eaters, wine lovers and everyone in between.

Vinstukán Tiú Sopar
Laugavegur 27
Aiming to fill the market for wine bars in Reykjavík, Vín- stukán Tiú Sopar features natu- ral wines from small produc- ers at affordable prices. While “Vinstukán” is an old Icelandic term for wine bar, “Tiú Sopar” is a play-on-words for ten sips (of wine) on Wednesday evenings from 8pm. The cozy candle-lit space is perfect for catching up with a friend or checking out a new musical act in an intimate set- ting. Djúpið is open daily from 4pm.

Djúpið
Hafnarstræti 15
Reykjavík’s newest ramen bar has springy house-made organic noodles, and they’ve recently levelled up the broth. We’re suckers for their creamy Tantanmen—a deeply flavoured soup with Tonkotsu adding heft to the mellow sesame paste and butter-cooked pork. Add a drizz- le of spicy chilli oil and you’ve got yourself the best bowl in town.

Noodle Station
Laugavegur 103
Before Reykjavík’s ramen revo- lution, there was Noodle Sta- tion, serving vegetable, beef and chicken noodle soups with a pungent chilli-garlic aroma that floods the street outside. It’s a thoroughly Western take on noo- dle soup... but damn, it’s satisfying on cold days, especially if you have a cold.

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The perfect day I had in Reykjavík, which happened on July 21st, 2018.

On the morning of that specific day, the planets were aligned. It was a perfect day I had in Reykjavík, which was time to go nuts. For once. Happiness is a reason to live. I don't do a lot of beer in the sun. I don't do a lot of drinking, but a lot of my friends joined up, and to my surprise, they seemed to have no problem doing it, which comforted me. Sitting in the sun, a friend of a friend offered me a Gucci belt and Fanar for being a “fucking legend” so the day had a chill vibe to it. For the record, I refused.

In the heat of the night
But what made that day utterly perfect, the cherry on top, is that I got a free ride home to Mosfellasarður instead of selling my liver to a grumpy taxi driver.

Dadykewl!

Perfect Day
A face of the downtown scene tells us how to spend a perfect day in Reykjavík
1. Icelandic Fish & Chips

Tryggvagata 11

Sometimes you just want fresh fish deep-fried. Icelandic Fish & Chips does this well. The fish is fresh and the batter is light and crispy, with Skyronnes, a skyr-based dipping sauce that comes in nine different variations including tarter sauce. Try the steinbítur, Atlantic wolffish. It’s as ugly in life as it is delicious in death.

2. Block Burger

Skólavörðustígur 8

Block Burger is an office favourite. You can see their white paper to-go bags stacked on writers’ desks. Modelled heavily on the American chain Shake Shack in presentation, Block is reasonably priced (for Reykjavik) and has quick service. It’s a lunchtime spot worth checking out.

3. Burro

Volusund 1

Foodies to see, we love Reykjavík’s only fully South American restaurant! With a vegan tasting menu and a smattering of chivitos (and a tongue-in-cheek bar serving tropical delights upstairs in the form of Pablo Discobar), Burro is a must-try locale.


Frakkastígur 16

Regulars swear by Brauð & Co.’s “snúfur”—cinnamon bread rolls smothered with a sugary glaze. They take it a step further and stuff the classics with blueberries and whatnot, eliciting inappropriate satisfied moans. Get there early to snatch a warm one.

5. Deig Workshop

Tryggvagata 14

Barring kleina and the sub US chain, we’ve been a doughnut-starved nation. But thanks to Deig, fresh fried doughnuts are a reality. Should you push about the custard filled crème brûlée doughnut or cry for the now discontinued surmúkk and cheesier dougnut? (Bring it back!) They make pretty good bagels too. Past... they open at 7am.

6. Ramen Momo

Tryggvagata 16

Iceland’s first Ramen bar has upped their broth game with a silky slick Tonkotsu. They have a choice of noodles and broths catering to food intolerances and fads, and a popular ‘Ramen of the Month’. We suggest getting the Ramen Tonkotsu with their perfectly cooked soy cured eggs.

7. Public House Gastropub

Laugavegur 28

What happens when Icelandic ingredients are tended to with Japanese flair? Public House Gastropub only gives out-of-the-ordinary, satisfying answers. The duck thigh in a pancake served with ginger sauce and the crispy shrimp dumplings with siracha mayo are too die for. Come early and enjoy happy hour while you can. You’ll never want to leave.

8. Jómfruín

Laðgarður 4

Jómfruín may be of Danish import, but it’s 100% an Icelandic institution. With its typically outlandish, smørrebrød, and the slightly retro décor, this is the place for a casual, playful lunch. Don’t miss out on the marinated herring and hand-peeled shrimps, and pair it all with some of the house zingy snaps.

9. Sea Baron

Geirsgata 4a

The eponymous “Sea Baron” himself plays the piano in this alleyway is now an additional seating locale. With dim lights, leather sofas and playful lunch. Don’t miss out on the döndings with sriracha mayo are to die for. Come early and enjoy happy hour while you can. You’ll never want to leave.

10. Pythusaðið

Ingólfstorg

One of the many post-jam options to consider when looking to put a tasty end to an fun night out, the Hot Dog House is a solid place for a quick snack. If you feel too inebriated by the steinbítur, Atlantic wolffish. It’s as ugly in life as it is delicious in death. But thanks to Deig, fresh fried doughnuts are a reality. Should you push about the custard filled crème brûlée doughnut or cry for the now discontinued surmúkk and Cheesier dougnut? (Bring it back!) They make pretty good bagels too. Past... they open at 7am.

11. Boston

Laugavegur 25b

A spin-off from the late, lamented, recently rejuvenated Tírkus, Boston is a Lauren's drinking hole with a dark drinking room and a huge balcony terrace out back with heaters, sofas and blankets. So if you’re done listening to DJ, you can smoke your face off in comfort.

12. Véður

Klappastígur 33

Besides the classic beers and wines, Véður’s specialty is their meticulously crafted twelve-cocktail menu, including a Bennivín-based Moscow Mule and a Kamikaze taken like a shot. Admire the craftsmanship behind the wooden floors and take your pick out of the glimmering row of multi-coloured homemade bitters and syrups.

13. Loft Hostel

Bakkastæktarla 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

Borgarstæktarla 1

With a saloon-like atmosphere in the daytime, when dogs and kids run around among 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 Reykjavíkínger, so if you’re looking for like-minded peeps to drink with, here you go.

16. Session Bar

Fuggetabarur

Session Bar is a minimalist craft beer and drinking den housed in a former hair salon in the heart of downtown. There are sixteen beers on tap, both Icelandic and international, and they have a focus on keeping the prices affordable, in contrast to Reykjavík’s generally pricey craft bar.

17. Kaldi

Laugavegur 20b

Kaldi is one of the champion craft beer brands of Iceland. Their bar in Reykjavík is a cosy hole-in-the-wall, with a brutalist hole in the wall—a former alleyway is now an additional seating area. Patrons can get a satisfying cheap pint of their unfiltered aged dark ale, or whatever seasonal brew is currently on the taps.

18. American Bar

Austurstræti 8

Football fans will rejoice in seeing the rows of screens parenally tuned on sports channel above the bar, while troubadours aficionados will find in American Bar a great spot to listen to classic country music. Grab a rib from the adjacent Dirty Burgers & Rib and be happy.

Shopping

19. Kvarýtta nr 49

Laugavegur 49

This minimalist, Bauhaus-esque spot took the Icelandic fashion
scene by storm upon opening in 2018, with its eclectic streetwear selection. They have designers that no one else has. Designers that you wouldn’t know before going there.

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 tea to artworks and records.

21. IDA Zimsen
Veinturgata 2a

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.

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. CNTMP
Laugavegur 12b
This sleek and minimal streetwear boutique occupies an enviable spot on the main Laugavegur strip. An acronym for “contemporary,” the shop’s name describes its concept—the store will stock limited garments by streetwear brands.

25. Hortex
Gæstastræti 6
A true-blue second-hand shop, you never know what you’re going to find at this Salvation Army outlet. The stark store, covered with clothes of all shapes and colours, is a delight for all senses that’ll have you alternating between, “Who would throw that away?” to “Who would buy that?”

26. Rauðhetta Æðurinn
Skólavöðustígur 8
In a sense Rauðhetta Æðurinn 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.
Make the most of your last hours in Iceland. We are your one stop shop for Icelandic design, souvenirs and traditional food. Browse wheninkef.com to see our selection and offers. All shops and restaurants are tax- and duty free.
Andavald - ‘Undir Skygðóarhaldi’

Journey into a hellish dimension and pray you get back

Words: Andavald & Hannah Jana Cohen  Photo: Berglind Petra Garðarsdóttir

It’s hard to put abstract thoughts into words, especially into English, but this album is like a journey, so each song is like a leg or a landmark. The first leg, ‘Afvegaleiðsla,’ is about being led astray, moving off the beaten track and into unchartered, hellish dimensions. The title is a play on words. It means being led astray, but could also mean trance.

III. Hugklofnun

The second leg of the journey, ‘Hugklofnun,’ is about being torn apart mentally and physically, losing touch with reality, losing your sanity, and surrendering yourself to a higher power. The title refers to being chewed in two, but it’s really a word play about split personalities. The vocals on this song are very intense. Axel, our lead singer, took it all the way with his insane, manic laughter, and there’s nothing fake about it. He actually ended up in the hospital after recording it.

See, there were many obstacles when recording this album. Making it was a torturous three-year process and in it, we opened up a gate to something that we didn’t understand. At least three of us lost our jobs and everybody lost their minds. We suffered financially, socially and mentally.

IV. Undir skygðóarhaldi

The final leg is about being chained up in a nightmare, yearning for salvation but finding no way out. That’s the essence of the whole album. ‘Undir skygðóarhaldi’ means being under a spell of darkness, being the captive of a shadowy presence.

There is an outro on the album, but this is really the last song and it’s not the end. The album doesn’t have an end. It’s a journey, and you come to this song and you are under the spell but you don’t escape it. Hopefully, the next album will snap you out of it.

V. Eftríspil

This is an outro that Dulvitund made. He just sent a file with, “Here’s something you can probably kill yourself to.” The conclusion was ‘Eftríspil.’ It’s a dreary eulogy to future journeys.
Rapper 24/7 is here to stay

Words & Photo: Ólafur Ragnarsson

“Seplar ljúka.” "Heaf er planib," and "Tvöfalt glas." Three songs. All hits. Together, rapping up over 700,000 plays. The common denominator? A feature by rapper 24/7. November 24/7 (real name Hafþór Sindri Hlandri and Ízleifur) is, arguably, one of the biggest stars of the Reykjavík underground, gaining notoriety over the past year for his smooth, catchy hooks and lyrical wordplay. Mainly working in the trap genre, he’s recently transitioned from auto-tune to a more clean and jazzy sound. A new record, "Undefinable," was born out of the very first session between Hafþór and producers Birgir Hákon and Yung Nigo Drippin’, which many hip hop artists live, using their personal style to reflect the person they are today.

**Musician**
Listen to 24/7 on Spotify

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**Double glasses**
Hafþór got his start releasing his music on SoundCloud in 2015, only to later delete it all from the site. “I just kind of stopped making music until Yung Nigo Drippin’ got me back into it,” Hafþór explains, sitting back in the CNTMP studio. “Nigo featured me on his record ‘Plús Hús,’ which blew up. It really motivated me to pursue making music again.”

And once he did start making music again, it was all over. One of his first songs, and unassuming the one that landed him on the map, was “Tvöfalt Glás” (“Double Glass”) with Yung Nigo Drippin’. A slimy sounding, hazy lo-fi trap banger tribute to the lifestyle which many hip hop artists live, or rather, have lived, “Tvöfalt Glás” was born out of the very first session between Hafþór and producers Hlandri and Ízleifur.

“I met Hlandri and Ízleifur at their studio. They showed me the beat to the song, and Yung Nigo and I just kind of birsdet out the hook to it on the spot. We made it in one session,” he laughs. “And it kind of sounds like we did.”

The song was a massive success, which Hafþór is grateful for, though he doesn’t necessarily see himself in the track anymore. “I have a lot of love for that song,” Hafþór explains. “But I’ve matured a lot since it’s release, and I feel that the song isn’t really a good reflection of the person I am today.”

**Undefinable**
The person he is today, Hafþór finds difficult to define. “I’m not really a fan of putting labels on myself. I’ve been called a gangster rapper before, which couldn’t be further from the truth,” he laughs. “I’m just myself, 24/7,” he states simply.

The artist is working day and night on his upcoming debut album, ‘FM 24/7’ along with producers BNGRBOY, Ízleifur and Hlandri. The album is set to come out later this year.

But while he enjoys what he’s doing right now, 24/7 does not plan on staying in the game indefinitely. “I’m not counting on being a 30-year-old rapper, personally, though I find the thought a bit amusing,” he says. “I plan on educating myself more in the future. I want to study music management so that I can still be working around music when I’m older.”

But whatever the future holds, Hafþór is currently pursuing rap full-time. “Whatever you do, just follow your passion,” he says, smiling. “You have to do what makes you happy.” And for Hafþór, that means 24/7.

**Music**
The initial lineup for this year’s Beinpjööð festival— the only place in Iceland where you can pound Brewera on a carpet of fake grass— has been announced. Performers this year include Hilíkar, Between Mountains, Ósk d.j., flugvöll og goaðskip, Fríður Dór, Joey Christ, Moses Hightower, Kaiian Mikla, Jonas Sig, and more. This year’s iteration will also see the festival move to Brandy, where it will now be hosted by Bryggjan Brugshús and Messeim. Tickets are on sale now, priced at 6,990 ISK for the weekend, or 3,990 ISK for a day.
Our Picks

July 5th - 21:00 - Nordic House - 3,000 ISK

Oyaa Valtýsdóttir has long been an intriguing presence on the Icelandic music scene. From her beginnings as a member of múm, she has ventured widely, collaborating with the world's various diverse communities, and developed a desert sun and a striking body of solo work. The resulting album — 2018’s Evolution — is a gossamer delicate and hauntingly beautiful collection that's currently in the running for the Nordic Music Prize. Live, Óyaa’s shows are soothing, affecting, hypnotic, pin-drop-quiet affairs, with the audience sitting rapt as a cocoon of gentle whispering vocals and soaring, coiling cellos are woven around them. Witness it yourself at the Nordic House on July 10th.

Concerts & Nightlife

Events listed are all live performances and DJs. Venues are listed by day. For music listings from Reykjavík has to offer. Visit grapevine.is or our app Appening, available on iOS and Android.

Our Picks

Friday July 5th

Pink Iceland Queer Pop-Up:
Daniel E. Barrows
18:00 Pink Iceland
Raykjavík Classics: French Flute & Harp Romanticism
12:30 Harpa
DJ Interbøwatz
23:00 Kaffibærinn
Miniokshi
23:00 Boston
Mr. Sísla / Jóe Tyrilí & Príns Póló
21:00 MIAMIR
DJ Sunaura
22:00 Prikið
Troubadour Gardar Garðars
21:00 American Bar

Saturday July 6th

Black+B-Death Metal Night:
Barthraal / Deusis Deuffent / Dynfari
22:00 Sóltómatkakjallarinn
Raykjavík Classics: French Flute & Harp Romanticism
12:30 Harpa
DJ ELELINE
23:00 Kaffibærinn
Glós
14:00 Sóltómatkakjallarinn
International Organ Summer:
Jóhanns Skoog
12:00 Hallgrímskirkja
Raykjavík Classics: French Flute & Harp Romanticism
12:30 Harpa
DJ Brikos
23:00 Kaffibærinn
Jazz Night
20:30 Kex Hostel
Agnes Thorsteinsdóttir & Eva Pétí Hilmaradóttir
20:30 Sigurjón Guðnason Museum
DJ Sensi
22:00 Prikið
Troubadour Gardar Garðars
22:00 American Bar

Wednesday July 10th

JáRT
16:00 Búrbúja
International Organ Summer:
Jóhannes Skoog
17:00 Hallgrímskirkja
Sunday Jazz
20:00 Bryggjan Brúghús

Thursday July 11th

JáRT / Jóakki Eino Kalvis / Farao
21:00 BóBó
The Cure 40th Anniversary Concert 2019
22:00 Prikið
18:00 Petersen svítan
International Organ Summer:
Eyþór Franzson Wechner
12:00 Halgrimskirkja
Raykjavík Classics: The Icelandic Art Song
12:30 Harpa
DJ Áðalbjörg
23:00 Kaffibærinn
Hank & Tank
21:00 Sóltómatkakjallarinn
Jóhannes Skoog
22:00 Prikið
Troubadour Reimur & Matti
21:00 American Bar

Monday July 15th

JáRT
16:00 Búrbúja
International Organ Summer:
Jóhannes Skoog
17:00 Hallgrímskirkja
Sunday Jazz
20:00 Bryggjan Brúghús

For music listings from July 10th on, check out happening.grapevine.is or our app Appening, available on iOS and Android.

Raykjavík Classics: French Flute & Harp Romanticism
12:30 Harpa
Mr. Sísla & Jóe Tyrilí
21:00 Mengi
Helga Margrét
21:00 Sóltómar
Gabrielle D’Alonzo
21:00 Sóltómatkakjallarinn
Raykjavík Classics: The Icelandic Art Song
12:30 Harpa
DJ Terrordisco
23:00 Kaffibærinn
Schola Cantorum Choir
12:00 Halgrimskirkja
Troubadour Alexander Áron
22:00 American Bar

MGU Víking / Östum
23:00 Boston
Troubadour Rúmar Kristinín
21:00 American Bar

Saturday July 13th

Raykjavík Classics: The Icelandic Art Song
12:30 Harpa
DJ Íoðís
23:00 Kaffibærinn
Jazz Night
20:30 Kex Hostel
Sólveig Sigurðardóttir & Gerrick Schulte
20:30 Sigrún Guðnason Museum
Troubadour Siggi Svarns
22:00 American Bar

Raykjavík Classics: French Flute & Harp Romanticism
12:30 Harpa
Myrra Réa
15:00 Nordic House
Dirty Cello
21:00 Hard Rock Café
Troubadour Hýrun Ben
22:00 American Bar

Monday July 8th

Raykjavík Classics: The Icelandic Art Song
12:30 Harpa
DJ Frosty
23:00 Kaffibærinn
Troubadour Alexander Áron
22:00 American Bar

Tuesday July 9th

International Organ Summer:
Örvar Ólafur Jónsson
20:00 Sóltómatkakjallarinn
Raykjavík Classics: The Icelandic Art Song
12:30 Harpa
DJ Stefán
23:00 Kaffibærinn
Jóhannes Skoog
22:00 Prikið
12:00 Hallgrímskirkja
Eyþór Franzson Wechner
International Organ Summer:
Byzantine Silhouette
21:00 Gaukurinn
Jazz Night
17:00 Hallgrímskirkja
Jokunns Einarsdóttir & Ágúst Marfasson
22:00 Prikið
The Icelandic Art Song
12:00 Harpa
DJ Óliver
23:00 Kaffibærinn
Ravison
22:00 Prikið

Wednesday July 17th

Mattias Ínsson
21:00 Nordic House
Don Lockwood Band
21:00 Slipið
Party Karaoke With DJ Dóra Júlíus Óli
Helga Margrét
21:00 Sóltómar
Raykjavík Classics: Mozart Piano Quintet K452
12:30 Harpa
DJ Sílið Blommi
23:00 Kaffibærinn
Jazz Night
20:30 Kex Hostel
Sólveig Sigurðardóttir & Gerrick Schulte
20:30 Sigrún Guðnason Museum
Troubadour Siggi Svarns
22:00 American Bar

Raykjavík Classics: Mozart Piano Quintet K452
12:30 Harpa
DJ Béniel
23:00 Kaffibærinn
Schola Cantorum Choir
12:00 Halgrimskirkja
DJ Maggi Lago
22:00 Prikið
Troubadour Siggi Svarns
21:00 American Bar

Raykjavík Classics: Mozart Piano Quintet K452
12:30 Harpa
DJ Béniel
23:00 Kaffibærinn
Schola Cantorum Choir
12:00 Halgrimskirkja
DJ Maggi Lago
22:00 Prikið
International Organ Summer:
Jon Barmann
12:00 Halgrimskirkja
Troubadour Reimur & Matti
22:00 American Bar

Mr. Sísla & Jóe Tyrilí
21:00 Mengi
Helga Margrét
21:00 Sóltómar
Gabrielle D’Alonzo
21:00 Sóltómatkakjallarinn
Raykjavík Classics: The Icelandic Art Song
12:30 Harpa
DJ Íoðís
23:00 Kaffibærinn
Sprítse Zení Klaas
21:00 Sóltómatkakjallarinn
Jóhannes Skoog
22:00 Prikið
DJ Íoðís
23:00 Kaffibærinn
Frode Alvik
22:00 Prikið
Troubadour Wymun Ben
22:00 American Bar

Thursday July 12th

Mr. Sísla & Jóe Tyrilí
21:00 Mengi
Helga Margrét
21:00 Sóltómar
Gabrielle D’Alonzo
21:00 Sóltómatkakjallarinn
Raykjavík Classics: The Icelandic Art Song
12:30 Harpa
DJ Íoðís
23:00 Kaffibærinn
Sprítse Zení Klaas
21:00 Sóltómatkakjallarinn
Jóhannes Skoog
22:00 Prikið
DJ Íoðís
23:00 Kaffibærinn
Frode Alvik
22:00 Prikið
Troubadour Wymun Ben
22:00 American Bar

Monday July 15th

Raykjavík Classics: Mozart Piano Quintet K452
12:30 Harpa
DJ David Roach
23:00 Kaffibærinn
Troubadour Ánar Fríðrikss
22:00 American Bar

Tuesday July 16th

Karaoke Party!
21:00 Sóltómar
The Taste Of Victory

Diving into the winners of Iceland’s Músíktilraunir

Music Competition

Blóðmör, Konfekt and Ásta won Músíktilraunir 2019. See them at Iceland Airwaves, and find them on Facebook.

In the world of Icelandic music, Músíktilraunir, Iceland’s ‘Battle of the Bands’ competition, is a veritable kingmaker. Running for over 30 years, it’s been kickstarting bands like Mammút, Vök, and Of Monsters and Men. This year, the winner was metal band Blóðmör (Blood Pudding, in English), while Konfekt came second, and singer/songwriter Ásta Kristín Pjetursdóttir third. All three bands recently played at Secret Solstice and will play at Airwaves this November.

Help from mom

Since the competition finale in April, Blóðmör have remained hard at work. “We’ve been performing almost every week,” the band tells me after a soundcheck at Íðnó. They’ve also released an EP called ‘Líkþorn’—a moody assortment of tracks straddling rock and metal. Have just one listen and you’ll understand why it’s powerfully effective.

“I don’t think any of us actually like blóðmör. It’s edible—but we wouldn’t choose to eat it.”

Indie kids fight back

Second place winners and indie kids Konfekt have also been kept busy since their Músíktilraunir success. “We’ve been recording a lot,” explains drummer Eva Kolbeins. “We’re taking it one step at a time. We’ll start by releasing a single and see where it goes from there.”

The band, like Blóðmör, is relatively young, only coming together in 2018, but they have already developed a defined style, deftly switching between Icelandic and English in tracks that are both relaxed and tightly controlled. This is all the more impressive considering that Músíktilraunir was one of their first major musical events. In fact, when they came to sign up, they didn’t even have a fixed name.

Konfekt, though, suits the all-girl band well. “It means assorted chocolates,” says singer Anna Ingibjörg Þorgeirsdóttir. “And we thought that it resembled our range of songs—some you might like, some you might not—but they’re all different.”

Next big things

Ásta Kristín Pjetursdóttir, who won third place, cuts a rather different figure. Arguably better known as one of Iceland’s foremost classical violinists, Ásta only began writing her own songs recently, describing how she began writing poetry which then fed into her songwriting. While she wasn’t playing at Íðnó, she will surely be one to look out for at Airwaves, especially for her award-winning Icelandic lyrics. Her songs are captivatingly sparse, utilising only a guitar and her ethereal voice, but it’s powerfully effective.

Could any of these acts achieve the successes of Mammút and Of Monsters and Men? It’s a bold proposition, but when you hear the skill of these new contenders, and look at their achievements thus far, there’s more than a little reason to be hopeful.
You could be forgiven for thinking a piece entitled ‘Homage to Robert Schumann’ would sound like music by Schumann. I’m guessing that most of the audience who attended the Reykjavík Midsummer Music Festival on June 21st might have thought the same. But, dear reader, how wrong they were.

György Kurtág’s haunting composition may reference Schumann in the title, and it is often performed interspersed with works by Schumann, but the similarities end there. Instead, the audience was treated to a set of six dissonant movements, where piano, clarinet and viola flutter up and down chromatic scales and clash in stark crescendos. It was another high point in a fiercely modern affair.

Making you think
There were doubtless some challenging moments in the programme. In Kurtág’s homage in particular, there was a fair bit of shifting in the audience, especially in the pointedly long pauses between the movements. It was, invariably, not a relaxing listen. But Midsummer Music has loftier goals than that. Such was the range of music that one would almost certainly have found something that struck them, and the technical and musical expertise on display was a privilege to behold.

Ultimately, Reykjavík Midsummer Music was a towering success, not least because it did what all the best classical music does — it made you think.
EXHIBITION

EXHIBITION

6 June - 12 August 2019
B. INGRID OLSON
Fingered Eyed

THE ARTS AND CRAFTS MOVEMENTS COME TO KJARVALSTAÐIR

Dungeons, Dragons And English Magic

The wild world of William Morris

Words: Berglind Jóna Hlynsdóttir
Photo: Berglind Jóna Hlynsdóttir & William Morris Gallery

Exhibition

‘Let Beauty Rule’ was made in collaboration with the William Morris Gallery, London, and Millionärsgården, Stockholm. See it at Kjarvalsstaðir until Oct 6th. More info: artmuseum.is

The Kjarvalsstaðir Art Museum is currently festooned with eye-pleasing patterns, hand painted originals, woven fabrics, printed plates, books, furniture, stained glass and tiles by legendary British artist, activist, poet and craftsman William Morris (1834-1896) and his collaborators, friends and family.

The most celebrated artist of the Arts and Crafts Movement, Morris was a socialist and activist who founded the predecessor of the Labour Party in Britain. He also founded Morris, Marshall, Faulkner & Co. with his friends - later known as 'The Firm' - producing handcrafted household décor. They worked in resistance to the industrial revolution by preserving traditional techniques, and giving recognition to everyone involved in the creation of each piece.

Sustainability and ethics

Museum director Ólöf Kristín Sigurdardóttir explains the aim of the exhibition is to bring to light not only the beautiful patterns that Morris is best known for, but also his political activism, his connections to Iceland, and the artists and collaborators who surrounded him.

“One thing that characterised him as a thinker and initiator is that he knew craft,” says Ólöf. “He could do everything: he knew how to make stained glass windows, he knew the processes for making tiles, how to weave and embroidery. He would acquaint himself with the processes from beginning to end. Sustainability in design is perhaps what makes him interesting to our time. It’s exactly where we are today.”

Dungeons and Dragons

While the works are often craft-based, Ólöf says the body of work has an emotional appeal. “These works are emotionally charged, and the craftsmanship is excellent,” she says. “They’re not majestic, and they don’t discuss great events, but they deal with great emotions, even though the works look back to medieval times.”

Morris built his Southeast London home, Red House, to embody his ideas. Every part was handcrafted, from the walls to the tables, with many medieval references. He often entertained friends, and it’s well known that he and his circle owned armour. “Its evident that these guys were deep into Dungeons and Dragons,” Ólöf laughs.

“Sustainability in design is perhaps what that makes William Morris interesting in our time. It’s exactly where we are today.”

Travel diaries and Middle Earth

‘Let Beauty Rule’ also displays items Morris bought in Iceland during his travels in 1871 and 1873, and sagas he translated from Icelandic with Cambridge scholar Erik Magnusson. Morris’s writing and translations inspired many fiction and fantasy writers like C.S. Lewis and J.R.R. Tolkien, some of whose Middle Earth languages are believed to have been inspired by Morris’s Icelandic-sounding English. Morris also wrote extensive diaries about his time in Iceland addressed to his friend Georgiana Burne-Jones, which were poetically re-interpreted and re-published in Lavinia Greenlaw’s ‘Questions of Travel’.

Morris’s work, politics and complicated love life have captivated people’s imaginations throughout the years. Ólöf references Jeremy Deller’s work ‘English Magic’, which shows Morris as a giant throwing Roman Abramovich’s yacht into the ocean. “When we think about this work we see how close to the British spirit Morris is when he is chosen to represent us,” Ólöf finishes. Ólöf. “At Kjarvalsstaðir there are, shown in tandem, collaborative works by Morris’s wife, Jane, and paintings of her by her lover Dante Gabriel Rossetti. The exquisite works of Morris, his daughter, wife and friends will interest anyone keen on beauty, handcraft, textile, literature or politics.”
Our Picks

**Cheating the Constant**

Until August 20th

2nd - BERG Contemporary

On the roster is Dóra Mággy, whose audio-visual work combines ethereal musical compositions with fantastical imagery. Next up is the master Finnbogi Petursson, whose work can best be described as an indefinable melting of music, performance, and technology. Then you’ve got the leading figure and programmed group (GMG) Venice Biennale-approved artist Jóhann Kallur, the socio-politically charged electric pieces of Jóna B. Sigurjónsdóttir. It’s a feast for the eyes, pioneering electronic media and video art on view at Kjarvalsstaðir. 

**Varn**

Until August 11th

- Ásmundarsafn

Four young artists explore the history and environment of the town and present their work using humour and playfulness. Come see them here.

**Carousel**

Join choreographer Ali Heffetz for a captivating double bill performance as part of Reykjavík Fringe Festival.

**Art Market**

July 7th - 11:00 - KEX Hostel - Free!

Full of artistic and crafty treasures, this is the place to be! So go to KEX and buy some! Support young artists so they don’t have to cry over everyday and fight sweatdrops for scrap food. You think we’re joking? We’re not J0!

Art Listings

Events are listed by venue. For complete listings and detailed information on venues, visit grapevine.is/happenings.

Send your listings to: listings@grapevine.is

**Opening**

**Dóguð Böðin**

Italian composer, visual artist, and performer Angelo Sturiale presents a collection of colour drawings exploring inner worlds, secret messages, and poetry.

- Opens on July 5th, 2019
- Runs until July 23rd, 2019

**Ongoing**

**NATIONAL GALLERY OF ICELAND**

Temporary Art History In Iceland [III]

A selection of over 80 works chosen since the 19th century.

- Runs until December 31st, 2019

**ÉKAHR OPEN AIR MUSEUM**

Daily Guided Tours

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

**NATIONAL MUSEUM OF ICELAND**

Myth Of A Woman

Architect Paolo Gianfrancesco used data from Open Street Map to celebrate the 130th anniversary of the museum; this exhibition presents 13 artists in dialogue with Sigurjón and his art.

- Runs until October 6th, 2019

**REYKJAVÍK ART MUSEUM**

Porcelain Souls

Morra

Fashion designer Signý Pórhálsdóttir takes over the lobby to work with Icelandic flora on silk and paper for her MORRA collection.

- Runs until September 25th, 2019

**NORDIC HOUSE**

Porcelain Souls

Morra

Photographer Inguvét Storich went through his parents’ archives and found letters from their lives in Breiðnál and Denmark in the 1950’s and 1960’s. Explore them here.

- Runs until September 25th, 2019

**UNIKA HOUSE**

Parcoal Souls

Morra

Photographer Inguvét Storich went through his parents’ archives and found letters from their lives in Breiðnál and Denmark in the 1950’s and 1960’s. Explore them here.

- Runs until September 25th, 2019

**REYKJAVÍK ART MUSEUM**

Kjarvalstaðir

Jóhannes S. Kjarval, after whom the museum is named, this exhibition displays the evolution of art from the national gallery’s collection, love, music, and poetry.

- Runs until September 1st, 2019
- Runs until September 8th, 2019
- Runs until August 23rd, 2019
- Runs until September 8th, 2019
- Runs until September 15th, 2019

**AIR FREE**

Ragnheiður Káradóttir: miniatures

Opening

- July 5th, 2019

- Opens on July 5th, 2019
- Runs until August 23rd, 2019
- Runs until August 4th, 2019
- Runs until July 23rd, 2019
- Runs until August 23rd, 2019
- Runs until August 17th, 2019
- Runs until September 1st, 2019
- Runs until August 4th, 2019
- Runs until August 17th, 2019
- Runs until August 23rd, 2019
- Runs until August 17th, 2019
The Cold Truth
Pawel Ziemilski’s ingenuous documentary
‘In Touch’ reunites fractured families

Film Festival
Ice Docs is held in Akranes, July 17th-23rd. Get more info at icedocs.is

Despite having a surprisingly long and productive relationship with filmmaking for such a small country, there are those who would question whether Iceland needs another film festival. But for the founders of Ice Docs, Iceland’s first international documentary film festival, the space and requirement for their event is clear.

Finding a space
“We’re very aware of the other festivals,” co-founder Ingibjörg Háltdorsdóttir tells me. “People think we’re the same as Skjaldborg because of ‘documentary’ in the title. But Skjaldborg usually just does Icelandic documentaries and then focuses perhaps on one particular filmmaker.” In contrast, Ice Docs seeks to have a distinctly international focus, with an emphasis on creative uses of the genre.

The idea for the festival came about, fittingly, in a cinema. Ingibjörg and co-founder, Hallur Órn Arnason, himself a documentary filmmaker, were at a documentary premiere, bemoaning the fact that there were less than 20 people there. The pair had previously worked together at the Reykjavik International Film Festival, so the solution they landed on to increase interest in documentary films was maybe not so surprising, considering their backgrounds and skills. But deciding to create a new annual, multi-day arts event from scratch is no easy task, and both knew it would be a labour of love.

That conversation in the cinema took place less than two years ago. “It’s been a long process, very organic. It just happened,” muses Hallur. Ingibjörg adds, “We were thinking, okay, it’s seven months till summertime, we really don’t want to do it that fast, so we did it the very un-Icelandic way and decided just to be patient.” She smiles, “to be honest I could have used six more months.”

Variety of form
The pair quickly teamed up with another Akranes-based filmmaker, Heiðar Mar Björnsson. The three share the same passion for documentaries and hope that the festival offers people the opportunity to experience the great range and versatility of the medium. At a promotional event for the festival last year, where they screened Irish film ‘School Life’, even Hallur’s father, despite having a documentary filmmaker for a son, was blown away by the scope of the genre. “He came out shaking his head saying ‘I didn’t know documentaries could do this.’” Hallur grins.

It’s this sensation that Ice Docs aims to instill. Both Hallur and Ingibjörg are quick to highlight the broad mix of films that will be screened over the five-day festival, believing there’s something for everyone in their programme. There’s ‘Aqauraela’, a film about water with no protagonist, opening film ‘In Touch’, which recently won the Skjaldborg Film Festival, and the light-hearted ‘Hail Satan!’ which Ingibjörg describes as “a humorous approach to satanism.”

Putting Akranes on the map
In total there will be over 40 films screened as part of the festival in the town’s charming theatre, which is one of the oldest operating cinemas in Iceland. In addition to opening up the world of documentaries for people, Ingibjörg in particular is keen to build Akranes’ reputation as an arts venue. Despite being only 40 minutes away from Reykjavík, Akranes has largely missed out on the tourist boom that has fuelled the Icelandic economy for the last 10 years. The founders of Ice Docs hope that holding the festival here will help raise the town’s profile.

We hope that people will see documentaries in a different light afterwards, but also that people see how cool Akranes is, and what a great location it is,” Ingibjörg summarises. “I think that would be excellent to see as many people there as possible. Join our village!”
Various Events

Friday July 12th

Friday Party!: ‘American Pie’ Screening
20:00 Bíó Paradís
How To Become Icelandic In 60 Minutes
19:00 Harpa
Icelandic Sagas: The Greatest Hits
19:30 Harpa
Búkaló: Margrét Maasek Burkeaque Show
21:00 fjarnarbíó

Saturday July 13th

How To Become Icelandic In 60 Minutes
19:00 Harpa

Sunday July 14th

Seat Filler: Iceland’s Only Free Game Show!
23:00 Secret Cellar
Party Bingo With Sigga Kling
21:00 Súta Sviníð
Guided Tour In English
11:00 National Museum Of Iceland
How To Become Icelandic In 60 Minutes
19:00 Harpa
Icelandic Sagas: The Greatest Hits
19:30 Harpa
Andrými Open House
12:00 Andrými

Monday July 15th

Soufflé Women & Queer Comedy Night
21:00 Súta Sviníð
Free Ashtanga Yoga Class
17:30 Andrými

Tuesday July 16th

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

Wednesday July 17th

Open Mic Stand-Up Comedy
21:00 The Secret Cellar
Improv Iceland: Comedy In English!
20:00 Tjarnarbíó
How To Become Icelandic In 60 Minutes
19:00 Harpa
Drag Pub Quiz: Queer Films & TV
21:00 Bíó Paradís

Thursday July 18th

My Voices Have Tourettes
21:00 The Secret Cellar
How To Become Icelandic In 60 Minutes
19:00 Harpa
Icelandic Sagas: The Greatest Hits
19:30 Harpa
Andrými Open House
12:00 Andrými

Friday July 5th

Friday Party!: ‘Bohemian Rhapsody’ Sing-Along Screening
20:00 Bíó Paradís
Drag-Dúguð Drag Show
21:00 Súta Sviníð
How To Become Icelandic In 60 Minutes
19:00 Harpa
The Lost Art Of Writing Letters
17:00 fjarnarbíó
Icelandic Sagas: The Greatest Hits
19:30 Harpa

Saturday July 6th

How To Become Icelandic In 60 Minutes
19:00 Harpa
Búkaló: Margrét Maasek Burkeaque Show
21:00 Súta Sviníð

Sunday July 7th

Guided Tour In English
11:00 National Museum Of Iceland
Seat Filler: Iceland’s Only Free Game Show!
23:00 Secret Cellar
Party Bingo With Sigga Kling
21:00 Súta Sviníð
How To Become Icelandic In 60 Minutes
19:00 Harpa
My Voices Have Tourettes
21:00 The Secret Cellar
How To Become Icelandic In 60 Minutes
19:00 Harpa
Meet-Up & Activism Workshop: “That Vegan Couple”
17:30 Súta Sviníð

Come sing along with Freddy

Fjallkonan is a new lively restaurant & pub in the heart of Reykjavík offering a selection of Icelandic and international dishes from local ingredients. Casual and cozy atmosphere yet still fun and festive. Stop by for snacks & drinks, lunch or dinner.

Fjallkonan WELCOMES YOU!
Happy Hour 15-17 every day
Draft beer, house wine by glass and cocktails – halfprice!

Icelandic Delicacies

LAMB & FLATBREAD
Slow cooked lamb, traditional Icelandic flatbread from the Westfjords, carrot purée, pickled red onions, horseradish sauce

ARCTIC CHARR & BLINI
Lightly cured arctic char, chickpea blini, horseradish sauce, roe, crispy lentils, yuzu-elderflower dressing

ICELANDIC PLATTER
Puffin, crowberry gel
Minke whale, malt glaze
Lamb tartar, chive mayo

THE LAMB BURGER
Bacon, mushroom & date duxelle, pickled red onions, pickled cucumber, sauce, fried cheese

SKÝR ETON MESS CHEESECAKE
White chocolate “Skýr” mousse, meringue, raspberries, raspberry sauce

Must try dishes

For event listings from July 18th on, check out happening.grapevine.is or our app Happening, available on iOS and Android.
“This idea in art is very important to me, to have beauty and the grotesque, noise and discomfort.”

Dance Parties And Canadian Spit

Siri, how does one become MSEA?

Words: Maria-Carmela Baso & John Rogers  Photo: Art Blonick

Musician

Listen to MSEA’s music at msea.is, and find out about her most social media at @msea.is

MSEA is a Reykjavík-based Canadian musician making intriguing, textual electronic-and-voice music. Her work often includes collaborative visuals—her first single, ‘Sea Self’, was launched with a multi-disciplinary exhibition. Her new EP, ‘Hiding Under Things’, is out now. “I’ve always found it difficult to articulate my inspirations,” she says, “because I tend to find it everywhere. This is more like a quick history of influence. The spaces we enter influence—support systems are everywhere. This is like to give shout outs but it would be it’s really about balance. Because we’ll topple over otherwise.”

Dance Parties

I was lucky to grow up in a neighbourhood with children my age who loved to dance. We would spend all of our time choreographing dance routines together, usually to Britney, Christina or Aqua, but I remember stumbling upon “The Score” by the Fugees and falling in love. I think I was eight. The kids weren’t into it so I kept it for solo dance parties. And I can’t forget to leave out Electric Circus—a live dance music television program that aired on MuchMusic—my only religion and probably where I got all of my awesome dance moves from.

Canadian Spit

I felt like if I moved to Toronto, I too could be a part of the fun? It didn’t really work like that but I did get to see them live a bunch.

Brainwashing

The secret to becoming an artist is really just suffering a medium amount of brainwashing. At one point you will realize you don’t want to follow the “word” of any gospel and you will grow a fondness towards the dark. This one is from bible camp. I had quite the religious family. It wasn’t all bad. There were many singalongs with my grandfather who really does sound like bible Elvis.

MSEA spent a long time on this ambience

Contrast

I find intrigue in oppositions. Maybe this is why I enjoy living in Iceland so much—the darkness of the winter and the brightness of the summer. This idea in art is very important to me. To have beauty and the grotesque, noise and discomfort while not being afraid of silence or minimalism. Or maybe it’s really about balance. Because we’ll topple over otherwise.

Ambience

This might seem like an obvious one, but for me it is an immense influence. The spaces we enter into to create, perform, and exhibit are a part of the work itself. This is why I am obsessed with lighting in my personal space, as well as on stage. The slightest dimming or colour change can have a monumental impact on the mood. And I like it moody! This also links to multisensory experiences and how it is becoming frequently explored. I’m curious to see how scent, taste, and touch will develop into a part of the artistic space in the future.

Moody ‘90s

Speaking of moody. Portishead, Cocteau Twins, Nirvana, Twin Peaks, Cranberries, Sonic Youth, Pixies.

Other Humans

EVERYONE AROUND ME! I would like to give shout outs but it would take up this whole article. I am forever inspired by the communities I have been a part of. They have offered a safe environment for exploration, mistakes and collaboration—support systems are everything. I am nothing without you.

Sylvia Plath

Her obsession with death, sexual-
Cheap Food

Here are some deals that'll keep your wallet feeling happy and full.

1,000 ISK And Under

**Hard Rock Café**
- Every day 15-18
- Nachos, wings & onion rings - 990 ISK

**Dominos**
- Tuesdays - All day
- Medium Sized pizza with 3 toppings - 1,000 ISK

**Tapas Barinn**
- Every day 17.00 - 18.00
- Half off of selected tapas
- Various prices

**Sushi Social**
- Every day 17.00 - 18.00
- Truffle potatoes - 1,000 ISK

**Fisherman’s fish**
- Monday - Friday
- 11:30 - 15:00
- Fish of the day - 1,990 ISK

**Bryggjan**
- Every day 16.00 - 21.00
- Shots 500 ISK
- Cocktails 1,200 ISK

**KEX Hostel**
- Every day 16.00 - 21.00
- Shots 600 ISK
- Cocktails 1,500 ISK

**Bryggjagra**
- Every day 11.00 - 14.00
- Chicken wings - 1,190 ISK

**Sushi Social**
- Lunch & dinner
- Grilled salmon - 2,190 ISK

**Tapas Barinn**
- Every day 17.00 - 18.00
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Eminent UK poets share letters with Iceland

Words: a rawlings & Felix Robertson Photos: Kristín Viðarsdóttir

Prison And Principle

Eminent UK poets share letters with Iceland

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Prison And Principle

Eminent UK poets share letters with Iceland

Co-organised by the University of Iceland’s Institute of Research in Literature and Visual Arts and the Reykjavik UNESCO City of Literature, the events focused on an interview session as well as a book launch and readings. The events are an extension of Sjón’s organizational efforts for the 2017 conference “The Tower at the End of the World,” an impressive gathering on island literature held in the Faroe Islands.

Unfurling connections

Friday’s public conversation at Veröld focused on unfurling poetic connections between Iceland and the British Isles. Greenlaw, Muldoon, and Armitage were joined by translators and scholars Kristín Sveva Tómasdóttir, Ádheiðn Ásberg Sigurðsson, and Sveinbjörn Egilsson to explore literary intersections in the north. One recurring theme was the remote and isolated nature of Iceland. “It was at the top left of the map,” said Armitage, describing his own fascination with Iceland in conversation with Sveinbjörn Egilsson. “It always felt alluring and mysterious.” Armitage also suggested that the nature of islands themselves may have held a key appeal, describing how they hold a “contrast both of prison, incarceration, and also paradise.” He suggested that the nature of Great Britain as an island may well have meant writers such as W.H. Auden and William Morris felt an affinity with Iceland.

Literary Event

‘Letters To Iceland’ occurred on June 21st and 22nd

Reykjavík’s literary world celebrated solstice with a duet of events featuring heavyweight UK authors Simon Armitage, Lavina Greenlaw and Paul Muldoon. As one of Iceland’s foremost poets, Muldoon has published over thirty collections, including works that have won him a Pulitzer Prize and the T.S. Eliot Prize for Poetry. He held the Oxford Professor of Poetry post from 1999-2004, a post that is now held by Armitage. As a poet, novelist, and translator, Armitage is similarly highly acclaimed for his lifetime commitment to literature. Armitage recently received the position of Britain’s Poet Laureate. Greenlaw’s impressive catalogue includes librettos, soundworks, novels, and poetry. Her book ‘Questions of Travel: William Morris in Iceland’ annotates 19th-century textile designer and author William Morris’ travel writing with her own poetic suppositions. While each author has previously visited Iceland, this is the first time they appear together in the country for literary events. Armitage has previously visited Iceland while writing ‘Moon Country’ together with Glyn Maxwell, and Greenlaw spent time here while researching her poetic meditation on Morris’ travels through Iceland in the 1870s.

Sense of removal

Greenlaw suggested that this could have been a key reason why he drew Morris in particular to Iceland in the 1870s, emphasizing his desire to escape his increasingly unhappy marriage and for a sense of removal. Though nearly 150 years have passed since Morris’ experiences in Iceland, his accounts may resonate with tourists today. Greenlaw explained that Morris was outraged to discover that there were already British travelers in Iceland “and that there was rubbish and litter at the geysers.” But it was perhaps the social aspect that really struck Morris the most. His famous question about the most grinding poverty was a ruffling evil compared with the inequality he was accustomed to influence by his experience of the already relatively classless Icelandic society. Greenlaw asserted that how this initially came as a shock to Morris’ “wealthy Victorian confidence.” “People would come up and talk to him,” described Greenlaw. “He could look at the place, but was surprised that the place could look back.”

Interesting tension

For the second event held at the Nordic House, the fine literary press Dimma published bilingual editions of poetry books by each author in a series called ‘Letters to Iceland.’ Greenlaw’s ‘Kennad’ (meaning identification or recognition) was translated by Magnús Sigurðsson, while Sjón translated Muldoon’s “Seven poems” as “Sjö ljóð.” Sigurðurjóó Frástardóttir handled the translation of Armitage’s “Paðan sem við horfum” (“From there we look”). Poets and translators read aloud excerpts from the books at the launch. In addition to these events, Muldoon, Greenlaw, and Armitage attended a guided tour of Kjarvalstadi’s exhibition “Sólvi Helgason: Blómsturheimar.” In the same space where Morris’ exhibition “Alæði Ingurður” is now in residence through October, the exhibition was also presented with the Settlement Centre and the Borg á Mýrum church where Iceland-UK connections were emphasised. Of her experiences in Iceland, Greenlaw commented that “there’s always a sense of possibility. You can stand on the sea and look out. You feel both a sense of travel and being held back. It’s an interesting tension.”

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FANCIES is where we talk to Reykjavík’s most fashion-forward figures about style

Natka Klimowicz

Natka Klimowicz (27) is an illustrator

Words: Hannah Jane Cohen  Photo: Art Bicnick

Natka is wearing:

▶ Holographic Jesus sunglasses. They were a gift from a friend
▶ Handmade earrings from Savvy
▶ Vintage velvet bodysuit from a Polish second-hand store
▶ Vintage jacket from Wasteland
▶ Vintage skirt from Fatamarkaðurinn
▶ Vintage combat boots

Describe your style in five words: Things my Mom finds weird.

Favourite stores in Reykjavík: I think Wasteland. I generally shop only in second-hand stores.

Favourite piece: Maybe this bodysuit. You can’t see but it has a stripper back and I always wonder who it was made for. Was it just a costume for some stripper? I think it was one of the first things I ever bought at a second hand store. This was years ago.

Something I would never wear: There’s many things, but I definitely just try to avoid clothing from big chain shops. I don’t think I can look good in things that have such guilt associated with them.

Lusting after: I don’t think such a thing exists. I just go and see what I need. That’s it. I really like going to second hand stores and just looking around for something that makes me feel cool.

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OUR FISH PANS ARE ALWAYS SERVED WITH BUTTER-FRIED ICELANDIC POTATOES & FRESH SALAD

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Running a restaurant is an unfor- giving business in which a ten-year run is considered notable. Yet, if you look around, there’s no shortage of spots that have been around longer than the Internet and burrito bowls combined. One such outlier is the neighborhood restaurant Hornið, which celebrates its 40th birthday this month.

Hornið was established in 1979 by husband-and-wife duo Jakob Hörður Magnússon and Valgerður Jóhannsdóttir, and has been owned and operated by them and their children ever since. This makes the restaur- ant at Hafnarstræti 13 one of the oldest res- taurants in continuous operation in Iceland. This may not seem like anything special to a foodie from mainland Europe, but the restaurant tradition in Iceland is very young. For a diverse list of reasons—a small population, geographic isolation, a lack of disposable income among the general populace, and perhaps even lack of faith in Iceland being capable of operating quality kitchens—it was hard to sustain such businesses until relatively recently.

**Shifting landscape**

Hlynur Jakobsson is the son of the founders, and helps run the place. Speaking mid-service over steam- ing pots of pasta, he described how the tourist boom has affected Hornið. “There has been a lot of growth in restaurants and pop-up restaurants in downtown Reykjavík in a small area,” he says. “We have more com- petition—but there’s always been competition. The big change has been the spread of the two-for-one deals, as locals now expect to pay half as much anywhere they go.”

Hornið clearly hasn’t been deterred by the shifting culi- nary landscape, stick- ing to their ladies and continuing to serve de- pendable Italian fare. This is a continuation of their pioneering work in introducing Italian food to Iceland. They are gener- ally thought to be the first to serve made-to-order pizza in Iceland.

“Dad had to make the pep- peroni from scratch, and we couldn’t find coffee beans anywhere in the country.”

**Italian Restaurant**
Visit Hornið at Hafnarstræti 15

**The O.G.**
Hornið celebrates 40 years of slinging pizza
Words: Ragnar Egilsson  Photo: Art Bieniek

**Italian Restaurant**
Visit Hornið at Hafnarstræti 15

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**The deep**
To coincide with the occasion, Hornið has reopened their base- ment jazz bar, Djiðjó. Dormant since the turn of the century, the bar was well-known as a hang-out for dipsomaniac journalists, and for giving bands their first gig. One band who played their first concert there, under the name of Victory Rose, later changed their name to Sigur Ros. “The jazz bar was another concept we helped introduce to Ice- land,” says Hlynur.

As our time comes to an end, I ask Hlynur what Hornið’s secret is. He gets a wistful look in his eye (or maybe it’s the onions he’s cutting). “It’s a family business from start to finish,” he says. “My dad is still working 40 years later, and myself, my brother and sister divide the roles between us. We don’t change things much, so two generations can sit down and know exactly what to expect. I think the family bond and consistency are the two biggest reasons we’re still around after all this time.”

---

**BEST THAI FOOD 2019**


Ban Thai is not “fast food” restaurants! food made fresh from scratch! it’s not pre-made every meal take some time to cook.
Passport to Spain
Tortillas, tapas and tinto de verano at Björgarðurinn

Words: Shruthi Basappa
Photo: Art Bicnick

Tapas evenings at Björgarðurinn
Visit the restaurant at Þórunnartún 1, Wednesday to Saturday, 3pm to 10pm

“There is something between Icelandic people and Spanish people,” says Esteban Morales, as he sets down a platter of tortilla pintxos in front of us. “I don’t know exactly what it is, but Spanish people feel well and comfortable in Iceland, and Icelandic people feel good in Spain. Maybe it’s the Gulf Stream that we share, I don’t know,” he laughs.

True or not, it’s indisputable that Icelanders have long enjoyed travelling to Spain. Our love for Spanish food has until now been satiated with aspirations of locally reimagined tapas joints. Chefs Esteban Morales and Ernesto More are determined to fill that lacuna with their tapas evenings at Björgarðurinn.

Tapas and Pintxos
A tapa is a hot or cold appetizer or snack, typically had with drinks in Spain. Originally meant as something to cover the top of one’s drink—or so some claim—today it has evolved into one of the cornerstones of Spanish cuisine.

While anything in small portions is a tapa, a pintxo is usually a topping speared or ‘pinched’ to a slice of bread. On this occasion we sampled vegan seitan pintxos with a silky escalivada. “We want to offer something for everyone. Normally tapas are usually meat or fish,” Esteban points out, “but our seitan is house-made and we’d like vegans to be tapas lovers too.” The smoky seitan and the textured so meaty that many of us were successfully fooled.

The Tortilla Test
But the true test of a taperia is its tortilla. Essential to an omelette with potatoes, the spuds and onions are poached in olive oil, eggs stirred in, cooked and flipped. Here, the tortilla is a generous hunk, with fluffy potatoes, custardy eggs in the middle, and enough onions to bring them all together. My Spanish dining companions heartily approve.

Typically diners are late affairs in Spain and ‘ir de tapas’ or to go bar hopping and snack along the way is the customary stop gap until dinner. This laid-back social grazing is hugely popular, and—unsurprisingly—borrowed across the world.

If the first week was any indication, the tapas nights are off to a splendid start. The hauntingly good music by Reynir Hauksson transports one to Granada, and the Flamenco dancing ends up stirring everyone onto their feet by the end of the night. The reasonably-priced bites—from 390 ISK to 890 ISK—are an attractive offer, rounded off with plenty of tinto de verano red wine spritz. Perhaps, a little slice of Spain resides in Reykjavík after all.

You’re supposed to share. But Shruthi was hungry
Grab it before it’s gone

“There’s Catalan food, Basque food, Galician food, Valencian food... Spain isn’t just Flamenco dancers and beaches.”

Diverse regional food
So what can diners expect from the tapas evenings at Björgarðurinn?

Unlike in Spain, in Iceland we don’t have vermuterias or tapas. So a place like Björgarðurinn is ideal,” Esteban explains. “I want to showcase the diversity of regional Spanish food, like this gargaracho.” He passes around some thick, zingy soup made with fresh tomatoes. “It’s an Andalusian dish. There is Catalan food, Basque food, Galician food and Valencian food. I’d like people to know Spain more—it isn’t just Flamenco dancers and beaches.”

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45
The Reykjavík Grapevine
Issue 11—2019

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Iceland’s summer solstice is marked by 24 hours of sun above the horizon, making it possible to watch the sun circumnavigate the sky. This year, solstice lands on June 21st, a Friday, the perfect day to seek out a ritual to mark this pagan holiday. Where midsummer is celebrated with bonfires in other Nordic countries, we make ritual out of a pilgrimage to the natural geothermal fires in the heart of Iceland’s Kerlingarfjöll mountain range.

Unlike last year’s sixty straight days of rain, the start of this year’s summer boasts blue skies, sun, and temperatures in the teens. So much sun, in fact, that the Icelandic Civil Protection authorities declared a persistent drought in the west, warning to take care with human-made fires. With precipitous precipitation and fickle weather the norm, such a dry spell is cause for concern in the land of ice and fire.

The farmlands surrounding the Highlands in the southwest remain verdant despite the drought. As we approach the Highlands, the foliage of southwest Iceland thins to dwarf-birch scrubland, patches of moss, and the occasional stronghold of invasive Alaskan lupin. An early crop of cottongrass (“fífa,” in Icelandic, pronounced “fee-vah”) strains its white tufts in the breeze, and we break into an adapted chorus of Little Willie John’s “Fever”: “Fee-vah! In the morning, fee-vah all through the night!”

**Orange dust balloon**

When the last patch of lupin fades from sight, we know we have officially entered the volcanic desert of Iceland’s Highlands. Here, the lack of rain is palpable. Plumes of orange dust balloon behind every 4x4 driving the Kjölur trail.

Our ride adapts happily to the rough gravel F-road, chugging a decent 40-50 kph along the recently improved route. The road is only open during the summer months—and even then only to 4x4 vehicles—but often closes during winter.

Solstice marks time—24-hours of daylight, the longest day of the year. We pop arctic thyme foraged fresh from the desert to taste homonym.

**Gods’ garden party**

We arrive at Ásgarður—“The Gods’ Garden” in English, and the name of the old Ásatrú gods’ home. The Ásgarður valley cradles Kerlingarfjöll’s mountain resort, where a burbling river flows past the campsite flanked by a rhyolite sphinx. The resort has several good options for rest, including the campsite, charming A-frame chalets, and other newer accommodation buildings. A 45-minute hike up the valley offers a geothermal hot spring for those seeking a natural bath.

We receive keys to La Plata, a charming and basic cabin overlooking the valley, its red paint weather-worn by rough seasons. What it lacks in facilities, it makes up for with views: from our bedroom windows, we see the glaciers Langjökull to the northwest and Hofsjökull to the northeast. The resort bustles with visitors, including several transient international campers. A dozen American teenagers, aged 13 and 14, finish off their Moondance Adventures two-week journey through Iceland with the midnight sun, plokkfiskur, and a game of hearts at Kerlingarfjöll. But the bulk of the visitors have arrived for a special event—a solstice wedding on the bank of the Ásgarðsá river.

**A solstice ritual**

After dinner, with the sun beaming as though mid-day, we set out for the geothermal wonders of Kerlingarfjöll. The hot springs and mud pools of Kerlingarfjöll are magic incarnate. It’s the ultimate solstice destination.

“The hot springs and mud pools of Kerlingarfjöll are magic incarnate. It’s the ultimate solstice destination.”
hill hikes empty of other humans. The air fills with the acrid scent of sulphur, and we gulp in the odd smell—for we know it means geothermal is nearby.

We pick our way carefully, hurriedly down wood planks to the first sulphuric fumarole. Steam hisses from a vent, and water boils beneath the earth's surface. We lay down by the phenomenon to angle our ears closer to the geothermal soundscape.

But we don’t linger for long. A bridge invites us over a chatter- ing creek, lined with more steam vents and boiling masses. The boardwalk disappears and we step timidly along soft yellow ground. To our left is an expanse of sulphur crystals and boiling mud pools, each bubbling puddle a fascination for eye, ear, and nose. One hand laid on the yellow ground reveals geothermal heat beneath the surface on which we crouch. It’s a bewitching, dangerous path, and we learn its beauty with each tentative step.

Up and down hills we wander, watching the northwest sun play with clouds. The landscape shifts its warm colours with each dip of cloud shadow. Fumaroles and mud pools fill the slopes of the rhyolite hills. Time slides past us.

As the sun dips beneath a taller hill, we find the ideal site for ritual. On the nearby riverbank, work has begun to construct a geothermal bathing area. The hot spring’s boiling water slides into a freezing subarctic stream, mixing to an pleasing 37 degrees. We take off our hiking boots and wool socks, and slide our feet into a small waterfall. Water bubbles and gurgles over our toes as we make one wish at this solstice shift.

Warm ground, warm hearts

After a sumptuous sleep in La Plata, we awake to full sun and two glaciers. Our trusty steed gallops again over the rocky F-road of Kjölur as we wind our way north to the geothermal oasis of Hveravellir. This valley is marked by multiple small geysers and calcified rock formed from hot water flowing in thin bursts over years. Peculiar mounds of sulphur belch fumarole steam into the air. We've found yet another hot spot in Iceland’s vast inland desert. Each geyser boils a different rhythm, and we delight at the tiny eruptions spitting water from underground.

After meandering the boardwalk of Hveravellir, we hike into the surrounding lava field in search of circular a’a lava formations. Lava bubbles have cracked into knolls, populated with flora and great nesting grounds for rock ptarmigan. Upon cresting one knoll, we startle a ptarmigan into flight, shuddering loose a few downy feathers as it careens into the field, croaking with surprise.

The knoll itself is a haven for lichen and moss. We spot tea-cup lichen tiny enough to hold dew for a fairy’s drink. Reindeer lichen proliferates. Black lichen curls a witchy bouquet on basalt. The intimate witnessing activated by our geothermal walk extends to close encounters with these lava-field inhabitants. We are once again warmed by the abundance of curious lives who flourish in the heart of Iceland.

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Opening hours:
Thursdays ...............15:00 - 18:00
Fridays .................15:00 - 18:00
Want to visit our factory?
Send us an email varma@varma.is
and we will find time for it!

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Tea cup lichen at Hveravellir
Our gas is running on fumes as we emerge from the belly of the mountain, driving north out of a long single-lane tunnel into the Westfjords’ picturesque Sigandafjörður. As the road winds down the west bank, Kittiwakes and fulmars glide alongside the car. We follow the birds. A rainbow paints the fjord’s mouth as birds and car slow into the quaint fishing village of Suðureyri.

With a population of just 300 people, Suðureyri offers a first-hand experience of an environmentally engaged community in an isolated fjord. The village marina holds an international eco-label Blue Flag for its sustainable environmental management. Suðureyri’s local school is one of two internationally recognised eco-schools in the Westfjords, awarded a Green Flag by the Foundation for Environmental Education.

This village havens immerses the visitor immediately in the homely comfort of a rural community aware of its interdependence with the ecosystem. The swimming pool is nestled at the foot of Breiðafjall, offering a welcome opportunity to contemplate the mountain. After our morning soaks and mountain meditation, the pool’s manager, Ivor, recommends plökkfiskur at Fisherman Café. We head there next.

**True fishing town**

Fisherman is a major attraction for Westfjords authenticity and environmental education done well. The ambitious establishment offers accommodation, a café, a restaurant and a gourmet seafood tour to experience local practices. By the end of our meal, we are on a first-name basis with Viktoria, our café hostess, who we ask to share the secret of the plökkfiskur recipe. No conspiracy is required—it’s on proud display in the back room. Suðureyri proves a warm welcome to Westfjords hospitality.

**Star-crossed plovers**

After our soak and hike, it’s time to fly to our next post. Suðureyri’s only gas pump is permanently closed, so we weigh our options and opt to continue towards Flateyri rather than backtrack to Ísafjörður to refuel. We tunnel into the mountain again, driving south and west for dark kilometres until we emerge to overlook Ónddarfjörður. The valley stretches far below, with the North Atlantic strung by an unexpected white-sand beach on its western bank. We turn right and coast into Ísafjörður, offering a welcome opportunity to contemplate the mountain. After our morning soaks and mountain meditation, the pool’s manager, Ivor, recommends plökkfiskur at Fisherman Café. We head there next.

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side grass, three eggs ready to hatch. The enticing beach is a safe dis-
tance from ducks’ and terns’ breeding
grounds. Socks and shoes slip off rap-
idly. The sand is warm, and the North
Atlantic an almost Mediterranean
aquamarine blue. We are beach babes
below the Arctic circle, plodging and
beachcombing on a mid-teens summer
day.

After a walk under the pier, our de-
sire to learn the secrets of the final eyri
pulls us from our shoreline saunter, so
we pile back into the car in search of
our next bird guide.

The world is our
oystercatcher

After crossing the mountain pass to
Dýrafjörður, Þingeyri appears across
the bay. Oystercatchers line the road.
Plump black-and-white bodies look at
odds with the shock of neon orange
beaks bleating cheeps as we park the
car. One waddles from a gravel nest,
where we spy three more eggs, simi-
larly splotched to the tern eggs, but
larger in size. The village of Þingeyri
feels the most like the place to root
and roost after a pleasant day explor-
ing the fjords.

Simbahöllin Café has a strong roast
brewing, and we refuel ourselves with
a coffee in anticipation of the drive back
to Ísafjörður, through the tunnels and
fjords. The village feels lived-in, famil-
iar, comfortable. If only we could stay
to share the local gossip, learn to play
the langspil, and take up residency in
the co-working centre of Blábankinn.

But there are more birds to follow, and
more slow travel in our futures, so we
set off home, our dreams ready to hatch
and soar.
The tiny Westfjords town of Flateyri juts out into the blue sea of Önundarfjörður on a thin spit of land. The main street has a quiet café, an empty sports field and a lonely gas station. On the pavement, a sole sign proudly proclaims: “Home of Iceland’s oldest store.”

The store in question is The Old Bookstore. I walk into the wood-lined storefront to find the shopkeeper, Eyþór Jóvinsson, behind the counter. He’s dressed in a tweed three-piece suit, and smiles broadly, saying, “Hello! Welcome!”

Licensed to book

Eyþór, it turns out, is the great-grandson of the store’s founder. “My great-grandfather started this business,” he says. He gestures to a display of open ledgers with small hand-written entries filling the pages. “We can trace every penny that has come from the business from day one. I can tell you what we sold exactly 100 years ago.”

Inquiring about the reading habits of people four generations ago, however, is a no-go. “It was just a general store, back then,” says Eyþór. “In 1919, we didn’t even sell books. You needed a license to sell books back in those days. In 1920, we got a license. One corner was the book section. Everything else was food.”

An eccentric selection

The books today are mostly second-hand, and sold by weight for 1,000 ISK per kilogramme. The selection spans everything from nature to medicine to competitive swimming, and from Icelandic-language textbooks to Bridget Jones—and two copies of the David Beckham autobiography. “One of them is in Icelandic,” says Eyþór. “It’s probably the only book I have in two languages.”

There’s also a selection of new editions, including the Halldór Laxness classic ‘World Light’ and Jón Kalman’s ‘Heaven and Hell.’

“There are also some photo books made by Eyþór himself, and others by his friends and associates. It’s an eccentric selection, but one gets the feeling that in this particular store, that’s the continuation of a great tradition.

Walk-in time capsule

The store also acts as a time capsule—both figurative and literal. Visitors can write messages and post them to future Flateyri residents who’ll read them in 100 years. Across the hallway lies the perfectly preserved apartment of the store’s founders—Eyþór’s great-grandparents—who moved there in 1915. It’s a treasure trove of old photographs and decorations, a box of bookbinding tools, and fascinating period furniture and accoutrements.

“Absolutely nothing has been changed since they passed away,” says Eyþór. “My great-grandfather passed away in 1950, and my great-grandmother in 1983—and this house is just how it was that day. Museums have reconstructed homes in the way they think people lived—but this apartment is how it was.”

As I step back out into the street, and the new millennium, something tells me Eyþór’s forebears would be proud that he’s still keeping the lights on at The Old Bookstore.
Residents of the northeast town of Egilsstaðir have had a few reservations about the new Coast Guard surveillance drone which was recently put into operation; amongst them, that the drone would be spying on people just trying to live their lives in the region. The Coast Guard, however, has provided assurances that the drone will only be conducting surveillance when it is flying over the sea, guarding Iceland's eastern coast.

Luxury Travel Guide has announced that, for the second year in a row, West Iceland is the Winter Destination of Europe for 2019. Quite an honour, and entirely unsurprising—Snæfellsnes in particular has often been called “Iceland in miniature” on account of the vast array of natural wonders that can be found there year round.

The famed Ölfusár bridge, aka that bridge you drive over when entering Selfoss from Reykjavík, is getting a makeover this summer. Sandblasters will go over the main framework of the bridge, and then it will be painted wine red, which is the official colour of the Selfoss Youth Association. The paint job will give the iconic bridge a little more pop and pizzazz.

South: Best Café
Friðheimar

Friðheimar, near Flúðir, is a café experience like no other. Located inside a large tomato greenhouse, it’s a verdant haven where you can taste soups, pasta sauces and Bloody Marys that are as fresh as possible. There’s a bread buffet to fill up on, and basil plants on the table to garnish your delicious homegrown tomato soup. Eating amongst the vines rejuvenates your mind, body and spirit. Booking recommended.

Reykjaness: Best Museum
Viking World

There are a lot of Viking-themed stops around Iceland, but nowhere else will you find a full longboat replica. Viking World in Njarðvík allows you to set foot on the Íslenningur, a longboat built in 1996 and modelled after the famous Gokstad vessel—a close-to-complete Viking ship that was excavated in Norway in 1882. You’ll also find a Smithsonian-produced exhibition spanning the Viking era.

West: Best Pool
Krauma

Asking for an Icelander’s favourite bathing spot is sensitive business. One panellist said their favourite is “somewhere I want to keep a secret so it doesn’t get too busy.” Still, several panellists sang the praises of the Krauma spa, with one declaring it a “10/10.” It’s a stark and stylish place featuring steam rooms and hot pots powered by the sulphurous water of Deildartunguhver. Your muscles will thank you.
It's a good year to be Þrymskviða. Importantly, thanks Drag-Súgur!

RuPaul's Drag Race! And more open arms: drag queens! (Thanks, bitches has finally welcomed with the mainstream world of basic hijinks, but, most importantly, drag is art.)

This poem is one of the shortest, sweeter, and funniest things to ever happen to Old Norse society. It's about Þórr and his zany antics, but, most importantly, it features something that even the mainstem world of basic birches has finally welcomed with open arms: drag queens! (Thanks, RuPaul's Drag Race! And more importantly, thanks Drag-Súgur!) It's a good year to be Þrymskviða.

One day, Þórr wakes to find his special hammer missing. He throws a tantrum like the manchild that he is, yelling at Loki to go and find the hammer for him. Loki borrows a magic shirt from Freyja that allows him to fly. Since Þórr has a bad habit of brutally butchering giants for shits and giggles, he figures Giantland is a good place to look. He flies straight up to a giant named Þrymur and asks, "Did you steal Þórr's hammer?"

"Sure did," the smug bastard tells him. "And he won't get it back again until the goddess Freyja marries me!"

Lýa takes on the world of TV

Gentlemen, start your engines

The Reykjavík Grapevine Issue 10 — 2018

Grimm Pickings

A few nights ago I was scavenging Netflix for anything I could have playing in the background while working. My criteria are simple: a series to have more than two seasons, it must be somewhat entertaining, and it can't have anything to do with sexual predators.

After rummaging around for a while, I came across Grimm. Six seasons, non-sexual monsters, 86% on Rotten Tomatoes, whoof! Believed, I lowered my butt into the butt-shaped groove I've diligently fashioned in the sofa and hit play. At first, the show reminded my of Buffy the Vampire Slayer and I got excited, but then I remembered there's no Buffy and no Spike. More importantly, there are no jokes. The two things the series have in common are visual effects where people's faces turn into monsters except they are called Wesen, which I found funny because the word "wesen" in Icelandic means "a minor nuisance."

I couldn't for the life of me name a single actor or actress. In fact, all the cast looks like they are some famous actor's uncle or sister. I wish I had the number of Joss Whedon so I could ignore time zones and annoy him in the middle of the night with this "great idea."

And may the best woman win

Although he objects as well, their only option is to dress Pórr up in Freyja's wedding clothes, complete with the aforementioned necklace. Loki is low-key super jealous and offers to dress as a handmaiden in order to accompany Pórr to his "wedding." So here you have it. Two super macho Norse gods walk up into Giant-land in full drag, serving bridal realness. And Pórr is liiliiving for it.

They sit down to feast and Pórr is a little hit put off that "Freyja's" has eaten a whole cow, eight salmon, every single dessert, and chugged three whole barrels of mead. "Damn, she hungry!" he says. Her "maid" explains that she was so excited that she didn't eat for days before coming. Pórr peeks under "Freyja's" veil and is gagged. "Damn, she ugly too!" he says. Her "maid" explains that she is so excited she hasn't slept either.

Pórr makes his sister bring in Mjölnir so they can swear their marital oath over it. Pórr grabs the hammer, crushes the skulls of Þrymur and his sister, slaughters all the other guests, does a sickening death drop, and sashays away. Talk about a red wedding, henny.

Morals of the story:
1. Drag is art.
2. Weddings always end in disappointment.
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What Is The World Coming To?
Words: Felix Robertson

Is Reykjavík safe? I don’t want to venture into any BAD neighbourhoods! With a crime rate merely 291 times lower than Vatican City, it’s reasonable to be wary about crime in Iceland’s capital. Certainly in some of Reykjavík’s ghettos you need to keep your wits about you. Recently some hapless tourists ventured into the dark underbelly of Reykjavík and actually tripped over a cat. Others have described seeing houses that Icelanders actually live in, rather than just Airbnbs. What a slut! Be careful out there, folks.

Recently, a friend of mine came out as cisgender. While I respect all gender identities, I do wonder if my friend is just trying to be cool and trendy, as it seems everyone is cis these days. Should I call them out? Of course you should call them out. People only make changes as profound as cisgender. While I respect all gender identities, I do wonder if my friend is just trying to be cool and trendy, as it seems everyone is cis these days. Should I call them out? Of course you should call them out. People only make changes as profound as cisgender.

How do I become a Social Media influencer? It’s actually not that hard. All you need to do is set up a sinisterly named transnational corporation which harvests user data on a sweeping and systematic scale and use this information to twist digital algorithms and spread politically extreme hate speech. Congratulations, you’re an influencer?

Never Underestimate A Drifter
Words: Hannah Jane Cohen Photo: Eve Online

Last week, the nerds of the MMORPG EVE Online were shocked by a surprise attack—no, not of heart disease from all the Dominos consumption—but by a hoard of NPCs that have destroyed everything in their wake. Enter the douchebag Drifters.

For losers, a NPC (non-playable character) is someone created by the developers, meaning there’s no human on the other side of it, just a bleak computer-generated consciousness. In EVE, one of these NPC factions are the Drifters—think space pirates—who, until now, have been but a minor annoyance. That is, until completely out of nowhere, hoards of them attacked every square inch of the Null-sec region of space—more or less the wild, west wild of EVE—en masse, destroying everything in their path. Nerds around the world sat in shock as they watched their carefully constructed citadels and ships fall to what they would have previously considered mosquitoes. Seriously, watch it on Twitch. It’s comedy gold.

Ozymandias returns
While this might seem like a normal thing to happen in an online game, in EVE, it’s completely unprecedented. The foundation of the game has always been player-on-player drama, complete with the espionage, theft and war that entails. Never has NPC-drama even entered the consciousness of players as a notable problem. Before this, getting killed by a Drifter would be totally embarrassing. That said, with the onslaught of Drifters, all other wars in the system have been halted. The Imperium and TEST Alliance have retreated to their home stations and all over-space campaigns called off. Multiple Reddit threads had players pleading surrender to the developers. So perhaps this was a good thing, an Ozymandias-esque move to promote peace in the system.

When reached for comment, the Drifters simply burned down the Grapevine office. Pity.

Send your unsolvable (UNTIL NOW) problems to editor@grapevine.is or tweet us at @grapevine.is

The House at Eyrarbakki

Annesysla Heritage Museum is located in Austur-Haus, the House, historical home of the Danish merchants built in 1705. Haus is one of the oldest houses in Iceland and a beautiful monument of Eyrarbakki’s time as the biggest trading place on the north coast. Today one can enjoy exhibitions about the story and culture of the region, famous plans, house made-out of human hair and the Krisp pot, are among items. Haus prides itself with warm and homely atmosphere.
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Whether you love it or loathe it, heart it or unfollow it, today’s Iceland is an Instagrammer’s dream. Sure, visitors to Iceland want to experience nature and feel waterfall spray on their faces—but they also want to keep their iPhone screens dry whilst documenting themselves doing it.

And hey, whatever. We don’t judge. The Grapevine has an Instagram, and we too take pleasure in communicating how humbling, mesmerising and sublime Iceland’s wilderness can be. Over the last decade and a half, we’ve visited the most remote parts of the country to express this stunning place to our readers.

Recently, however, a new type of comment has started appearing on such posts. Replies like “Please don’t give away this place!” and “This isn’t for everyone!” have become frequent, from Icelanders, expats and visitors alike.

It’s a strange phenomenon, given that these commenters read Grapevine for the very articles they’re asking us not to post. After all, the Grapevine isn’t some all-powerful megaphone that directs the Goretex masses to every bathing place we cover. Nor are we gatekeepers of what our readers shouldn’t know about—but rather a gateway to what they should. And if someone sees one of our shots and decides to rent a 4x4 and drive 400km to an obscure F-road in the Westfjords to take a dip? They’ve most definitely earned it.

That said, we sympathise with people who are concerned about the effects of tourism on nature. On this, we agree, and we take every opportunity to encourage respect for the landscape, and to hold those in power accountable for improving infrastructure and providing proper parking, signage, marked trails, and other basic facilities.

But for those who think this country’s wild places are somehow their secret to keep? Jog on, people. It was never yours, and you should really get used to sharing.

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