

#MeToo

News: Conference tackles first two years of movement

gugusar

Culture: Iceland's newest, brightest, rising star

Ian McEwan

Books: Literature and the power of imagination

Húsavík

Travel: Hidden gems and remote surprises

It's Always Fun

Sindri Már Sigfússon, the mind behind **Seabear** and **Sin Fang**, talks about

To

blind luck, the changing face of the **music industry**, and why it took so long to believe in his **success**.

Self-sabotage!

PERFORMING AT ICELAND AIRWAVES

Plus!

GIG GUIDE × **CITY MAP** × **TRAVEL IDEAS** × **FOOD**



COVER PHOTO:
Anna Maggy
[instagram.com/not_annahmaggy](https://www.instagram.com/not_annahmaggy)

Anna Maggy's only brief for the cover was "go nuts". Her artful, experimental style has won her accolades.

Her hugely popular Instagram feed is an absolute must, a joy to behold. With Sindri's love of experimentation, their work together on the cover is a match made in heaven.

First



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EDITORIAL

The World Is Like Inflight Smoking

Think about it like this: the world is like inflight smoking. You remember that time? Probably not, unless you were born in the early eighties. But once, when we were ignorant, adults thought it was okay to smoke inside planes. The same vehicles that recycle the air and spew it back out, because no one can open the window to let fresh air in unless you want to crash and die.

But not everyone liked to smoke. Like children. Like people that weren't that fond of lung cancer. Or people that didn't like crashing. So the smokers made these no-smoking areas in the planes—like it made any difference at all—because those passengers had to have their cigars and cigarettes, no matter what. And they were merciful, allowing us to have a small space without their air pollution.

So imagine this, if these smok-

ers—men in suits that are of course sitting at first-class—refused to stop smoking, the air in the plane would run out within hours, with the consequence being that everyone in the plane would suffocate and die.

You would imagine that all the smokers would quit immediately—if not only to save themselves—right? No, let's imagine that they would refuse to stop, even with warnings of their impending doom fresh in their mind minds.

Imagine next that the pilot, the one that captains the plane, would talk to those smokers and ask them to quit for the greater good. But they are too afraid of smokers, as they're the customers bringing in serious money for the airline and spending the most on the inflight services. The pilots agree that it's

more simple to do nothing and just hope for the best and keep their key customers satisfied.

So what would happen amongst the passengers on the plane? The kids would revolt. They would realise that the grown-ups are failing them. They would say, this is our future, and demand that these fuming bastards put out their cigarettes for the rest of the trip and save everyone from destruction.

The flight attendants politely ask the suits in first-class to reduce their smoking because the kids' eyes are burning from the smoke. They agree to this, grudgingly, but they still have some Cuban cigars that just need to be smoked, and it makes no difference to the oxygen - it's all burning up anyway. And are we even sure that the smoke is the true reason for the air is running out?

Well, first class is not convinced.

Messed up, right? I mean, who wouldn't butt out their cigarette in a situation like that? But hey, it's just hypothetical.

Now imagine if the pilot was Donald Trump (or any other world leader turning a blind eye to climate emergency), the passengers in first class were the richest one per cent, and the kid in the back of the plane—the hope of the future—was Greta Thunberg.

No, sorry, that's just some silly fiction. Kids aren't allowed to have an opinion about their future in the real world.

This metaphor is borrowed from the former mayor of Reykjavík Jón Gnarr, and it's a point worth translating to English. VG ☞



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



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



Alexander Jean **Edvard Le Sage de Fontenay** is a Reykjavik-born part-time DJ (under the pseudonym Bervit), event-planner and lover of art, creation and aesthetics. Most recent endeavors include co-producing The Grapevine's own Grassroots concerts at Húrra and LungA Art Festival's busy event schedule.



Lea Müller first came to Reykjavik in 2016. Three years of long-distance, a bachelor's degree in cultural and business studies, and uncountable visits to Iceland later, she finally decided to move here. Apart from her writing, she's currently learning to let go of her perfectionism by learning Icelandic.



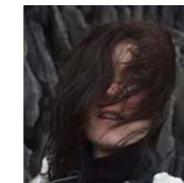
Samuel O Donnell Sam is an English major from The United States. He has his Bachelor's Degree, and keeps telling himself that this is the year he will begin pursuing his Master's. In his spare time, he enjoys playing video games, writing short horror stories, listening to all kinds of metal, and reading.



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



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



a rawlings is Grapevine's literature correspondent, also covering environmental news, travel, and more. An interdisciplinary artist whose work focuses on environmental ethics, dysfluency, and watery bodies, her books include 'Wide slumber for lepidopterists' and 'Sound of Mull.'



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

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A fraction of the Icelanders at the Climate Strike

What Are Icelanders Talking About?

Sparks a-flyin' in your newsfeed

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

NEWS Possibly the hottest topic in Iceland right now is the controversy within the ranks of the police. It turns out that **National Police Commissioner Haraldur Johannessen is not a popular guy** within his own ranks. Eight out of Iceland's nine police chiefs have filed statements of no confidence against him, as well as the Police Federation of Iceland. They have all characterised his tenure—an office he has held since 1998—has been marred by mismanagement, unnecessary spending, and what Arinbjörn Snorrason, chair of the Reykjavík Police Officers Union, called “ruling by fear”. The highest authority over the police, Minister of Justice Áslaug Arna Sigurbjörnsdóttir, has stated that while **Haraldur will not be stepping down**, that her Ministry is working on “reorganising and restructuring” the police hierarchy. Such changes may see Haraldur pushed into an obscure middle-management position to mollify him. Only time will tell.

People are both surprised and not surprised by recent polling which shows the **Independence Party at their lowest levels of support ever**. Yes, even lower than right after the banks collapsed. On the one hand, this is unsurprising given the bevy of unpopular policy positions the party has taken up. On the other hand, it is a little bit surprising, given that the Independence Party is more than a political party; it's an Icelandic cultural institution, and their levels of

support are usually pretty stable, even in times of tremendous crisis. Parliamentary elections will be held in 2021, barring any unforeseen circumstances, so it's entirely possible this situation won't last long.

Icelanders took part in the **Global Climate Strike** held on September 20th, which stands to

reason given that the climate crisis is melting our glaciers, which could lead to more volcanic eruptions and earthquakes, and our shorelines are already being drastically affected. Hundreds of Icelanders marched through downtown Reykjavík to Austurvöllur, the square in front of Parliament, to demand the government takes action. Meanwhile on social media, some Icelanders have swallowed the alt-right talking points against Swedish climate activist Greta Thunberg, but these Icelanders are very few and far between, and are largely shouted down by people who actually would rather not see the end of the world in their lifetimes. Imagine that. ❖



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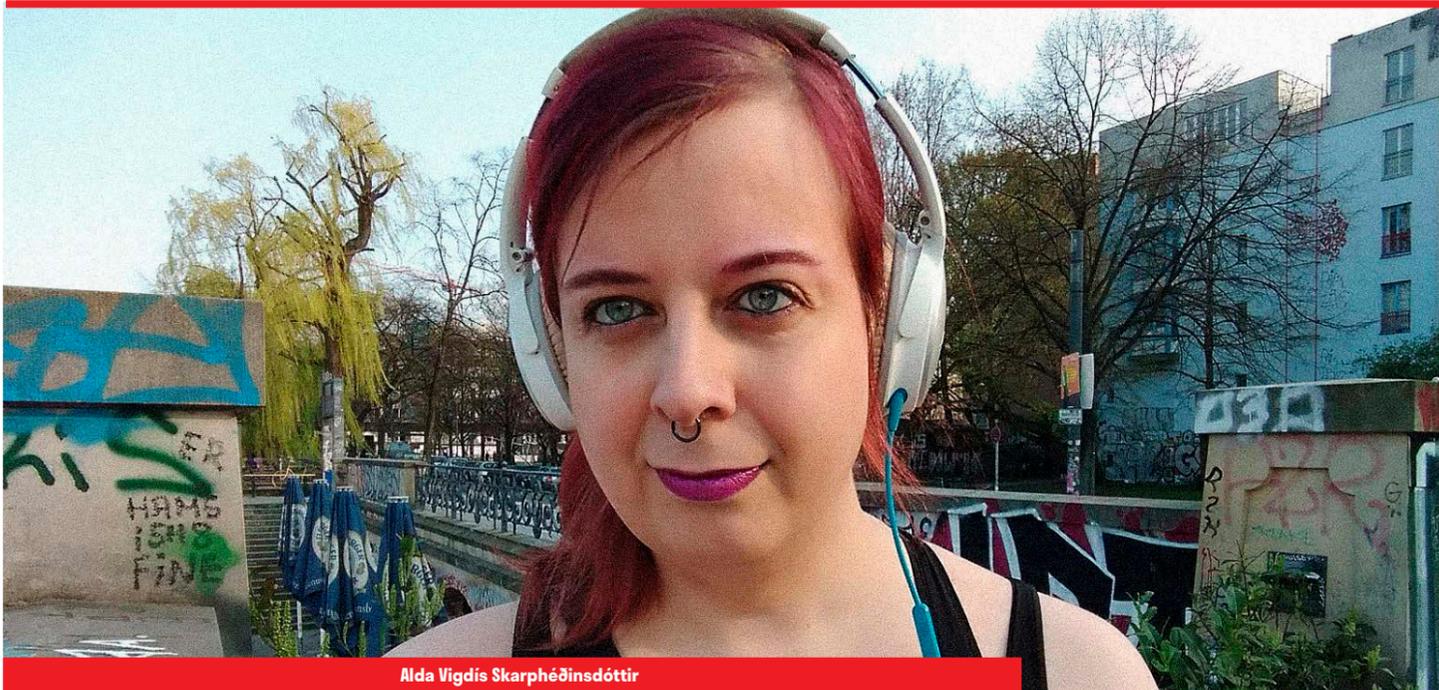
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Alda Vigdís Skarphéðinsdóttir

Trans Woman Denied Proper Name And Gender Registration

Despite legal changes, the National Registry plays by old rules

NEWS

Alda Vigdís Skarphéðinsdóttir, an Icelandic trans woman with a legal address in Germany, was denied being able to change her name and registered gender with Iceland's National Registry. While the Registry cited her legal address as the reason for their rejection, Iceland's gender determination law makes no such provision. In fact, the new law specifically abolished such hindrances when it was

passed. Alda tells the Grapevine that she has filed an appeal on the matter.

Alda is an Icelandic citizen who has lived in Berlin for the past five years now and began her transition there about three years ago. When Iceland passed its gender determination law—which eliminated the many medical and legal hoops that trans people have had to go through in the past in order to change their legally registered name and

gender—Alda sought to do exactly that.

Kafka on our shores

The new law contains only one condition for being able to make these changes: that any person in the National Registry need only be 18-years old or older. However, **the Registry rejected Alda's changes based on her having a legal address in Germany.** The Registry has insisted that she must make these changes in Germany and provide the Registry with documentation to this effect.

However, Alda is not a German national but an Icelandic citizen, and so German law does not provide her with the ability to change her registered gender there.

While the Registry told the Grapevine that they are following the "guiding principle" of international civil law, Alda has appealed the matter. *More in-depth coverage of this story can be found at grapevine.is/news.*

Words: **Andie Fontaine**

Photo: **Alda Vigdís Skarphéðinsdóttir**

FOOD OF ICELAND

Saltfiskur



Over a millennium ago, Vikings traded not with gold coins or fur pelts, but with salted cod, or saltfiskur.

And it's no wonder; the stuff is delicious. Cod, like any other animal product, doesn't last long without preservation, and, with the dawn of the refrigerator still a thousand years off, the Vikings had to use salt.

The modern process of making saltfiskur involves covering a tray with salt, placing the cod on

the tray, then covering the cod with salt. If it looks like there's too much salt on the cod, that means it needs a little more. After that, the cod must be refrigerated for a day, and then rinsed in cold water. Then it is wrapped in muslin and refrigerated for a week. At this point, it will keep for several weeks.

It is then baked or pan-fried in butter. The result is a dish with a slightly crispy outer layer and a smooth, satiny texture on the inside. As for the flavour, it is salty, but not overwhelmingly so. It's also chock full of protein. **SO**

ASK A

Historian

Q: Why Did Iceland Switch From Driving On The Right To The Left?



Words: **Andie Fontaine**
Photo: **Ásgeir Ásgeirsson**

Odd as it may seem today, there was a time when Icelanders drove in the left lane. However, that changed in 1968, and we sought out historian Stefán Pálsson to explain why:

"That Iceland didn't switch to the right lane before 1968 can be explained by a blend of laziness and unluckiness. The Danes adopted right lane traffic, like most European nations, in the wake of the French Revolution. Although Iceland was a Danish colony, it didn't occur to us to import this rule—ultimately, it was hard to talk about actual roads or traffic in Iceland at that time.

"Cars arrived in the early 20th century, and as they grew in number, the pressure grew to adopt traffic laws that would be in harmony with our neighbouring countries, especially as the cars we were importing were designed for right lane traffic.

"We finally decided to make the change in 1940. However, shortly before the regulation was enacted, Iceland became occupied by the British, who of course drive on the left, so it was considered wisest to wait on making the switch.

"By the end of the 1960s, Iceland was facing a monumental transportation infrastructure project, and it was clear that it would be expensive to make any changes to it once complete. And so it was decided to push ourselves into the traffic lane used by the rest of Europe. This was undoubtedly encouraged by Sweden making the switch in 1967. The Swedish government had actually decided on the switch many years before, but made the mistake of putting it up for referendum, and the right lane traffic was resoundingly defeated. The government had the sense next time around not to ask the people what they thought."

Volcano & Earthquake Exhibition

Photo: Eyjafjallajökull Eruption 2010



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The Sailor's Guide To Superstitions

Arr! Shiver me timbers!

ICELANDIC SUPERSTITIONS

Words: Valur Grettisson

Photo: Art Bicnick

So you want to be a sailor, eh, matey? Well, not so fast. There are a few **ground rules** we need to cover before you push off into the crushing Atlantic.

No pointing

First, check if your shiny new sailor clothes were sewn on a Sunday. Because if they were, buddy, you are screwed. It means that you will no doubt die at sea. Now, before you head out, don't you dare throw a rock in your boat lest you

want it to sink later on. And don't be childish and point at a ship, as that will have the same repercussions. Yeah, apparently that's a real thing.

Once you're chugging out to sea, no matter your mood don't even think of whistling. You are practically daring the wind to smite you.

Sleep tight

Well you've survived up until now, and even caught some delicious cod, but

you also got some tiny weird fish. You'll just toss your unintended catch back to the sea, right? Jesus, what are you, a madman!? **Do not throw fish overboard—for then you are feeding none other than the devil himself.** And that means you're gonna die out there.

Now then, it was a productive day, and you deserve a good night's sleep. But keep your wits about you because sleep brings about the most important part of the job: dreams.

If you dream of blood, a broken engine, or some other calamity, wake the hell up and sail straight home. But if you dream of nets overflowing with fish, wake up and start dragging those suckers on board. The same goes with some women; dream of your old lady, and you're in luck.

So remember: The real luck on the ocean is not fishing well, but to return safely. Still interested in earning your sea legs? 🍷

JUST SAYINGS

„Að tefla við páfann“

This is probably the first idiom that many Icelandic kids learn. It literally means “playing chess with the pope.” But the meaning is far from literal. **So when you're playing chess with the pope, well, good luck, because that means you're taking a well-earned dump.** The origin is from the middle of the 18th century and was probably meant to disrespect the pope himself. But no one's really sure about why this became a thing.



Probably because Icelanders secretly hate Catholics (we're Lutherans), and we thought it was hilarious. Poop (and Pope) jokes always are. **VG** 🍷

LÓABORATORIUM



GRAPEVINE PLAYLIST



RYBA - Stalker
This one is dark. The beat is intrusive, like when your heart is pounding and you can't calm it down. RYBA has put the melancholy and dread of walking the streets of Reykjavik in autumn into a cleverly crafted song. Be prepared to feel gloomy. **LM**



Mr. Silla - Butter on it
Mr. Silla is perhaps the best-kept secret in Icelandic music. She's an incredibly talented singer, but also has a smooth and cool vibe about her music. Her new song, “Butter on it,” is a fantastic sombre trip-hop-ish track with a crying electric guitar and some deep backup vocals care of Páll Ivan frá Eðlum. What's not to like? **VG**



Birgir Hákon - Starmyrri
How do you pretend to be a gangsta rapper in the safest country in the world? Well, Birgir Hákon adopts the gangsta vibes straight from American hip hop (cultural appropriation anyone?). He raps about the money that he doesn't have and the handgun that he definitely doesn't have. But is it fun? Sure. As a fiction, it works. Is the song well composed? Not really. But the attitude definitely is. **VG**



Án & Jóhanna Elísa - Whoever/However
Án (Elvar Smári) is the epitome of Iceland's bright future in electronic music, IMO. In his new song, he gets an assist from Jóhanna Elísa (from the band Atería) to sing the melody. The song is solidly crafted and the melody is beautiful. It's the perfect song for heartbroken people and pretentious editors-in-chief in a mid-life crisis. **VG**

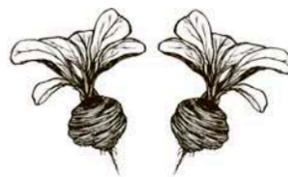


Hrim - Tryst
This chill track has dark undertones. The heavy beat pounds through the entire song while a light melody in a minor key plays underneath. “Save me from myself,” sings Ósp Eldjárn. Dark lyrics undercutting nice music. **SPO**



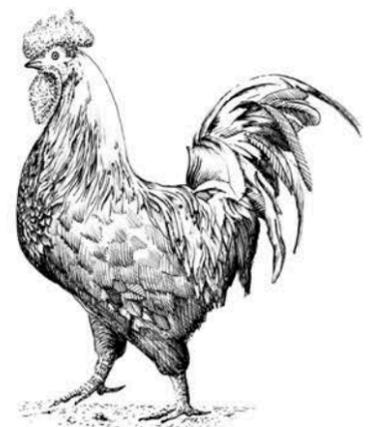
Marina Ósk - Ég sit hér í grasinu
If you're learning Icelandic, you should check out the video to this song. It's a slow melody and easy to follow because Marina shows you bits of paper with the lyrics on them. This is perhaps as far from parental advisory explicit content as it gets. **LM**

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TV GODDESS

Archibald's Next Big Thing



I have around 38 years of cartoon watching under my belt. I never stopped watching cartoons, even when most people my age moved onto other things. When I first heard Eric Cartman's voice in 'South Park,' I had trouble breathing from laughing. When I came to, I spent a long time trying to perfect my Cartman impression. My older sister was not a fan of my constant stream of Simpson's quotes. I remember the Cartoon Network's 90s revival; it was glorious. Now I have a kid, so I can compare my cartoon watching habits to those of a child who doesn't always share my taste.

A few Saturday mornings ago I was a big ol' duvet larva, dozing on and off on the couch. My son was wielding the remote when the image of a heretofore unknown yellow chicken overtook the screen.

"Shit, this looks boring," I thought to myself. As a rule, I try not to impose my negative opinions onto my heir because I don't want to taint his personal pop-culture taste buds. So I said nothing.

Then an amazing thing happened: this yellow chicken, the titular Archibald, turned out to be lovely and fun and voiced by the one and only Tony Hale—Buster from 'Arrested Development!' I can't think of a better voice for this happy chicken constantly embarking on zany adventures.

The series is also created by Hale, and it was so fun that we binged watched until our eyes were sore. It's silly and positive, funny and delightful. The only negative thing I can say is that Archibald has three siblings and only one of them is a girl—a very smart girl. Cartoons need more girls and I would love if some of them were dumb. LH 🍷

FOOTBALL



Qatar Bows, Tyrants Froth, Óðinn Rages & More

Commanded by former Iceland coach, Heimir Hallgrímsson, The Red Devils have excelled this season

Words: **Greig Robertson**

Illustration: **Lóa Hlín Hjálmtýsdóttir**

After millenia of scorching heat, a biting cold has engulfed Qatar. Aron Gunnarsson's relentless typhoon of destruction has the nation quaking in its boots, with scores of the population declaring their allegiance to Al Arabi just to avoid his wrath. But in his absence, the iron fist ruling over Europe has unclenched. Drained of energy, Gylfi and Jói have been ordered to recharge, with the remaining horde forced to pick up the slack. Here's how they fared in recent weeks:

Aron and Heimir's EXTREMELY well-oiled machine

Tony Blair and George Bush's mouths were frothing when they heard

murmurings of a weapon of mass destruction in the Middle East. But, to their disappointment, it was actually real—found in Qatar, in the form of Stars League toppers, Al Arabi. Commanded by former Iceland coach, Heimir Hallgrímsson, The Red Devils have excelled this season, thanks mainly to the summer addition of Aron Gunnarsson. The bearded beheader has already scored twice for his new club, who duel with third-placed Al Sadd on September 27th.

PL warlords enter early hibernation

During a recent summoning to Valhalla, Gylfi Sigurðsson and Jóhann Berg Guðmundsson were ordered to

conserve their energy for next month's crunch EURO qualifiers against France and Andorra. All told, Óðinn's decrees made for a drab weekend in the English Premier League, in which the former sent a spirit in his place to Everton's 0-2 home defeat to Sheffield United, and the latter sought shelter in his rúgbrauð bunker to avoid selection for Burnley's 2-0 smiting of Norwich. As part of his gruelling subterranean strength and conditioning program, Jói is obliged to consume 18 loaves of the good stuff per day. Yikes.

Earth to scorch for Rúnar despite United defeat

Rúnar Már Sigurjónsson's Astana FC narrowly missed out on a famous scalp in their Europa League opener against Manchester United at Old Trafford. Though the Kazakh champions were eventually cut open by a slaloming Mason Greenwood run and finish, they can take plenty of positives from the 1-0 defeat into their remaining first-round fixtures against Partizan Belgrade and AZ Alkmaar. No doubt the Eurasian giants will be looking for inspiration from their Icelandic number 10 to give them a chance of smiting a Champions League reject in the knockouts.

Another civil war brews

But Rúnar Már's success could come to the detriment of our boys starlet Albert Guðmundsson, whose Alkmaar side secured a 2-2 away draw against Partizan in Group L. They face United next and will be overtaken by the Kazakhs if they fail to win and Astana secure all three points against Partizan at home. The last thing the national team needs is a fight to the death for the runner up spot, so Erik Hamrén has ordered team doctors to remove the pair's teeth during the next international break.

Finnbo fit and firing

It's no secret that FC Augsburg's flirtations with the relegation zone becomes an all-out dry hump when Alfreð Finnbogason is on the treatment table. And this season is no different. Finnbo bagged a crucial assist in the Bavarians' only win of the season: a 2-1 felling of Eintracht Frankfurt. To retain their Bundesliga status, Augsburg will be as reliant as ever on the Icelandic hitman. For now, they sit in 11th place. 🍷

Follow our live-tweets on Euro qualification matchdays on Twitter at @rvkgrapevine. Iceland's march to the Euro 2020 trophy will continue throughout 2019.

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The scene at Harpa last week

Moving Forward With The #MeToo Conference

Activists, researchers, politicians, and locals discuss gender inequality

Words: a rawlings
Photo: Art Bicnick
 The inaugural #MeToo: Moving Forward conference was held in Reykjavik from September 17th to 19th. Co-sponsored by the Nordic Council of Ministers, the Government of Iceland, and the Institute for Gender Equality and Difference at the University of Iceland, it provided a platform to

discuss structural aspects of gender inequality, which enable sexual violence and other gender-based harassment. Host Kolbrún Halldórsdóttir outlined the conference's focus. **"We will dig deep into the effect of this social phenomenon**—some call it

a revolution. We will be focusing on three key issues: #MeToo: why now, #MeToo: what next, and #MeToo in the Nordic countries."

#ÉgLiká

With 800 registered participants and 80 speakers over the course of three days, the conference was opened with an address from Iceland's Prime Minister Katrín Jakobsdóttir. "It's been two years since millions of women across the world used the simple but powerful hashtag #MeToo. How can

we make sure that collective demands result in enduring structural change?" The Prime Minister emphasised the revelation that laws are not enough to address sexual harassment. She also commented on how shocked she was in learning about the severity and prevalence of gender violence towards women of foreign origin in Iceland. "When migrant women spoke out, many of us here in Iceland were devastated," Katrín revealed. "They described levels of multiple discrimination that most of us had hoped didn't exist in Iceland. By doing so, they exposed the fact that while we have made massive progress on gender equality, we have not sufficiently confronted the intersections of gender, racial, and class injustices. I believe this holds true for the other Nordic countries as well."

W.O.M.E.N.

The Prime Minister's acknowledgement of the realities faced by immigrant women in Iceland was a touchstone in her speech and a later panel discussion. "The first time she said it, I was quite moved," recalls Randi Stebbins, conference attendee and human rights activist. "It was quite moving for me as an immigrant woman in this community who has worked on these issues. As an immigrant woman, I didn't know these conversations were going on here until they got published. It's the in-group deciding who gets the space." Prior to moving to Iceland with her family, Randi worked for several years as a lawyer in the United States with undocumented

"Gender violence is the most pandemic form of violence in the world."

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immigrant populations who were victims of violent crimes. “I volunteer as a peer counselor at W.O.M.E.N. in Iceland,” Randi said of her own contribution to the #MeToo movement. “As a lawyer or a peer counsellor, you never know what story is going to come in. But I’m always humble when somebody does come in and share with me because usually this is not someone I know.”

At the #MeToo conference, the work of W.O.M.E.N. was presented by founding member Tatjana Latinović. She is also the Chair of the Icelandic Women’s Rights Association. Since its inception in 2003, W.O.M.E.N. has provided women of foreign origin with support ranging from financial advice to harassment issues.

50 years

“Women have been saying ‘me too’ for a very long time,” Angela Davis began her keynote address. “But it was not until two years ago that these issues started to be taken seriously within the mainstream.”

“When we began to forcefully speak out against the physical and sexual abuse of women, we did not know that it would be 50 years before this ideological structure against gender violence would begin to yield material results,” she said, outlining the larger history leading up to the #MeToo movement. “50 years of anti-rape hotlines, 50 years of battered women’s shelters, 50 years of activist commitment, protests, marches, demonstrations. **Solidarity and struggle does eventually yield change.** The #MeToo movement is a stunning example.”

Angela noted especially the contribution of Icelandic women to structural changes started in the 20th

century. “We’re here in Iceland, Iceland which has a long history of taking the lead in struggles for women’s equality. When the majority of women here went out on strike, they were demonstrating to the world that movements could initiate processes of structural transformation.”

Laws don’t work

Angela’s keynote subsequently addressed the problematics attached to individualized legal strategies. **“Gender violence is the most pandemic form of violence in the world.** We’re rarely called upon to reflect on the structural and institutional underpinnings of these violences. Remaining at the level of the individual will condemn us to endless repetition of the same punitive solutions. Punitive approaches will not solve the structural problem.”

Angela concluded her address with a complex message of hope, a powerful way to direct the conference’s consideration of gender violence and sexual harassment. “I do wonder whether we can eradicate it,” she said, “but I do believe.”

Everything is all wrong

A rousing address by Danish human rights activist Emma Holten provided the first bolstering moment of the conference. After a personal experience with revenge porn, Emma became a significant voice on social media in the Nordic #MeToo movement. While discussions throughout the conference focused on structural and systematic changes needed, the personal realities of survivors had a felt presence.

“Ministers, I want to address you,” said Emma. “Ask yourself whether you

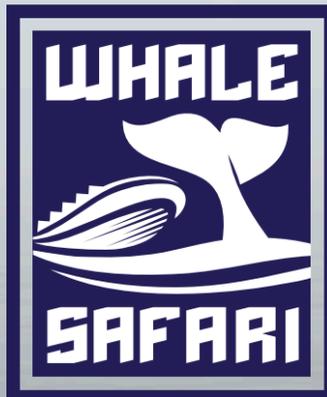


Prime Minister Katrín Jakobsdóttir addresses the crowd

are an hysteric. The hysteric says, if we were living in a well-functioning society, this would not happen. Ever. To the hysteric, the violation and the harassment is proof, is a symbol of the fact that the society is not functioning. What patriarchy does is that anyone who challenges the idea that society is functioning in the right way is immediately termed an irrational person. The only way the marginalized person can succeed is to fastly hold on to the idea that everything is alright.”

#Me2

This inaugural conference covered perpetrator accountability, disabled women and #MeToo, sexual harassment at work and in higher education, consent, care, and the backlash against #MeToo. Moving forward for the Nordic countries means ending sexual harassment as necessary for gender equality. This is the focus for the Nordic co-operation Programme on Gender Equality 2019-2022. 🍷

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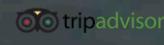


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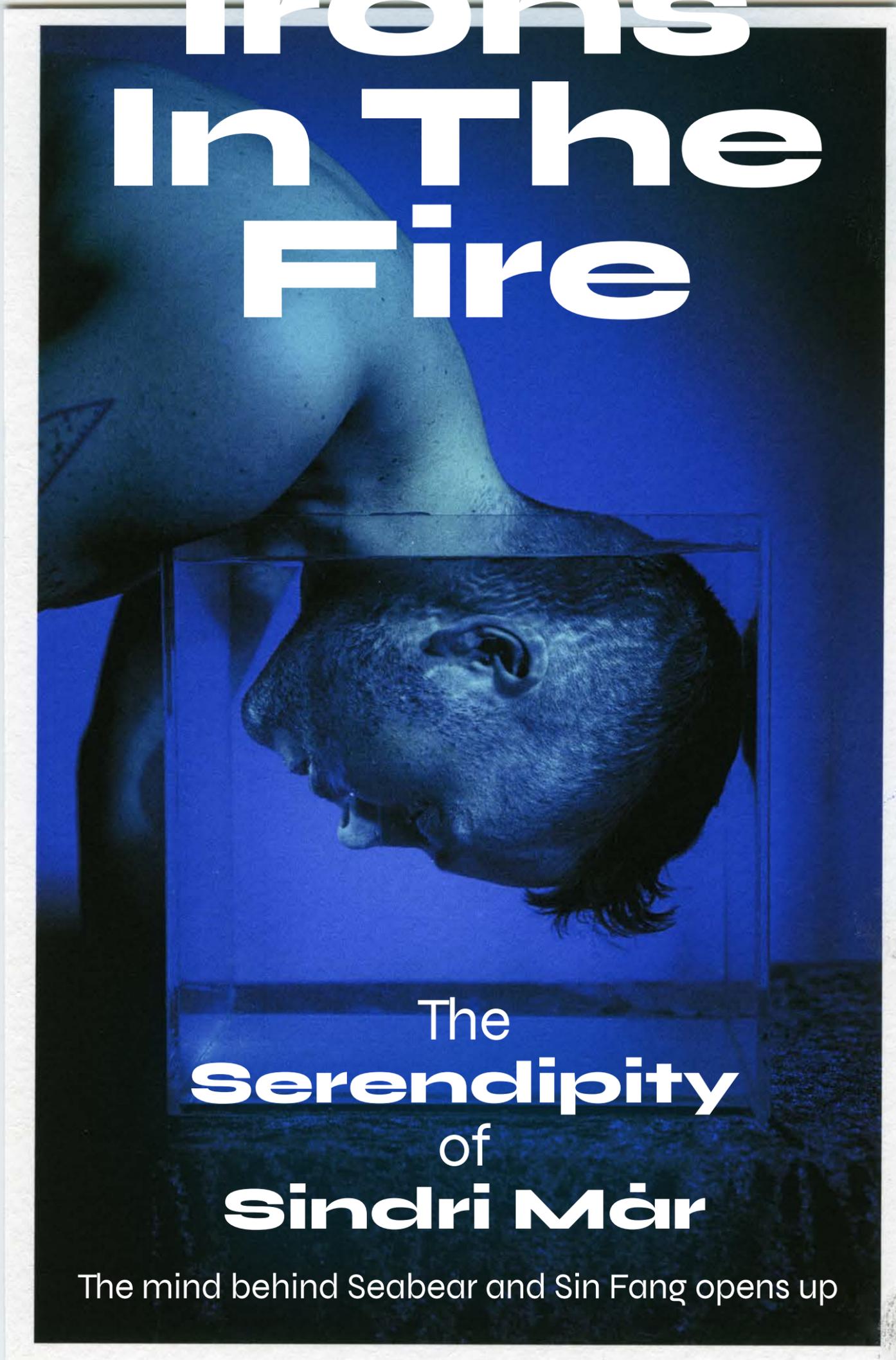
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Irons In The Fire



The Serendipity of Sindri Már

The mind behind Seabear and Sin Fang opens up

Words:
Andie
Fontaine

In a cluttered, unassuming basement deep in the heart of West Reykjavik is the nerve centre of one of the pioneering legends of Icelandic indie music: Sindri Már Sigfússon, perhaps better known to the world as Seabear or Sin Fang. Emerging in Iceland's explosive music scene of the early 2000s, almost entirely by accident, this unassuming but uniquely talented soul got his start in the visual arts. Through a homemade

EP he made more or less on a whim, he has since then been catapulted into international fame, working on everything from his own solo projects to film scores and even commercials. And he's still not finished.

His serendipitous journey from frustrated student to iconic musician is made all the more fascinating by his quiet, self-deprecating nature, underneath which beats the heart of an artist

with an insatiable drive to create. He tells us the tale of his journey so far, his incredible luck, and why the death of music criticism is a good thing for everyone involved.



Photos:
Anna
Maggý



»» Waiting on the record button

Sindri has always been obsessed with music. Although this may sound exotic to younger readers, it wasn't easy being a fan of obscure, independent music in the early internet age.

"When I was nine or ten I would call into radio stations and make requests," Sindri recalls. "And then I would wait with my finger on the record button on my little cassette deck. Or if I was

listening to the radio and heard a song I liked but didn't recognise, I'd call them up and be like 'hey what was the name of the song you just played?' and write the name down and go to the record store. It was such a hassle to be a music fan at that time. And then when Napster came out, I stayed up all night looking for music that I had been wanting to listen to for years but never found, like some early Slint album. I just lost my mind on Napster."

Despite this, by his own admission Sindri didn't entertain ideas of being a musician himself until later on in life, telling The Grapevine that he didn't take his first guitar lesson until he was 19-years old.

"I'd always just been drawing and

painting. I thought that in the future, I'd go to art school, and then I would continue and do a teacher's degree, and teach art to kids. That was somehow set in my brain that that was what I was going to do."

The bad student

Perhaps like many creative types, Sindri fell shy of model student status in his youth, eventually dropping out before finishing secondary school.

"I was just so bored of endlessly

doing stuff that I had no interest in, and school had been that way for me since I was a teenager," Sindri admits. "There's something wrong with my brain where I have a very hard time concentrating on things that I don't have any interest in. So the classes would float by, and in my mind I just went somewhere and I couldn't remember anything that happened in the class unless I was interested in it."

That would change in 2002, when he was admitted to Camberwell College of Arts in London. Although the city didn't really appeal to him—"It felt like no one was very happy in London"—it was there that he began making music "playing around in DAWs and making random beats and sampling but nothing very focussed until I bought an acoustic guitar. I started playing around with it."

The return to Iceland

Sindri began doing menial jobs upon his 2003 return to Iceland, at one point laying blocks of concrete for Reykjavík's pavement. But his subsequent admission to Iceland University of the Arts unexpectedly gave him the time and energy he needed to explore his musical chops.

"The classes were only until noon, and you had the rest of the day free, so I decided to make this EP," he says matter-of-factly. "At that time, there was a nice rack at 12 Tónar that was only homemade music, so you could make music in your home, burn 10 CDs and 12 Tónar would sell it at a commission for you. There was a bunch of music there. So I made this CD that was released under the name Seabear. I designed the cover, and then used my mother's sewing machine to sew them all together, and it just kind of got out of control. I didn't see myself as a working musician. That was a dream that was way too big to have ever thought of dreaming."

To Germany and beyond

For reasons Sindri admits he still doesn't understand, that debut EP somehow made itself into the hands of a German label called Tomlab. They released a Seabear song on one side of a 7", opposite a song from Grizzly Bear.

"I guess they just thought it was funny that there were two 'bear' bands making similar music," Sindri says. He was invited to play in Berlin by the same label at the famed Volksbühne theatre. While initially reluctant, the appeal proved too strong for Sindri to resist.

There was just one problem: he needed a band.

Seabear, assemble!

How does a solo artist go about forming a band in time for a concert when he doesn't have any musician friends? Pick who's ever around you, apparently.

"At that point I wasn't around that many musicians who I knew could play with me," he says. "There was an amazing girl at my school who was a violin player, so I asked her, and this friend

of mine I used to skateboard with from Hafnarfjörður who I knew played guitar. It ended up being the three of us going to Berlin.”

By his own account, this live show was intensely emotional, but would lead to even bigger things.

“I was so nervous, I was blackout shaking nervous,” Sindri recalls. “It was a sold out crowd. It was only a few years ago that I started considering myself a musician. I’ve always felt like a music fan who started making music, which I guess is another word for severe imposter syndrome. At that point, having all these people working at that theatre, being really nice, and so many people are working around this event and I was just like, ‘What am I doing here? I don’t belong here. I’m not even at an amateur level musician and I’m playing

The Seabear work ethic

“That’s been pretty much the last 15 years for me; people asking me to do stuff, play or make an album and I’m just like ‘OK, why not?’” Sindri says. “I’ve never really actively pursued anything music-wise in my career. I just make music and the music leads me somewhere.”

As is often the case with bands in their formative years, Seabear did a lot of touring early on.

“We had maybe three years of just touring the whole year,” he says. “In 2010, we toured from January to December. It was completely mental touring.”

However, the experience would sharpen and refine Seabear into being “a full-fledged band”. While their first album was based more or less on Sindri’s demos, “The second album was something we did together. Some person would have a little idea, and we’d jam on it until it was a finished song. You know, how normal bands work. There was a lot of discussion of course, which I think is good. Ideas have to go through a lot of filters when you’re in a band to get to their final destination. It was a lot of fun. We’re all very different people, and I think that’s probably from me just asking the people around me who I know play some sort of music. It wasn’t like we were like-minded or anything. It was a very random group of people. I think at the end of the first band cycle, it was very democratic and everyone had their say and creative input. It was a very collaborative effort.”

However, the constant touring began to take its toll. “I think we were just burned out after that. We were all so tired after three years of touring, and we were starting to have kids at that point, and you really can’t do that kind of touring when you have a tiny baby at home.”

With that, Sindri decided to put Seabear on ice; a decision he admits having some regrets about.

“It was probably my decision to put the band on hiatus in 2010, with our last show at Tjarnarbió. Also because I wanted to be a little egomaniac like I was in the first years of the band, and just do everything myself, which I ended up doing for a few years with the Sin Fang project. It was kind of stupid in hindsight, because we were selling out a lot of the tours and it was going quite well. But it’s always fun to self-sabotage. That’s also been a theme in my life.”

The rise of Sin Fang

There is some overlap between the hiatus of Seabear and the beginnings of Sin Fang; the first Sin Fang album was made at the same time we made the second Seabear album. But where Seabear was a collaborative effort, Sin Fang was not just a solo project; Sindri also sought to do everything completely differently.

“I think that unleashed something in me to do that first Sin Fang album, because I decided I wanted to be more brave with my voice,” Sindri explains. “I made some rules for myself; I had to play every instrument, to sing in falsetto and louder, to be more bold, which was not a part of my character. I feel like that was a moment for me. I kind of broke out of my shy shackles a bit.”

“With the stuff I was doing before I was kind of whispering into the mic; it

was all very hushed and subdued. That [2009 Sin Fang] album, I decided I had to be on the cover, because at that time it was such a no-no to have your face ever connected to any of your music. Looking back over the years, I see a pattern in myself, which is difficult to see when you’re this close to it. You gain clarity as the years go by, and just feel that each time I finish a project, I always want to do the exact opposite.”

The return of indie and the death of criticism

As Sindri was embroiled in Reykjavík’s early 2000s, he sees clear parallels with today’s music scene, wherein things seem to have come full circle.

“There are a bunch of bands now in this Post-dreifing collective, which are similar to the early 2000’s thing; they all play together, and they’re all playing in each other’s bands, and each one



of them has their own solo thing, and they’re all championing one another,” he says. “I think that’s really great. And they all wear like fucked up Red Cross clothes and not designer clothes. But with my generation, I was kind of a baby—like 22—it wasn’t a generational thing; it was a spirit thing. Just like-minded people doing similar things, but another thing I thought was great about that period, which I also see in this Post-dreifing phenomenon, is the variation of genres. Where people feel the need to carve out their own identities. And in such a small scene, people were very wary of sounding the same as another band. It’s OK to have influence of course, but sounding like another band was a big no-no.”

Even music criticism—something Sindri seems to have a love/hate relationship with—has undergone a waning of sorts.

“I think almost no one is covering music now,” Sindri says. “It used to be that when you released an EP, it would get a review in Morgunblaðið, Fréttablaðið, and DV. It was just everywhere. And they had all these little magazines for young people, like Undirtónar and Monitor. I guess young people don’t really read printed media anymore. Music reviews don’t really exist anymore, when you think about it, and by that I mean giving a band or an album three stars or something like that.”

“There were these tastemakers, and buying a CD was an investment,” he continues, “so you’d be like ‘Oh, it got an 8 on Pitchfork? I guess I’ll buy it then.’ But now, no one gives a shit, because you can just open up Spotify

and see if you like it. You don’t have to listen to some idiot telling you if it’s good or not. Even though I’m such a music nerd it was very entertaining for me to read when people have really thought about the music and are really dissecting it, so in a way I’m a bit sad that that’s kind of ended. But as a musician, I’m happy to see that people can just listen to the music and make up their own mind.”

“I guess I’m a musician now”

Despite being one of Iceland’s indie music scene’s iconic figures, Sindri did not really consider himself a musician until much later on in his career. He recalls being struck with the realisation when Seabear played Iceland Airwaves in 2009 (readers take note: Seabear will be performing at Iceland Airwaves this year, too), at a packed show at Iðnó with a queue stretching down the block.

“I remember after the show I was thinking, ‘I guess I’m a musician now. I’m gonna play music and people are going to see it,’” he says. “I was just so happily surprised with the way my life had turned out because I never really expected it. It was a dream that was too big for me to even think about, to be a successful musician.”

Although he still considers himself more at home in the studio than on stage, the Sin Fang experience definitely helped Sindri “break out of [his] shell”. That said, the fame doesn’t seem to have gone to his head.

“I guess you’re a bit flattered, but I think it’s best not to dwell too much on these things,” he says of fame. “I think it’s really bad art-wise to think about the audience when you’re making something. I approach art with the idea of doing it for myself. I think that’s the best way to stay true to yourself, to stay true to your voice and not to be like ‘Oh, I should probably write like a low-key piano song to try to get onto a Spotify playlist;’ or ‘people really like this song, so I should make another one like this.’ I try to stay away from thoughts like that, and whatever impact it’s had on people’s lives. I try not to think about that.”

“It’s weird to be reminded that what I do, someone is listening to it. Art is therapy for me. I don’t know where I would be if I didn’t have this outlet, this purpose for myself. And it’s purely for myself. I’d keep doing it even if it was only my mother listening to the music, because I need to do it to survive.”

Ultimately, Sindri’s process seems to happen entirely in his unconscious, with little deliberate thought put into the actual creative process. And that’s precisely what makes the magic happen.

“I try to never think about what I’m going to do with the art when I’m doing it; it’s kind of just for me,” Sindri says. “I think I like to operate on intuition. My goal when I’m making music is always to get into this flow state where I’m not thinking. Thinking can get in the way of making stuff. Thinking all day about what you’re going to do when you could be just doing it. My favourite time is when I’m making music and just making it flow without thinking. I realised when I started releasing music and started doing interviews, people would ask me questions that I had never thought about. Like ‘why are you doing this specific thing?’ and when I think about it, I have no idea. I just do it.”

“I remember after the show I was thinking, ‘I guess I’m a musician now. I’m gonna play music and people are going to see it.’”

“I never really expected that.”

in front of all these people.’ But we did the show and it went pretty well. I think the extreme nervousness and amateurism helped me on stage a bit.”

It helped him indeed: the show so impressed another German label, Morr Music, that they approached him about signing with them. Sindri, who knew Thom Yorke had bought Morr Music’s entire catalogue, “said yes on the spot”. Which meant that he had to make an album.

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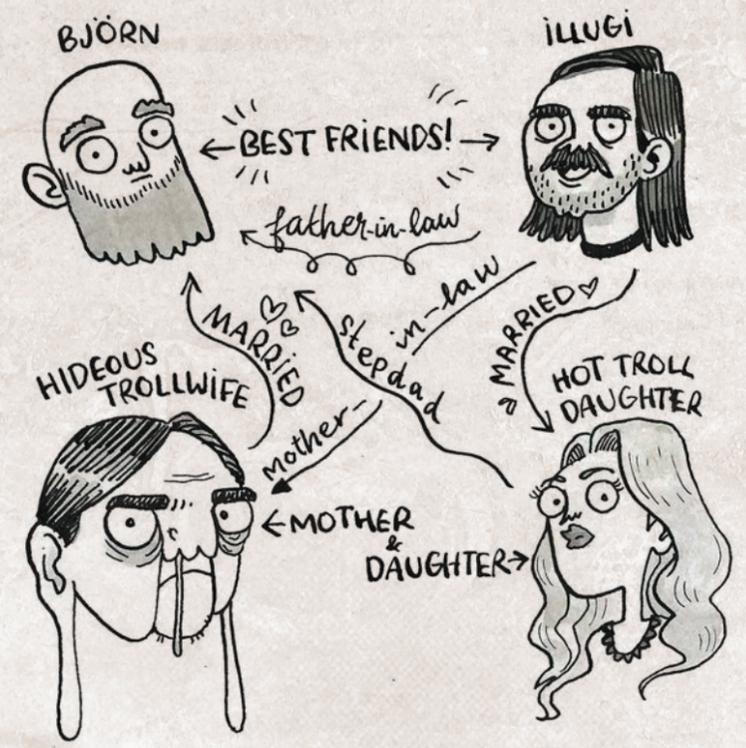
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If your idea of a fun night out is watching someone hammer a nail into their own face, swallow a sword, or seeing the intriguing results of a painting that used a penis for a brush, then Coney Iceland is right up your alley. Replete with comedy, burlesque, and rollicking fun times in good company, it's well worth checking out for novices and seasoned freaks alike. **AF**



A Sinister Swim

RIFF Swim-in-Cinema: 'The Host'

Sept. 28th - 19:30 - Sundhöllin -
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Iceland loves two things: Swimming, movies, and drinking. Okay, that's three things, but who's counting? RIFF's Swim-In-Cinema brings all three together for one fantastic experience in the old swimming pool of Sundhöllin. There, the South Korean film 'The Host' will be screened while you float around and make new pool-friends. But keep your eyes on the film, both for the sake of other guests as well as the art—if you haven't seen 'The Host,' you haven't lived. **VG**



It's Art, Mom!

The Thirteenth Month

Until Nov. 2nd - Berg Contemporary

Green aliens, primaeva selfie sticks and a black hole of shoes. Sounds like a fun Tuesday night to us, but it's actually a new art installation by Styrmir Órn Guðmundsson at Berg Contemporary. The exhibition is highly interactive and has been garnering quite a lot of attention. Styrmir was allegedly inspired by near-death-experiences, so dress accordingly and remember to stay hydrated. **VG**

CULTURE NEWS

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We Used To Hate It, Now We Miss It

Almar Atlason's 'Thirst & Promises' is anything but stale

Words:
**Hannah Jane
Cohen**

Photo:
Art Bienick

Almost four years ago, Almar Atlason, a first-year art student at the Iceland Arts Academy, presented his final project. Naturally, he decided to spend a week living naked in a glass box and livestream it online. In a matter of days, Almar was one of the most famous and controversial artists in the country. Everyone in Iceland knew who he was—and had seen him naked.

Now, he's here with a peculiar new project—a landscape painting exhibition at Gallery Port called 'Thirst & Promises.' While a series of landscapes

seems rather conventional for the eccentric artist, if you know Almar, you'll know it's anything but.

No mountains here

"When you're in my line of work, you can't really complain about attention," Almar says, reminiscing on his naked-man-in-a-box days. He's sitting in his cluttered studio, surrounded by assorted knick-knacks. "It was weird, but it was a little bit weirder a few years later when I turned out to be a 23-year-old

divorced alcoholic has-been," he laughs. "Now, I've become a stale artist. I am having a show with landscape paintings and I play in a Bubbi Morthens cover band. I don't think you can get any more stale than this, but I like it."

Almar calls them landscapes, but you'd be hard-pressed to find one depicting an idyllic countryside. "There's not a lot of mountains in them," he says. "I feel like everyone in Reykjavík is trying to identify Reykjavík now, saying 'Oh I miss when McDonalds was on Laugavegur. The old signs and the old businesses. These new businesses are not as nice.' But it seems everyone is just missing something they used to hate. Searching for an identity of what it is being in Reykjavík because they feel like they are losing something even though they never really cared about it."

It was this spark that drew Almar from performance to painting for this project. "Painting is like memorabilia. It's a documentation of a performance," he explains. "You look at the brushstrokes and what the artist was looking at and seeing how he moved, the tools he used. It seemed good to use this to tackle the loss you used to hate. This turned into 'Thirst & Promises.'"

The fishermen & the wives

These two words are, to Almar, the unifying factors tying together Icelandic society. "This promise, without hope, that things will get better and this endless thirst," he explains. "Like the old fishermen going out on the ocean every single fucking day risking their lives just to sleep way too little and do it again the day after. Or the wives or single mothers in these little farms being cold 363 days a year with a 13th child in the belly going way too late to sleep and waking up way too early just to be able to repeat." He pauses. "This thirst interests me and I think painting is a nice way to play with that." **✂**

ELECTRIC DREAMS

Music

We Are Not Romantic's debut album 'Who's In Control?' can be streamed on Spotify or downloaded from Bandcamp.



Unapologetic Energy And Good Vibes

Vigorous music-duo We Are Not Romantic are their own biggest fans

Words:
**Alexander Le
Sage de Fontenay**

Photo:
Album Cover

Prolific grassroots-collective and music label Post-dreifing released collaborative music duo We Are Not Romantic's debut album 'Who's In Control?' just two months ago, but the project, created by Andrés Þór Þorvarðarson and Raket Andrésdóttir, instantly found success on the

local music scene. In just a few days, they had amassed a decent following.

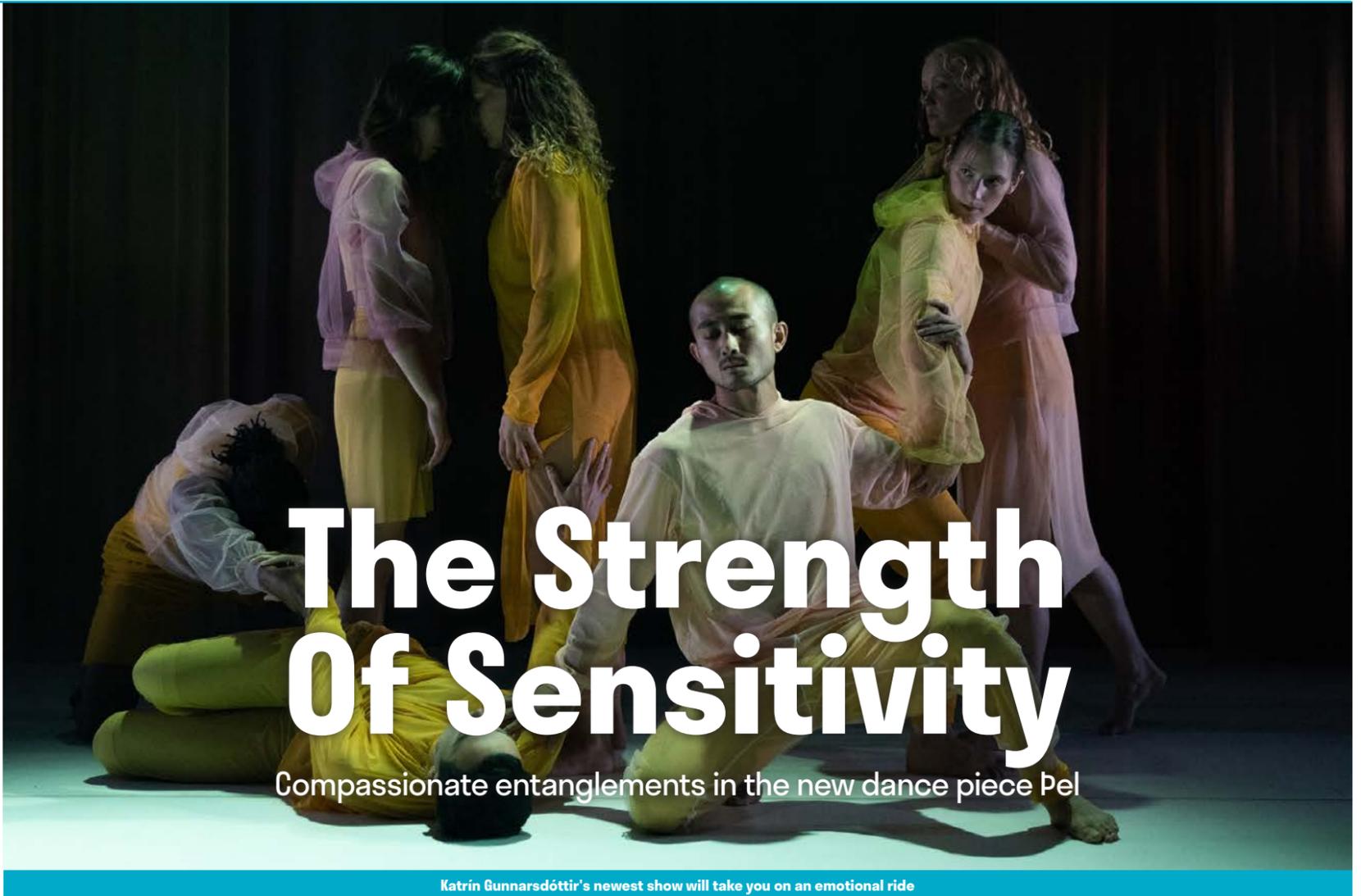
I found them through their song 'Nokia Calling.' It was all over my Instagram feed and I'm happy to say I gave in to the hype. The track's repetitiveness and comically aggressive tone emanates a post-ironic energy

that grabbed me—an appropriate fit for Reykjavík right now.

What makes We Are Not Romantic so appealing is their unapologetic energy, good vibes and the fact they don't take themselves too seriously. "We like to dress up before shows and generally want for us and the audience to have a good time," Andrés explains. "We like to keep things free and vague. We don't really rehearse or decide beforehand what we are going to do on-stage," Raket adds.

Andrés and Raket like to go with the flow when it comes to writing and performing. "This summer we ended up playing almost every weekend except one since we released the album," Raket says. "We had no control." Andrés adds. Raket continues: "I love making beats and electronic music is fun—it's a party! Sometimes I get really tired after our high-energy parties, but then I just take naps."

As I spoke with We Are Not Romantic, Andrés is about to go on an internship abroad and Raket has started her last year studying fine-arts at Iceland University of the Arts. "We are working on a new album that will hopefully be released before October," Andrés says. "We made new songs over a period of two days," Raket adds. "And we are making three music-videos with some talented friends," Andrés concludes. "A man's best friend is music." **✂**



Dance Piece

Pel will be performed on September 29th, October 4th, and October 13th at Borgarleikhúsið. Tickets are 4,900 ISK.

The Strength Of Sensitivity

Compassionate entanglements in the new dance piece Pel

Katrín Gunnarsdóttir's newest show will take you on an emotional ride

Words:
Rex Beckett

Photos:
Iceland Dance Company

We strive to connect. We crave touch and intimacy. We want to belong and be a part of something. We strive to feel some shared experience. These are not questions to be answered in Pel, Katrín Gunnarsdóttir's newest dance piece for the Iceland Dance Company (IDC), but situations we are compelled to watch for in it.

Bodily relationships

Katrín is an award-winning choreographer who has been involved in the Icelandic dance scene for over a decade, as an independent dancer and choreographer, as well as with events like the Reykjavik Dance Festival and Everybody's Spectacular. Pel is her first piece with the IDC, and it's proving to be a mutually beneficial union, one that reflects the compassion and togetherness of the performance itself.

The piece is a dynamic, flowing organism comprised of seven dancers—the largest group that Katrín has choreographed for—allowing her to explore new types of bodily relationships. “With Pel, the aim was to really make a dance performance for a group,” says Katrín. “It’s very much about the group. How the group is interacting, intertwining, listening to

each other, creating these embracing, repetitive rituals or images. They’re kind of weaving together this sort of landscape.”

These intertwinements and interactions play a lot with different aspects of physical touch and corporeal connection, tying the movements in closely to the title. The word þel (pronounced thel) itself is rife with meaning. It can refer to the membranes in the body, describe empathy or compassion, and it’s also the name for the thinnest softest layer of Icelandic wool that lies closest to the skin.

“When I named the work, then it was just like, poof!” says Katrín. “It just opened up somehow. All the threads started connecting. The image started to form. That was actually the biggest turning point, landing on this title.”

Touch is integral

From this point, she began to explore the ideas of boundaries and contact—merging and blurring them—in order to build the group movements. “Touch is an integral part of this,” she says. “Working with the space that’s in the periphery of the skin, then really touching and being very close, and then trying to almost get closer than you

possibly can. To go even through the other person or for the individual to really disappear into the group.”

The group’s input in this process was integral and hugely influential on the output of the work, as Katrín felt the profound energy emitted from the dancers, who work together regularly. “When I’m working on the creation process, it’s very much a collaborative effort,” she says. “The dancers contribute so much. I give them tasks and improvisations to work on and then we build on that. I’m the one in charge of things, I take responsibility for the choices, but there is still a lot of input from them. There’s more complexity than in my previous work. They work together all year round so there is already a group entity, so that’s also kind of what drove me.”

“Entanglement”

The word ‘thel’ also has an English con-

notation, derived from William Blake’s poem ‘The Book of Thel.’ It can refer to desire, wish, feminine frailty and the frailty of humankind. While Katrín was not directly working off this idea,

she does see it as a way one could approach the work, and also how some of the interactions in the piece could be interpreted.

“I’m also working with these qualities of softness, fragility, quietness, slowness, and sensitive, intimate encounters,” she says. “That’s also something I really want to amplify and put forward in my

work. I think it’s sometimes mistaken for weakness. It’s mistaken for something that’s less interesting than something that’s based on drama or conflict. Even though I’m working with intense physicality, it’s not in a conflict standpoint.”

Katrín prefers the idea and the word ‘entanglement’, rather than conflict, to describe the form of tension in Pel. “It means things that are meeting that don’t fit together at the begin-

“I’m working with these qualities of softness, fragility, quietness, slowness, and sensitive, intimate encounters. I think it’s sometimes mistaken for weakness.”

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ning, this kind of encounter," she says. "Entanglement is this organic way of dealing with the other. We also can relate this just to relationships. This way of finding a symbiosis with someone. It's always very complex. It takes time, and it develops, and it's not without friction. That's kind of some of the ideas that circulate around in the work."

The concepts of entanglement and intimacy tie

"Working with the space that's in the periphery of the skin, then really touching and being very close, and then trying to almost get closer than you possibly can. To go even through the other person or for the individual to really disappear into the group."

back in with the importance of touch and physical connection between the dancers throughout the piece. These boundaries and the idea the membrane are portrayed as well through the set design and costuming, with lots of sheer flowing soft fabrics, where the dancers spill between the stage and its limits. The sound design uses recordings of the dancers' voices manipulated into ambient drones, an entanglement

of the organic and synthetic.

A shared experience

For Katrín, the process of creating Pel has broadened into larger existential ideas about group dynamics. "I think that just this exploration of these aspects of quietness, softness, togetherness, is this kind of affirmative act that is very important in a bigger context," she says. "We're all facing these questions in our society. How to still be together in this society and on this planet. That's a very pressing matter all around. I think there is always a relatable way of viewing the content in that sense, even though I'm working in quite an abstract situation."

While coexistence is a pressing matter for humanity right now, Katrín acknowledges that physical intimacy can still be challenging for people to see.

"For audiences to watch people being this close, it's actually not that common, or it's something that's out of the ordinary in a way," she says. "To kind of heighten and amplify this sensitivity that the dancer has, to be able to manoeuvre so close together and to listen so closely and to be so linked is very admirable to watch."

"I would be very happy if the audience manages to get a feeling of this softness and get a bit of the vibration from the group," she says. "When you watch dance, your mirror cells actually start moving. When you give yourself time to just witness this slow unfolding of a mutating flow of bodies, it just starts to move you as well. It would be wonderful if people could zone in and forget about their everyday struggle for a while and have this shared experience." 🍷

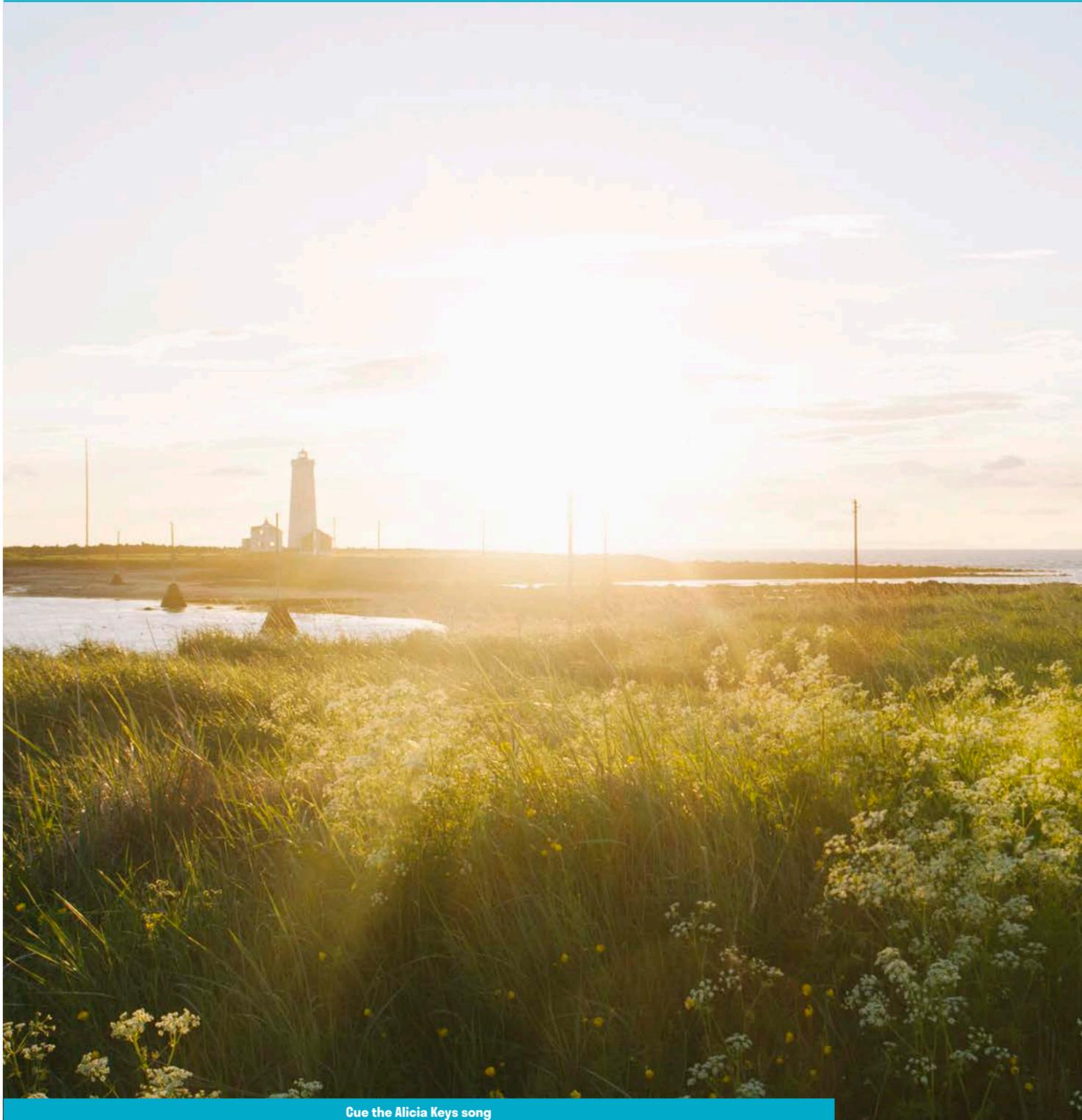
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Cue the Alicia Keys song

Can't Help Fall(ing)

Say goodbye to summer and hello to pumpkins

Words: Lea Müller Photos: Lea Müller & Axel Sigurðarsson

However brief the fall season is in Iceland, it is certainly a magical time. In September and October, the leaves turn all kinds of breathtaking colours and the people of Reykjavík fall into a sort of collective melancholy, as they bid goodbye to summer. If you're lucky enough to spend a couple of days in the capital area this fall, here are some tips for indulging in the bitter-sweet sentiment of the season.

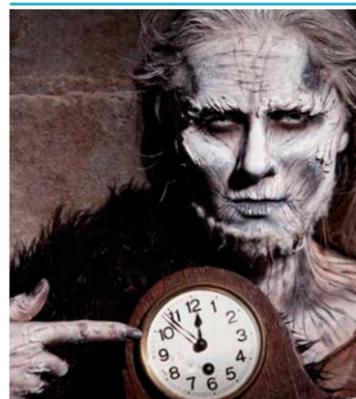
Sunset in Seltjarnarnes



Backgrounded by a magnificent view of the Reykjavík bay area and the impressive mountains stretching behind, Grótta is a great place to watch the sunset

and marvel at the sublime power of the sea pushing in the waves. Three things to watch out for: Seals by the shore, the tide—you might get wet feet if you're not walking back in time—and those terribly misaimed golf balls.

Shop for a Halloween costume



It's never too early to start looking for the perfect slutty pumpkin dress. If you're on a budget and want to keep things environmentally friendly, check out Kolaportið or the Red Cross stores to get your hands on loads of pre-loved items. Otherwise,

Hókus Pókus is the go-to for cheesy costumes. Looking for something a little spookier? Just across the street lies Rokk og Rómatík, Reykjavík's resident goth vendor.

Picnic at Öskjuhlíð



Öskjuhlíð is the area around Perlan and perhaps the most underestimated destination in Reykjavík. Most people drive up the hill just to visit the museum without ever exploring the lush flora around it. Fall is, however, the perfect time to wrap yourself in an extra layer, pack a light bag

of snacks and enjoy this piece of nature in the midst of Iceland's capital. You can head upwards from the Nauthólsvík parking area, along the winding paths, and find a sheltered picnic bench once you reach the top. You'll be rewarded with a stunning view.

Árbær Open-Air Museum



For some unknown reason, fall comes for many with a sense of nostalgia. The Árbær Open Air Museum perfectly caters to this emotion, taking you on a journey to an older version of Reykjavík before cruise ships crowded the harbour and groceries became available in supermarket chains. It's a unique space, where history is kept alive and you'll definitely learn to appreciate the comfort of our modern homes as the seasons are changing. ☺



BEST OF REYKJAVÍK

Best Place To End The Night

Winner:

Kaffibarinn

Bergstaðastræti 1

This classic party place is still the late-night hangout of choice in 101 Reykjavík. The raucous local crowd is a mixture of Iceland's fashion folks, artists, hipsters and intelligentsia—as seen in the KB “Barflies” photo book. “It's a perfect meeting point where you can go for the dancefloor, space out in the back, or chat all night in the smoking area,” said the panel. “The staff are always genuinely nice to you, even if you're pretty drunk. Everyone goes there. It's the only place I'd go after putting a friend in drag and end up having my numerology done by a stranger.”



Runners up:

Kiki Queer Bar

Laugavegur 22

If you're going out dancing, Kiki can't be beat. With DJs playing pop classics and an energetic, disinhibited crowd, the panel enthused: “It's so much fun! You can dance, hug your friends, kiss your spouse... you can let everything out and dance your ass off in a safe, welcoming environment.”



Ölstofan

Vegamótastígur

On the other end of the spectrum is the no-frills drinking room of Ölstofan. With low music, dim lighting, lots nooks to converse in and a big central bar, “It's a no-bullshit place,” said the panel. “There's an interesting older crowd, it's always open late, and you can have a pint and chat without anyone bothering you.” ☺

September 27th—October 10th

In Your Pocket



Reykjavík Map

Places We Like

Best Of Reykjavík

Perfect Day

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



Words: **Lea Müller**
Photo: **Provided By The Subject**

Ásrós Helga Guðmundsdóttir

Ásrós Helga Guðmundsdóttir is one half of the indie band Between Mountains, which won Iceland's Battle of the Bands Competition in 2017 and is best known for their song "Into the Dark." This is how she would spend her perfect day.

First Things First

Before I describe my perfect day, I want to specify the season in which it is taking place. It's winter—winter is wonderful and I love Christmas so much! It's totally my favourite time of the year!

Morning

On my perfect day, I grab my robe, have a **cup of tea** and eat some delicious breakfast. I **pet my cats**, Eldur

and Tímon, and while I sip my tea I look at the snowy, beautiful Icelandic landscape just outside the big window in my house, which would be located somewhere near Reykjavík. Coming from a small town in the Westfjords, Reykjavík is too big for me, but I'd like to live nearby.

Mid-morning to Afternoon

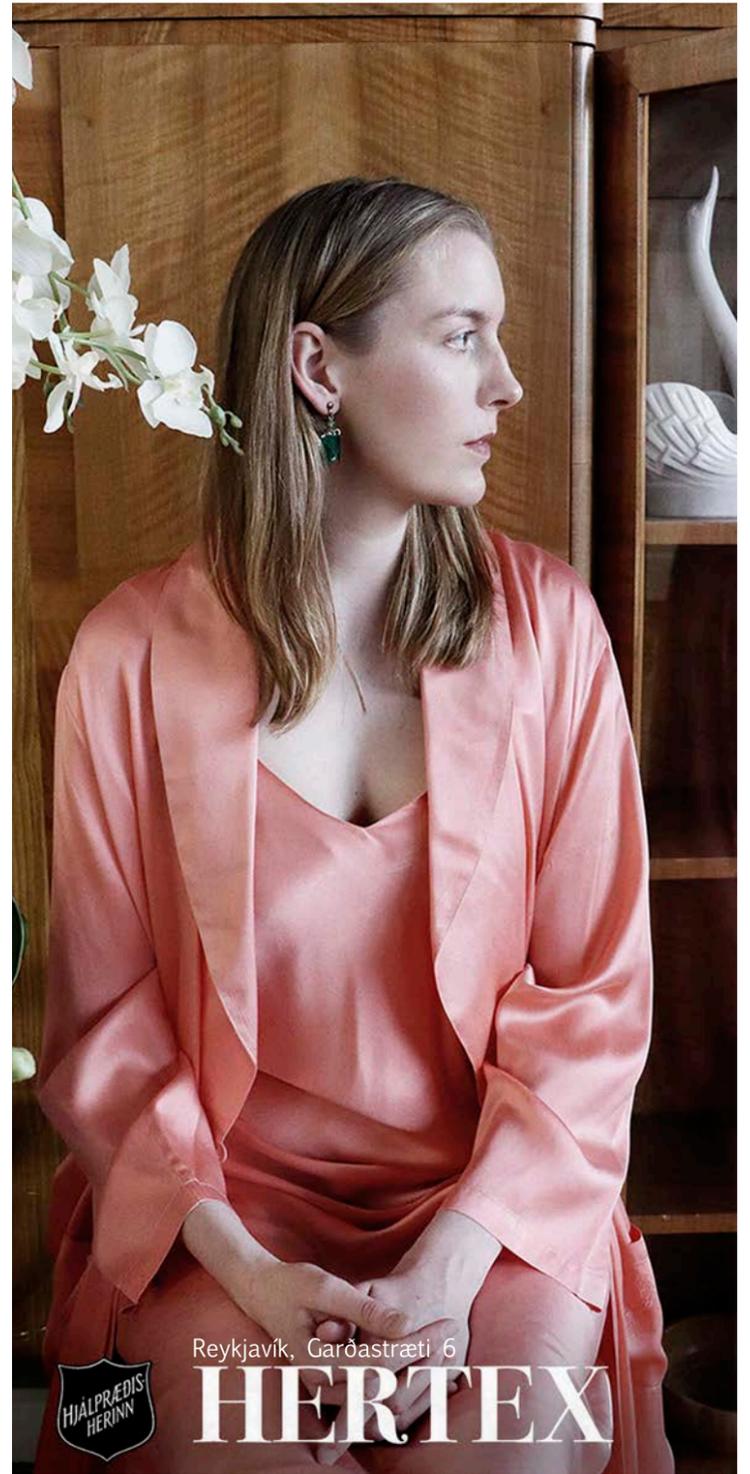
I'd do some exercises and afterwards, take a hot shower and sing like there is no tomorrow. Then I'd drive downtown, ideally in some eco-friendly car, to a set where I am about to act for a cool Icelandic movie. I work until the afternoon but before I head back home I go shopping. Unfortunately, there are barely any plastic packaging-free options when it comes to food in Iceland. But I'd try to get as much as possible from stores like **Heilsuhúsið** in Kringlan.

Evening

I invite my friends over for dinner and I cook them medium-rare steak with béarnaise sauce and they drink red wine. After dinner, we go and play some music. Magnús plays the piano while Kéli and I sing some beautiful harmonies. We sing **Abba songs**, some classic Icelandic pop and, of course, a lot of Christmas songs. We play, sing, laugh and chat a lot while fluffy snowflakes fall from the dark sky.

In the heat of the night

As ideal as it would be to go downtown in Reykjavík now, I rather stay at home and enjoy the rest of the night with my boyfriend Samúel. We soak in our **hot tub** and turn all the lights off so we can see the **stars**. I love space. I think it's beautiful and so mysterious. 🌌



Venue Finder

Venues	Museums & Galleries
The numbers on the right (i.e. E4) tell you position on the map on the next page	
Austur Austurstræti 7 D3	ART67 Laugavegur 67 F7 Open daily 9-21
American Bar Austurstræti 8 D3	ASÍ Art Gallery Freyjúgata 41 G6 Open Tue-Sun 13-17
Andrými Bergþorugata 20 G6	Aurora Reykjavík Grandagarður 2 B1 Open 09-21
B5 Bankastræti 5 E4	Asgrímur Jónsson Museum Bergstaðastr. 74 G4 July 8-Sep 1, Mon-Fri
Bar Ananas Klappargistigur 28 E5	Berg Contemporary Klappargistigur 16 E5 Tu-F 11-17, Sat 13-17
Bió Paradís Hverfisgata 54 E5	The Culture House Hverfisgata 15 E5 Open daily 10-17
Bjarni Fel Austurstræti 20 E4	The Einar Jónsson Museum Eiríksgata G5 Open Tue-Sun 10-17
Bravó Laugavegur 22 E5	Ekkisens Bergstaðastr. 25b F4
Boston Laugavegur 28b E5	Galleri List Skipholt 50A H10 M-F 11-18, Sat 11-16
Dillon Laugavegur 30 E5	Hafnarborg Strandgata 34, 220 D3 Open Wed-Mon 12-17
Dubliner Naustin 1-3 D3	Hitt Húsið Pósthússtræti 3-5 D4
English Pub Tryggvagata 12 D3	Hverfissgalleri Hverfissgata 4 D4 Tu-Fri 13-17, Sat 14-17
Gaukurinn Tryggvagata 22 D3	i8 Gallery Tryggvagata 16 D3 Tu-Fri 11-18, Sat 13-17
Hard Rock Café Lækjargata 2a D3	The Penis Museum Laugavegur 116 F8 Open daily 10-18
Hressó Austurstræti 20 D3	Kirsuþerjatréð Vesturgata 4 D3 M-F 10-18, Sat-Sun 10-17
Húrra Naustin D3	Kling & Bang Grandagarður 20 A4 W-Sun 14-18, Th 12-21
	Listastofan Hringbraut 119 A4 Open Wed-Sat 13-17
	Living Art Museum Grandagarður 20 A4 Tu-Sun 12-18, Th 12-21
	Mokka Kaffi Skólavörðustíg. 3A E5 Open daily 9-18:30
	Museum of Design and Applied Art Garðatorg 1 E5 Open Tu-Sun 12-17
	The National Gallery of Iceland Frikirkjuvegur 7 F3 Open daily 10-17
	The National Museum Sudurgata 41 G2 Open daily 10-17
	The Nordic House Sturluggata 5 H2 Th-Fri 11-17, W 11-20
	Hafnarhús Tryggvagata 17 D3 Open 10-17, Thu 10-22
	Kjarvalsstaðir Flókagata 24 H8 Open daily 10-17
	Ásmundarsafn Sigtún D3 Open daily 10-17
	Reykjavík City Library Tryggvagata 15 D3 Mon-Thu 10-19, Fri 11-18, Sat-Sun 13-17
	Árbæjarsafn Kistuhylur 4 D3 Open daily 9-18
	The Settlement Exhibition Aðalstræti 16 D3 Open daily 9-18
	Reykjavík Museum of Photography Tryggvagata 15 D3 Mon-Thu 10-18, Fri 11-18, Sat-Sun 13-18
	Saga Museum Grandagarður 2 B2 Open daily 10-18
	Sigurjón Ólafsson Laugarnestangi 70 D3 Open Tu-Sun 14-17
	SÍM Hafnarstræti 16 D3 Open Mon-Fri 10-16
	Tveir Hrafnar Baldursgata 12 G4 Open Fri-Sat 13-16
	Wind & Weather Window Gallery Hverfisgata 37 E5

Vital Info



Useful Numbers

Emergency: 112
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Dental emergency: 575 0505
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Post Office

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

Pharmacies

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

Opening Hours - Bars & Clubs

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

Opening Hours - Shops & Banks

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

Swimming Pools

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

Public Toilets

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

Public Transport

Most buses run every 20–30 minutes
Fare: 460 ISK adults, 220 ISK children.
Buses run from 07–24:00, and 10–04:30 on weekends. More info: www.bus.is.

A



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The Map

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

Dining

1. Fjallkonan

Hafnarstræti 1-3

Named after the female personification of Iceland, Fjallkonan is located smack-bang in the middle of downtown, and caters to locals and tourists alike. For the Icelandic-cuisine-curious, there is a platter of whale, lamb and puffin, all presented beautifully. For those who are just looking for a great selection of fresh meat, fish and vegetarian options, Fjallkonan does these to perfection as well.

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. Matur og Drykkur

Grandagarður 2

In how many ways can we say, "eat here"? Is it the whole cod head you should get, or perhaps the double-smoked dried lamb, or the creamy halibut soup? Whatever you get, rest assured it'll have roots in Icelandic culinary history, elevated to fine dining standards. And do not leave without trying the fried-to-order kleinur.

4. Sandholt

Laugavegur 36

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

5. Le Kock 2.0

Tryggvagata 14

In the ground floor of a new hotel, it's a large space with three components: the Le Kock diner serving burgers, fish and chips, and comfort food favourites; a cocktail bar called Tail; and a second branch of Deig, Le Kock's sister bakery. The music policy can be shaky—unless you like Status Quo—but the all-day happy hour has 1,500 ISK cocktails and 800 ISK beers.

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 sriracha mayo are to die for. Come early and enjoy happy hour while you can: you'll never want to leave.

8. Messinn

Lækjargata 6b

Messinn may be modelled on the well-known Westfjords restaurant Tjoruhúsið, but it's now no doubt a Reykjavik restaurant of choice. What keeps us coming back is how the food keeps getting better every time we dine there. Our favourites include their savoury plockfiskur, velvety graflax, and a perfectly seared trout with honey and almonds.

9. Sea Baron

Geirsgata 4a

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

10. Pylsuhúsið

Ingólfstorg

One of the many post-jam options in town for those looking to put a tasty end to a fun night out, the Hot Dog House is a solid place for a quick snack. If you feel too inebriated by life to experiment, a classic one "with everything" will do the trick.

Drinking

11. Curious

Hafnarstræti 4

Watch out, henny—there's a new

queer bar on the scene, and it's decked out in tropical apparel. Serving up cocktails, coffee and—starting in August—a vegan café, Curious is a one-stop-shop for whatever scene you belong to. Werk.

12. Bravó

Laugavegur 22

Oh, bravo, Bravó, for having the best happy hour in this fair city. With its colourful fairy lights and a plethora of comfortable pillows, Bravó feels like a children's bedroom tent for adults. If you get lucky and grab a table, or even just a single seat, then it's the happiest place on earth.

13. Loft Hostel

Bankastræti 7a

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

14. Kaffibarinn

Bergstaðastræti 1

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

15. Gaukurinn

Tryggvagata 22

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

16. Session Bar

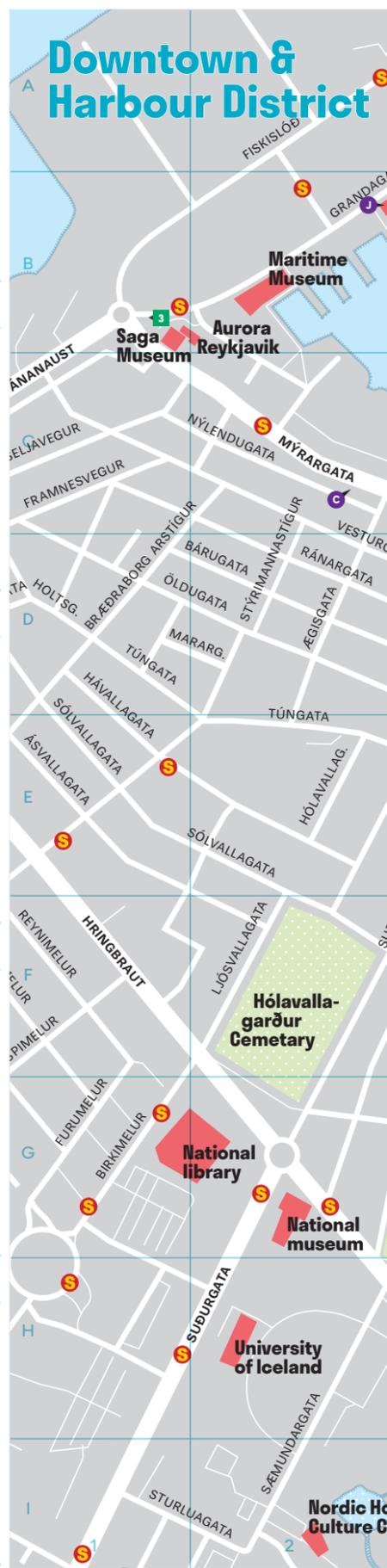
Fógetagarður

Session Bar is a minimalist craft-beer-focused 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 Reykjavik's generally pricey craft bar.

17. Papaku Reykjavík

Klappastígur 38

Formerly Bar Ananas, Papaku Reykjavik is Reykjavik's only beach bar, and it is truly a breath of fresh air for the otherwise dreary downtown scene. No sir, this is no dive bar, but a club, with a pool table, piano, darts board, a spacious bar, a tiny dance floor, and a solid line of DJs that all aim to make you bust a move.



18. American Bar

Austurstræti 8

Football fans will rejoice in seeing the row of screens perennially 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 & Ribs and be happy.

Shopping

19. Kvartýra №49

Laugavegur 49

This minimalistic, Bauhaus-esque spot took the Icelandic fashion

E

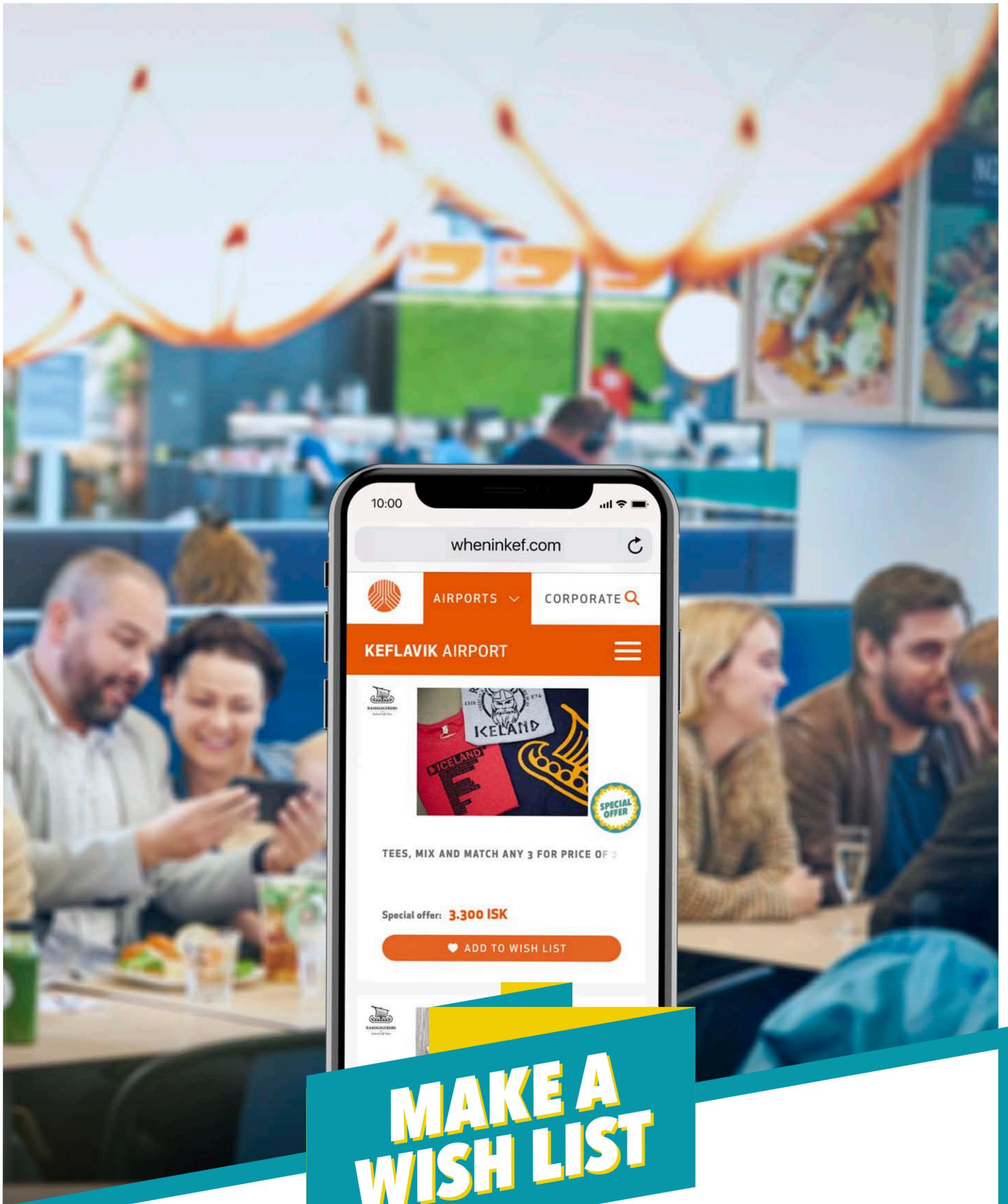
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AUSTURSTRÆTI 3
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scene by storm upon opening in 2018, with its eclectic streetwear selection. They have designers that no one else has.

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. ÞA Zimsen

Vesturgata 2a

This peaceful spot is equal parts

café and bookstore, so you can get a coffee and a snack while you leaf through your purchases. Everything there is interesting. If the magazines fail, people-watching never does.

22. 12 Tónar

Skólavörðustígur 15

This city-centre record store is something of an institution, offering the unique experience of having the store staff ask about your music taste then sit you down with a coffee, some headphones, and a pile of Icelandic records.

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 sell limited garments by streetwear brands.

25. Spúútnik

Laugavegur 28b

This well-curated clothing emporium

is more like a secondhand clothing boutique than a charity shop. It's expensive but it's all imported stuff you won't find anywhere else. They're also very particular with their selection: after sorting through maybe six shirts, they'll determine that just one is truly good enough.

26. Rauðhetta & Úlfurinn

Skólavörðustígur 8

In a sense Rauðhetta & Úlfurinn is a Reykjavik 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.

New In Town



Laundromat Café

Austurstræti 9

Have you ever wanted to have lunch and do your laundry in a public place? You're in luck. The Laundromat Cafe on Austurstræti is open (again) for business. Whether you want brunch, a sandwich, or a burger, they have a quality selection of food made to order. Best of all, the staff is friendly and know the menu so well, they could recite it to you with their eyes closed (please don't ask them to do this). **SPO**

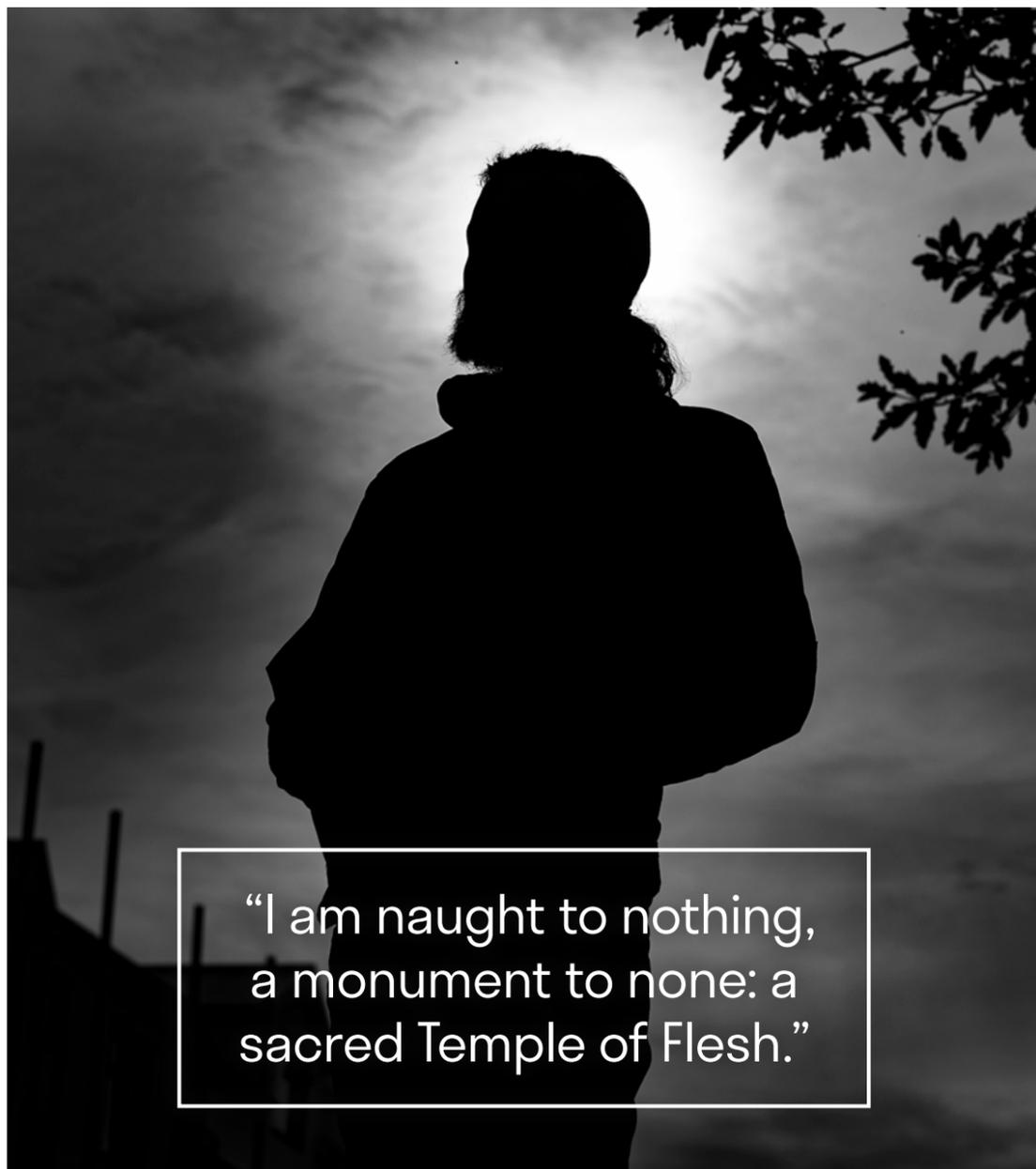


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“I am naught to nothing,
a monument to none: a
sacred Temple of Flesh.”

TRACK BY TRACK

‘Unbroken’ By ZAKAZ

Enter forgotten unwritten histories as the lord of your own existence

Words: ZAKAZ Photo: Art Bicnick

EP

Listen to ‘Unbroken’ by ZAKAZ on Bandcamp at zakaz.bandcamp.com.

All of these songs are deeply personal and were written in a period of total chaos, grief, and sorrow. I hope people will take something positive away from them. Too much pointless negativity and hatred plagues this soil. I only wish people would let go of their childish beliefs and start appreciating those around them.

Too many people are afraid of showing emotion, particularly men. It’s a fucked-up culture here in Iceland, where men are forced to hold back their emotions and therefore become “tough” or “strong.” The suicide rate of young men reflects this, and most of you are to blame. Talk about how you feel to anyone you trust—there’s always someone. And if not: Find creative ways to express yourself.

Hof úr Holdi

This track is about my struggle with depression and contains a powerful reminder that I am stronger than the adversities I face: “I am the fire

that burns away the past.” It’s also a reminder that I am only flesh, and therefore every moment left living is sacred. “I am naught to nothing, a monument to none: a sacred Temple of Flesh.” A deeper meaning is the notion of a forgotten unwritten history that exists within your body. I believe in genetic memories, which you can access through meditation.

Shadows That You Cast

The only lyrics not written by myself, but by my brilliant other half, a closet poet for sure. When you don’t feel good enough for anything and you feel like nobody appreciates you, treats you like shit, and expects everything in return. That is what this song is about—breaking ties and getting a sense of freedom when you have nothing left to lose.

Unbroken

Ah, the title track. This should be the most grandeur of them all right? Judge for yourself. It’s written about a nostalgic yearning for simpler times, where we stood equal before the forces of nature and didn’t consider ourselves above it all. There are forces today that

would cover the world under a suffocating veil and ultimately end the world as we know it, “Unbroken we stand, forever.” A song against all oppression.

The end passage is written for my dog that was put to sleep in my arms in March of 2018. It hurt me deeply. This whole album is dedicated to all those I have lost in the last few years.

Eilifi Drottinn Holds

This song is about owning up to your mistakes, taking responsibility and not backing down from adversities. The song starts with a confession to a person that is very close to me about vowing never to make the same mistakes that they had done throughout their life but ended up breaking that vow, regretfully. The lyrics describe being betrayed by those who you thought were loyal, hurtful memories of lost times, and redemption. Being the lord of your own existence and destiny; lord of your own flesh. Only you can make something worth doing and be the master of your own fate.

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Music



Hipsumhaps, pictured yesterday

Best Remembered Secrets

The dreamy, lo-fi, indie-laced pop of Hipsumhaps

Words & Photos: **Sigurður Ragnarsson**

Band

Listen to Hipsumhaps' 'Best Gleymdu Leyndarmálin' on Spotify.

"Hipsumhaps is a word that we thought described the band perfectly," Jökull Breki Arnarson explains. Along with his collaborator Fannar Ingí Friðbjólfsson, Jökull is sitting back in his grandparents' garage, which they've turned into a makeshift studio. "It's a word that doesn't know where it's going or what it's doing. You can't define it. It's kind of random, unsure of itself and unclear."

Something fresh

But while their name is unsure or unclear, the band's debut this summer was anything but. The two burst onto the scene only months ago with a slew of popular singles, including "Lífið sem mig langar í" and "Honný," which preceded the release of their first album, 'Best Gleymdu Leyndarmálin' ('Best Forgotten Secrets') on September 22nd.

With every release, the duo repeatedly established themselves as something fresh. Their mix of dreamy, lo-fi indie laced guitar-driven pop is irresistibly catchy. 'Best Gleymdu Leyndarmálin' is the perfect album to play whether you're at a chill party or driving down Sæbraut at 21:00 in the evening in an intense downpour.

The origins

The pair have known each other for a long time, having first met when Fannar worked as a group leader at Jökull's summer job in 2013. Over the years, they formed a tight friendship. Fannar began to take notice of Jökull's musical ability, though, when the latter took part in Verzlunarskólinn's singing competition Vælið.

"I had no idea that Jökull could sing," Fannar says. "He sent me recordings of him singing two songs, some song by Elvis Presley, and 'To Build A Home' by The Cinematic Orchestra, which I was blown away by. I was so excited for him."

Jökull went on to win Vælið but dropped out of Verzlunarskólinn the following December. "After dropping out I started working on music and producing for Flóni," he explains. "I produced quite a lot of his first album, which was a lot of fun. I am honoured to have been part of that project."

Eyes everywhere

After wrapping with Flóni, Jökull joined up with Fannar and they started Hipsumhaps, beginning their album approximately a year ago. "We went to a summer cottage in July and recorded a lot of material there," Fannar says. "It was an important moment for us because we tracked guitar and vocals for the song 'Augu' there. It is my favourite song on the album because of that."

'Augu' is the 8th song on the album, and one of its more heartfelt tracks. The song speaks of relationship troubles and wanting something that "...just won't ever happen." Driven by a reverb guitar riff, 90s-Esque electronic drums and a synth which kicks in about halfway through the song, it has a childlike optimistic quality about it. Though the last few months have undoubtedly hectic for the duo, Hipsumhaps seem ready and eager to take on the music landscape headfirst. While their album might call them a best-forgotten secret, it's clear they are anything but. **VG**



MUSIC NEWS

Hildur Guðnadóttir, who composed the haunting score for the HBO hit miniseries **Chernobyl**, has landed the Emmy that she was nominated for: outstanding music composition for a limited series, movie or special (original dramatic score), specifically for the score in episode two of the series, "Please Remain Calm." Part of the eerie beauty of Chernobyl's score can be attributed to the methodology, which was made almost entirely with recordings Hildur made in a decommissioned nuclear power plant. "You arrive and you have to put on these Soviet uniforms and hats," she told the Grapevine. "Being able to spend a few days in the lives of the people who work in these environments is phenomenal. It was really inspirational to go there." **AF**



The European Broadcasting Union (EBU) has decided to fine Icelandic public broadcaster RÚV €5,000 for Hatari's displaying of the Palestinian flag during the live broadcast of the **Eurovision Song Contest** last May. RÚV has issued a statement objecting to the fine, saying there is no way they can bear responsibility for Hatari's action. Hatari finished in 10th place at the Eurovision Song Contest held in Tel Aviv, but it was not their song, 'Hatríð Mun Sigrá', which elicited the strongest response—rather, it was their unfurling of scarves stylised after the Palestinian flag that kicked off a slew of responses of both praise and condemnation. The display was, in the eyes of the EBU, a violation of the song contest's rules about sending overtly political messages during the competition. That said, RÚV has provided assurances that they will still take part in Eurovision 2020, which will be held in Rotterdam. **AF**



The unique theremin composer, **Hekla Magnúsdóttir**, won an award for the best film score at Festival of Slovenian Film for her music for the movie 'Stories From The Chestnut Woods.' The movie is Gregor Bozic's first feature film and has received rave reviews, praising the film's poetic vision and heralding Gregor as one of the most talented filmmakers in Slovenia. Readers of the Reykjavík Grapevine know Hekla well, but she has been gaining a lot of attention after releasing two albums of theremin music. **VG**

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Our Picks



Kef LAVÍK

September 28th - 22:00 - Prikíð - Free! ★

Kef LAVÍK are an unusual band. Perhaps it's something to do with the way they crack themselves open—their lyrics are nakedly personal, addressing struggles with love, pain, drug abuse, suicidal thoughts and longing. Their shows, meanwhile, are nothing

short of celebratory. Their devoted fans sing at the top of their lungs, jumping around to the upbeat electro-pop-rap crossover tunes. Even those who don't understand the words get swept up in the atmosphere. The boys rarely play live, so take advantage of this opportunity to see them at Prikíð and don't forget to prepare with a few spins of their newest effort, 'Blautt Heitt Langt Vont Sumar.'

Arrive early. **TNI**



APE OUT

October 4th - 21:00 - Mengi ★

Two musicians. One video game player. A new type of improvisation. Try to stay alive. **HJC**



Dynfari, The Moronic & More

October 5th - 22:00 - Gaukurinn - 1,000 ISK ★

Melodic black metal legends Dynfari join up with hardcore newcomers The Moronic, At Breakpoint and Holdris for a melange-of-metal extravaganza. Come celebrate the winter with the best medicine for depression: guitar riffs. **HJC**



Jeremy Denk

September 29th - 20:00 - Harpa ★

After condensing 700 years of music into one album, pianist Jeremy Denk is here to blow your mind. **HJC**



Can't think just feel #9

September 27th - 20:30 - Loft - Free! ★

MSEA's monthly concert series always impresses, but this month's iteration is unusually spooky. Fresh off a US tour, electronic goth queen Sólveig Matthildur will take the stage along with the tech noire Dada Pogrom and post-apocalyptic Okuma. Happy Halloween. **HJC**

September 27th—October 10th

Concerts & Nightlife

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

Friday September 27th

★ **Can't think just feel #9 // Sólveig Matthildur, Dada Pogrom & Okuma**
20:30 Loft
Under The Church, Urðun & Narthraal
21:00 Gaukurinn
Stebbi Jak & Andri Ívars
22:00 Bryggjan Brugghús
Lagaffe Tales:
B2B Jónbjörn & Viktor Birgiss
22:00 Kaffibarinn
DJ Crush
22:00 Bravó
DJ KGB / Ewok x Kocoon
22:00 Prikíð
Piano Inauguration: Kristín Anna
21:00 Mengi
Beer & Hymns
20:00 Langholtskirkja
Dúndurfréttir:
Abby Road 50 Year Concert
20:00 Harpa
We Will Rock You:
Queen Tribute Concert
20:00 Háskólabíó



Saturday September 28th

★ **Kef LAVÍK**
22:00 Prikíð
Mostly Minimal Vol. 1: GeoVol & KrBear
22:00 Bravó
Skoffin Houseparty
20:30 Hlemmur Square
Nýdönsk
19:30 Harpa
DJ Margeir
22:00 Kaffibarinn
Ólöf Arnalds
21:00 Mengi
Aaru & Hollow Front
22:00 Gaukurinn

101 Savage
23:30 Prikíð
Árni Vil: Album Release Concert
20:00 Hannesarholt
The Greatest Showman
19:00, 21:00 Lindakirkja

Sunday September 29th

★ **Jeremy Denk**
20:00 Harpa
The Chamber Music Society #1: Brahms & Tanyev
16:00 Harpa
DJ Silja Glommi
22:00 Kaffibarinn
Perlur Fyrir Svín & DJ Pálmi
22:00 Prikíð
Sunday Jazz
20:00 Bryggjan Brugghús
Sigríður Ósk Kristjánsdóttir & Edda Erlendsdóttir
12:00 Hannesarholt

Monday September 30th

DJ John BRNLV
22:00 Kaffibarinn

Tuesday October 1st

Karaoke Party!
21:00 Gaukurinn
Jazz Night
20:30 Kex Hostel
Guðbjörg R. Tryggvadóttir & Guðmundur Karl Eiríksson
12:00 Hafnarborg



Wednesday October 2nd

Vök
20:00 Hljómahöll
Don Lockwood Band
21:00 Slippbarinn



Party Karaoke With DJ Dóra Júlía & Helga Margrét
21:00 Sæta Svíníð
Omotrack
20:30 Lág múla 9

Thursday October 3rd

Skerpla
21:00 Mengi
French Coffeehouse Live Music
20:00 Petersen svítan
Skepna
21:00 Gaukurinn

Friday October 4th

★ **APE OUT: Live Games, Live Music**
21:00 Mengi
Luka Okros:
Schubert, Rachmaniov & Liszt
20:00 Harpa

Saturday October 5th

Dynfari, The Moronic, At Breakpoint & Holdris
22:00 Gaukurinn
Etta James Tribute Show
20:00 Bryggjan Brugghús
Une Misère, Elli Grill & Volcanova
21:00 Dillon

Iceland Symphony Orchestra: Musical Time Travel
14:00 Harpa
INGO
22:00 Bryggjan Brugghús
Beyoncé Tribute Show
21:00 Hard Rock Café
Stjórnin
20:30 Háskólabíó

Sunday October 6th

Camerarctica:
Mozart Arias & Brahms
16:00 Harpa
Nat & Natalie:
100 Years Of Nat King Cole
20:00 Harpa
Sunday Jazz
20:00 Bryggjan Brugghús
Sing Together With Þórunn Harðardóttir
14:00 Hannesarholt

Tuesday October 8th

Ragnar Jónsson & Jónas Ásgeir Ásgeirsson
19:30 Salurinn
Karaoke Party!
21:00 Gaukurinn
Jazz Night

20:30 Kex Hostel



Wednesday October 9th

Don Lockwood Band
21:00 Slippbarinn
Party Karaoke With DJ Dóra Júlía & Helga Margrét
21:00 Sæta Svíníð
Regnbuen String Ensemble
14:00 Harpa
Markús Bjarnason, Marteinn Sindri, Jelena Ciric & Myrra Rós
21:00 Gaukurinn

Thursday October 10th

Deep Jimi & The Zep Creams
21:00 Hljómahöll
Zak & The Krackens
21:00 Kex Hostel
Iceland Symphony Orchestra: Open Rehearsal
9:30 Harpa
Iceland Symphony Orchestra: Brahms & Tchaikovsky
19:30 Harpa
Skúraleiðingar #1: Kallabandið, Nostalgía & Band nútímans
21:00 Hard Rock Café
Drulla & Kingkiller
21:00 Gaukurinn
Jo Berger Myhre & Ólafur Björn Ólafsson
21:00 Mengi
Katrín Arndísardóttir
20:00 Petersen svítan



★ For music listings from October 11th on, check out happening.grapevine.is or our app Appening, available on iOS and Android

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Music



gugusar, the next best thing

In Character

The sublime intensity of gugusar

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

Artist

[Check out gugusar on Spotify.](#)

Guðlaug Sóley Höskuldsdóttir is shy. Sitting in her family's Grafarvogur home, backlit by the late-summer sunshine, the 15-year-old songstress—who performs under the name gugusar—speaks quietly and punctuates each of her thoughts with a nervous laugh. She's never been interviewed before and frankly seems somewhat caught-off-guard when told how her newest song "I'm not supposed to say this" has been on constant rotation in the Grapevine office. In truth, talking to me might be the first time she's ever met a fan.

But her music and live performances tell a different story. Intricate, low-fi emotional tunes peppered with swaying beats and subtle roaming harmonies, gugusar's works project a quiet confidence and remarkable emotional insight. They're visceral, heartfelt, and utterly captivating—Iceland's toned-down response to Billie Eilish. Hearing her songs for the first

time reminded me of watching Hatari's first shows, or listening to "B.O.B.A." on the day it was released—this girl is going to be big. I'm betting on it.

Other people's steps

"Gugusar is a character," Guðlaug says, smiling simply. "Me, as myself, I would never sing in front of anyone, not even my Mom. But when I'm onstage as gugusar, it's a whole different thing."

Guðlaug premiered gugusar live at this year's Músiktilraunir contest with her instrumental song "Marthröð." She won the Rafheili Músiktilrauna, the contest's award for electronic music. "I didn't have an idea for a song, so I just went on my music program and just picked an instrument. I pressed record and played something and didn't even listen to it. Then I picked another instrument and did the same thing, and then I did another one," she explains. "I was really stressed [to perform] but then it worked out fine."

She followed that up with two

more songs, "If u wanna go," and "I'm not supposed to say this," released in August and September, where Guðlaug added her voice. "I write in a character, so I write about something that hasn't happened to me," she explains. "I put myself in other people's shoes."

"If u wanna go," Guðlaug emphasizes, is about a person who is confused, while "I'm not supposed to say this" takes a more complicated approach. "I was writing from the perspective that someone has been really mean to you, and you're like, I hate him, but I'm not supposed to say that I hate someone. It's confusing," she relays.

We're supposed to say this

While her debut show was at Músiktilraunir, her second performance was equally as impressive—onstage with Hermigervill and FM Belfast at Menningarnótt. "It was really crazy," she says excitedly, her face breaking out in a huge smile. "Unnsteinn Manuel just called me one day. It was a random number and I wasn't even going to answer but I picked up and it's Unnsteinn!" She laughs. "When I was little, I looked up to him so much so I was panicking."

The concert went well, and saw Guðlaug find even more comfort in front of a crowd. "It's weird how I change characters when I go onstage," she says. "After the show, I thought, 'what did I just do?' It's so weird," she laughs. "But it's cool. Then I'm back and I'm me, Guðlaug, and I'm like 'thank you, I don't know what just happened.'" 🍷

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We're Not Sports Persons!

Supersport! aims for a top 10 pop hit on Rás 2

Words: **Phil Uwe Widiger** Photo: **Art Bicnick**

Band

Follow the band on Instagram, @ssuper.ssport

Bjarni, Þóra, and Dagur of Supersport! are all cuteness and smiles as they sit around a table at Kafibrennslan. The band is fresh off an enchanting Culture Night performance, where, forgoing the stage, they decided to sit in a patch of grass in the middle of the audience as they serenaded onlookers with catchy, uplifting pop tunes. While all three have only been collaborating as Supersport! for one month at the time of our coffee date, their performance revealed a chemistry far beyond their time together.

Three musicians walk into a studio

Bjarni and Þóra, taking over guitar

and vocal duties, had been playing together for about two years in the successful indie-rock band bagdad brothers before forming Supersport! A change of plans resulted in unexpected free time to write new songs.

"The oldest ones started happening in June," recalls Bjarni. "We've gotten ourselves into a rhythm where we write songs very frequently and very fast." Both agree that the songs they are currently performing are some of the best they have ever written.

Culture Night was also when Dagur joined the band. "I was asked to join the next rehearsal and when I arrived, Bjarni told me I was also going to be a singer in the band," says the drummer. "And that we were going to record a demo a day after." He laughs, revealing another endearing feature of the trio: They do not take themselves too seriously.

Just another pop song

"Well, they are all essentially pop songs," says Bjarni, when asked whether there were any underlying theme behind the band's music. Judging by the way he talks, it seems he might consider this a bad thing.

The guitarist shrugs. "Sometimes I feel like the urge to apologize for it or talk about it in an ironic way even though it's definitely my preferred form of expression. In the Post-dre-ifying social circles there are a lot of people who make very experimental music. So in this context, it's always kinda awkward to talk about being inspired by the Beatles," he explains.

But just like the later half of the Beatles' output, Supersport! is setting out to put a dynamic production on their album due before the end of the year. Another goal is to have a top 10 hit on the Icelandic radio channel Rás 2. "It's about time," says Bjarni, happily.

Not really sports persons

The name Supersport! is an homage to a British indie-rock band of the nineties. "We're not really sports persons," explains Þóra. "But in some ways we're a sportier band than other bands we've been in," Bjarni continues. "The songs are just fitter. I feel like they are in very solid shape. They've been worked out quite well."

"That was improvised, just to be clear," laughs the guitarist.

All jokes aside, though, it's clear Supersport! has the skills and charms to meet their goals and create that top 10 hit. They're currently working on new material and, as they ask to be included in this article, looking for a manager. Any takers. ♡

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Jim Jarmusch, please acknowledge our existence

Get Your RIFF On

Grapevine's resident tastemakers
pick the best of the best

Words: **The Reykjavík Grapevine Film Fans Dpt.** Photo: **Art Bicnick**

Film Festival

RIFF will be from Sept. 26th-Oct. 6th at Bió Paradís. View the whole schedule on riff.is

Cinephiles assemble! The Reykjavík International Film Festival is back and will be bringing some much needed visual content to our proud city from September 26th through October 6th. We at the Grapevine consider ourselves to be quite the intellectuals, so here are our not-to-miss films.

Dogs Don't Wear Pants

J-P Valkeapää

When in doubt, go see a BDSM-fueled Finnish flick. The synopsis of 'Dogs Don't Wear Pants' is as Finnish (and glorious!) as can be. A depressed surgeon—of course—is struggling with the death of his wife. But when he meets a BDSM dominatrix by chance, and she confuses him with a client of hers, everything changes. She strangles him and he unexpectedly sees visions of his lost spouse. This leads him to seek more extreme punishment, in search of something deeper than just a sexual experience, which leaves them both—the dominatrix and the surgeon—confused and vulnerable. Bring your own gags. **VG** Screening Sept. 26th at 20:30, Oct. 2nd at 21:15, and Oct. 6th at 20:30 at Bió Paradís.

Varda by Agnès

Agnès Varda

All film students remember the day they saw 'Cléo de 5 à 7' in class. Directed by the incomparable Agnès Varda, the New Wave picture opened my eyes to cinema in all of its beauty. This year, the illustrious artist put out 'Varda by Agnès,' a documentary/lecture of her time in the sun. The film jets between being a dissection of her filmmaking as well as just a celebration of her greatest hits. Varda sadly passed away just one month after the film's release. Come celebrate her legacy and make sure to show up in all purple. That was kind of her thing. **HJC** Screening Sept. 27th at 19:00, Sept. 29th at 17:00, and Oct. 6th at 13:15 at Bió Paradís.

Joan of Arc

Bruno Dumont

The fact that Jeanne d'Arc is probably the only figure from the Hundred Year's War in particular—and possibly the 15th century in general—that pretty much anyone can name is a testament to how enduring and resonating her brief but eventful life was. While films have often taken a crack at telling the story of her life, critics have been praising the performance of the actor behind the titular role, Lise Leplat Prudhomme, for her convincing intensity despite being only 10-years old—and when you're playing an insurrection-

ist guided by the voices of saints against one of Europe's most powerful armies, your intensity is going to have to be convincing. **AF** Screening Sept. 26th at 20:30, Oct. 3rd at 17:00, and Oct. 5th at 19:00 at Bió Paradís.

The Dead Don't Die

Jim Jarmusch

The zombie movie genre may be wearing thin in 2019, but put this well-worn subject in the hands of understated art-house legend Jim Jarmusch, back it up with a star-studded cast, and the results are going to be quite a departure from the expected. One could see this film as the natural extension of the same director tackling the curse of immortality suffered by vampires in 'Only Lovers Left Alive.' True to his nature, Jarmusch approaches the zombie genre with wit, grace and a meditation on the end of the world. **AF** Screening Sept. 27th at 21:00, Sept. 30th at 21:00, and Oct. 5th at 19:45 at Bió Paradís.

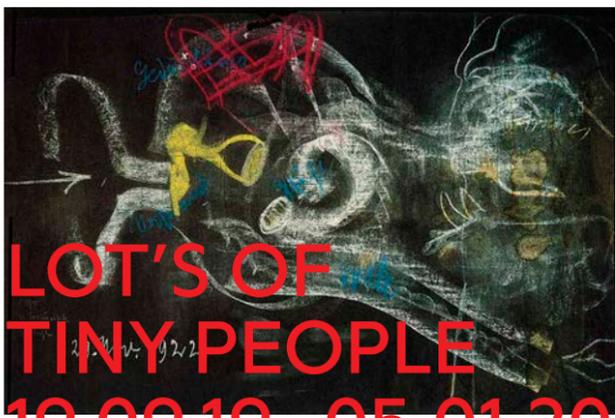
God Exists, Her Name Is Petrunya

Teona Strugar Mitevska

"I'm a woman, not an idiot," Petrunya argues with the police officer investigating her comical case. In this subtle feminist piece, Petrunya, a young woman from Macedonia, accidentally wins an annual religious competition, where traditionally men—or rather, exclusively men—dive after a wooden cross thrown by a priest into the river. The male outrage which follows is overwhelming, but Petrunya reasons that she has the same right as any man for the prosperity promised to the winner. What makes this movie so special is the character, who is not inherently feminist but simply applies common sense to her situation. **LM** Screening Sept. 26th at 19:00, Sept. 29th at 16:50, and Oct. 4th at 15:00 Bió Paradís. ☞

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Our Picks



★ Sequences Art Festival

October 11th-20th - Various Venues

Sequences is like Reykjavík open Iceland Airwaves their doors, exhibiting music, text, film, installations, drawings, sculptures, embroidery, wall murals, cartoons and live performances. Pórranna Björnsdóttir created the opening performance, which will take place at the Marshall House on October 12th. It's all about experiencing sound (as the title "Muffled sound from a television from behind a closed door" suggests) and is meant to evoke memories, share experiences and forge connections to a distant world. One of the last events on October 20th will be a screening of the movie "Gabriel" by Agnes Martin, who was best known for her radical abstract paintings. **LM**

and is meant to evoke memories, share experiences and forge connections to a distant world. One of the last events on October 20th will be a screening of the movie "Gabriel" by Agnes Martin, who was best known for her radical abstract paintings. **LM**



★ Late Summer Show

Until October 12th - i8 Gallery

The cold winds might be sweeping in but that doesn't mean you can't end the summer with

a bang. Stop by the legendary i8 for works by Margrét H. Blöndal, Ásgerður Búadóttir, Eyborg Guðmundsdóttir, Karin Sander and more. **HJC**



★ Elsewhere

Until October 6th - Ásmundarsalur

Elín Hansdóttir is known for creating temporary interventions installed directly into a space. For

this exhibit, she scaled down her usually immersive works, creating intimate sculptures that turn the viewer into a giant. **HJC**



★ Duwoeu

October 4th-6th - FLÆÐI

Artist Högná Heiðbjört Jónsdóttir teams up with goldsmith Emília Ósk Bjarnadóttir for this

new collaboration of painting, jewelry, and more. There will be a special opening party on October 4th at 17:00. **HJC**

September 27th—October 10th

Art Listings

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

Opening

REYKJAVÍK MUSEUM OF PHOTOGRAPHY

Observe Absorb

Artists Karoline Sætre and Rannveig Jónsdóttir dive into lacks of memory, where something—often nostalgic—is always out of reach. Prepare to get homesick.

- Opens on September 27th, 2019
- Runs until October 27th, 2019

REYKJAVÍK ART MUSEUM - HAFNARHÚS

SOMETHING FROM NOTHING: The Visual Realm Of Magnús Pálsson

Artist Magnús Pálsson is known for the breadth of his mediums. Here, selected pieces from the early 60s until today reflect Magnús's pop/conceptual philosophies in sculptures, bookworks and two-dimensional works.

- Opens on September 28th, 2019
- Runs until January 12th, 2020

KORPÚLFSSTÖÐUM

TORG Art Fair

SÍM's annual art fair is back! Stop by to see the best and brightest of Icelandic and international contemporary art and maybe even pick up a few pieces for yourself. If not, you can just walk around, peruse, and chat to the artists themselves.

- Opens on October 4th, 2019
- Runs until October 6th, 2019

Ongoing

NATIONAL GALLERY OF ICELAND

Treasures Of A Nation

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

- Runs until December 31st, 2019

Violin Power 1

In this autonomous work, observe Steina's development as an artist, from playing the violin in her youth and dancing in later years, to singing along to the Beatles' "Let it Be" as a stoical, mature artist.

- Runs until December 31st, 2019

EINAR JÓNSSON MUSEUM

Permanent Exhibition

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

REYKJAVÍK CITY MUSEUM

Settlement Sagas

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

REYKJAVÍK ART MUSEUM - ÁSMUNDARSAFN

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

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

- Runs until December 31st, 2019

Helgi Gíslason: Where The Boundaries Lie

Helgi Gíslason presents a series of sculptures from different periods of his career. In his work, Helgi deals with man and the human condition. His works, though, are up for interpretation.

- Runs until November 3rd, 2019

REYKJAVÍK MUSEUM OF PHOTOGRAPHY

Icelandic Cornershops

In the mid-80s, small shops were found on every street corner of the city, serving as more than just grocery shops but rather as social centres, where people gathered to chat, catch up, and exchange news. This exhibit celebrates that lost piece of history.

- Runs until November 5th, 2019

Encounters - Nordic Photography Beyond Borders

This exhibit is characterised by social and political overtones. In the works, ways are explored of visualising "encounters" between subjects, thus drawing attention to major issues like immigration, changes to land- and cityscapes, or the local impacts of globalisation.

- Runs until January 12th, 2020

REYKJAVÍK MARITIME MUSEUM

Fish & Folk

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

Melckmeyt 1659

Melckmeyt was a Dutch merchant ship that crashed near Flatey Island in 1659. Explore the wreck here.

REYKJAVÍK ART MUSEUM - HAFNARHÚS

Erró: Mao's World Tour

Between 1972 and 1980, Erró painted over 130 paintings, with two images of different origins against each other: Chinese propaganda posters of Mao Zedong and Western tourist pictures from famous sites.

- Runs until January 5th, 2020

SIGURJÓN ÓLAFSSON MUSEUM

Connections

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

- Runs until October 6th, 2019

MUSEUM OF DESIGN AND APPLIED ART

Behind The Scenes: Archiving A Ceramic Collection

In 1979, Anna Eyjólfsdóttir began to collect ceramic pieces by Icelandic artists. In 2017, the Museum of Design and Applied Art acquired her collection. Currently, the museum is cataloguing the collection in front of your eyes.

- Runs until October 27th, 2019

Urban Shape

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

- Runs until October 6th, 2019

NORDIC HOUSE

You never know what you have until you lose it

Ólafur Sveinsson's exhibit celebrates Iceland's unspoiled nature with photos of mountains, geothermal areas, waterfalls, big wide areas, and uninhabited wilderness.

- Runs until November 17th, 2019

REYKJAVÍK ART MUSEUM - KJARVALSSTAÐIR

Jóhannes S. Kjarval: Can't Draw a Harebell

Here, explore the floral works of Jóhannes S. Kjarval, after whom the museum is named. Be it ornamental plants, potted plants, or wildflowers, you'll find it all.

- Runs until December 31st, 2019

William Morris: Let Beauty Rule!

English artist William Morris was a true Icelandophile, and even translated the Sagas. Here, see original drawings of Morris's patterns, wallpapers and work processes, paintings, drawings, and more.

- Runs until October 6th, 2019

Sölvi Helgason: Floral Fantasy

Sölvi is one of Iceland's most fascinating folk artists. Here, see 18 previously unknown works by the eccentric scholar that showcase his characteristic floral patterns.

- Runs until October 6th, 2019

ÁRBÆR OPEN AIR MUSEUM

HEIMAT: Two Worlds

To mark the 70th anniversary of the arrival in 1949 of a group of Germans to who travelled to Iceland aboard the Esja ship, this exhibition presents photographs of their journey made by Marzena Skubatz.

- Runs until October 31st, 2019

REYKJAVÍK ROASTERS

í kring 03

A collection of short stories. A mish-mash of pictures. A zine. Journey to all three Reykjavík Roasters locations and you'll experience all of this in Kári Björn's three-part exhibition.

- Runs until October 9th, 2019

HAFNARBORG

Everything At The Same Time

In this exhibit, explore how young artists take on and confront the freedom in contemporary visual arts. How can one extract meaning from that which can mean anything?

- Runs until October 20th, 2019

Prison

Olga Bergmann and Anna Hallin capture the "all-seeing eye" of surveillance systems, exploring the concept of prison, both in the conventional sense within the walls of detention centers, as well as beyond into the greater monitoring of everyday society.

- Runs until October 27th, 2019

WIND & WEATHER WINDOW GALLERY

Sunny Palace

Arnar Ásgeirsson's installation features a large-scale black and white print surrounded by climbing ropes. The window is viewable in all weather—no need for sun.

- Runs until October 27th, 2019

MUSEUM OF DESIGN AND APPLIED ART

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Exhibitions:

- Urban Shape**
Paolo Gianfrancesco
- Behind the Scenes**
Archiving a ceramic collection
- Morra**
Signý Þórhallsdóttir
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SPECIAL EVENTS

OCT 4TH | 18.00
WINE TASTING
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OCT 9TH | 19.30-22.30
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@ LÓA BAR - BISTRO
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REGULAR EVENTS

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FRIDAYS | 19.00-22.00
LIVE JAZZ
@ LÓA BAR - BISTRO
LAUGAVEGUR 95-99
101 REYKJAVÍK

SATURDAYS | 20.00-23.00
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LAUGAVEGUR 95-99
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SATURDAYS | 18.30-20.30
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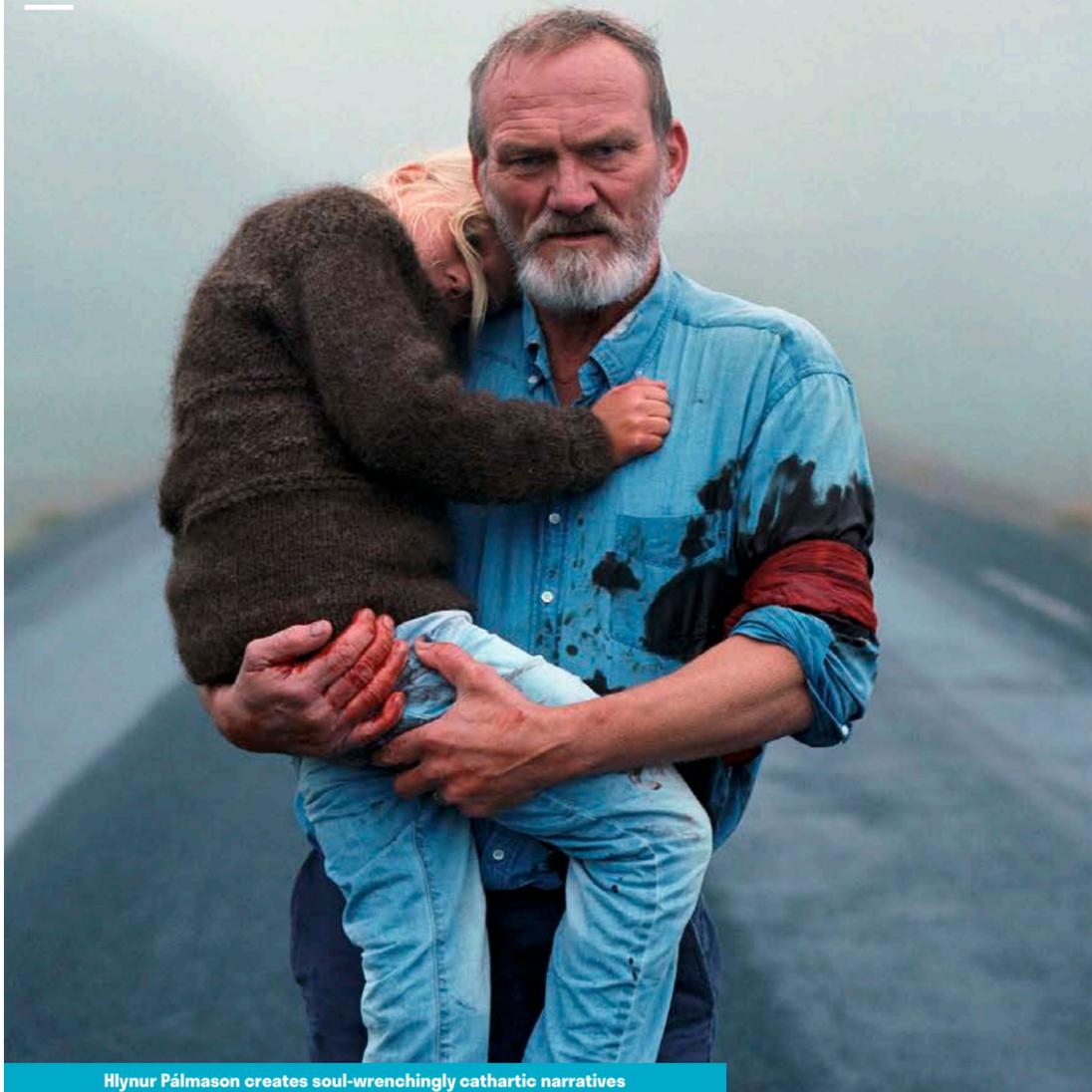
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Film

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FILM



Hlynur Palmason creates soul-wrenchingly cathartic narratives

It's Time For Our Statuette

Hlynur Palmason's 'A White, White Day'
heads to the Oscars

Words: Valur Grettilsson/Tara Njála Ingvarsdóttir
Photo: Hlynur Palmason

Film

You can see 'Hvítur, Hvítur Dagur' in
Bió Paradís with English subtitles.
Check out their homepage for
screenings.

It's official: Hlynur Palmason's 'A White, White Day' will be Iceland's contribution to the 2020 Academy Awards. The film, Hlynur's second, has been travelling the world, picking up heat after its premiere at the International Critics Week at Cannes earlier this year. His debut effort, 'Vetrarbræður' ('Winterbrothers') was similarly successful, so it's clear that Hlynur is one-to-watch on the Icelandic scene.

'A White, White Day' tells the story of Ingimundur, a retired police commissioner who is dealing with the tragic death of his wife. When he learns that she was having an affair before she died, his life is turned upside down into a visually stunning and soul-wrenchingly cathartic tale.

Time as a medium

Hlynur's education was in the visual arts—something that's clear when you see his films, which blur the lines between

visual arts and filmmaking.

Unlike many other filmmakers, Hlynur works across mediums, playing with moving images, sounds, paintings and sculptures. He spoke with Reykjavík Grapevine in August about the importance of time as a medium in his film work. For him, these are all parallel processes. "One of the things that excites me about this relationship is that a photograph can trigger a story or a storyline that builds into a film," he shares. "Or you can be working on a film and it triggers something in your painting. I tend to think of my films as compositions."

"Filmmaking and this film are very much about rhythm and time," Hlynur continues. "Oil can be said to be the medium of painting. Time is the medium of filmmaking."

Through the cinematography of the film's prologue, Hlynur aimed to convey "the experience of time passing"—from the death of the protagonist's wife to when the story begins. He does so through stunning landscape shots of the

run down-house that Ingimundur is fixing up for his daughter and grand-daughter. The montage becomes an introduction to the landscape, the character of the weather, and a glimpse at how time passes for the living after death.

Third time's the charm

Iceland's contribution to the Oscars is always decided by a vote among those in the Icelandic film industry. Hlynur's picture won by a large majority, so it's safe to say that this was not a controversial decision.

The film will now be added to a long list of contributions from dozens of other countries, all of which are in the running for a nomination in the Best International Feature Film category. Current frontrunners are 'Parasite,' directed by Bong Joon-Ho (South Korea), 'Pain & Glory,' directed by Pedro Almodóvar (Spain), and 'Les Misérables,' directed by Ladj Ly (France).

The last time an Icelandic film was nominated for an Oscar was in 2006, when Rúnar Rúnarsson's film, 'Síðasti bærinn' ('The Last Farm') was in the running to be named Best Short Film. That was just the second time an Icelandic filmmaker was acknowledged by the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences, after Friðrik Þór Friðriksson's 'Börn Náttúrunnar' ('Children Of Nature') was nominated in the Best Foreign Language Film category in 1992. [↗](#)

"Oil can be said to be the medium of painting. Time is the medium of filmmaking."

gpv.is/film
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Various Events

Friday September 27th

★ **Reykjavik International Film Festival** ★
Various times & locations
RIFF: Horror Marathon
21:00 Bió Paradís
Not So Secret Friday Show With Gisli Jóhann
21:00 The Secret Cellar

Saturday, September 28th

★ **Reykjavik International Film Festival** ★
Various times & locations
How To Become Icelandic In 60 Minutes
19:00 Harpa
Icelandic Sagas: The Greatest Hits
19:30 Harpa
Saturday Night Showcase
21:00 The Secret Cellar

Sunday September 29th

★ **Reykjavik International Film Festival** ★
Various times & locations
Coney Iceland
21:00 Gaukurinn
The Art Of The Fool: Workshop With Dawn Nilo
13:00 Gerðarsafn Kópavogur Art Museum
Guided Tour In English
11:00 National Museum Of Iceland
Party Bingo With Sigga Kling
21:00 Sæta Svinið
Free Yoga Class
12:00 Loft
Plant Swap
13:00 Reykjavik City Library Árbær

Monday September 30th

★ **Reykjavik International Film Festival** ★
Various times & locations
Soulflow: Women & Queer Comedy Night
21:00 Gaukurinn
Terra Madre Film Screening & Pop-Up Grill
16:00 Harpa
The Magic Viking
21:00 Secret Cellar

Tuesday October 1st

★ **Reykjavik International Film Festival** ★
Various times & locations
Gógó Starr: Drag Pub Quiz!
21:00 Fjallkonan
Funniest Four: Comedy Show
21:00 The Secret Cellar

Wednesday October 2nd

★ **Reykjavik International Film Festival** ★
Various times & locations
Golden Mic Stand-Up Comedy
21:00 The Secret Cellar
Introduction to Gurdjieff Sacred Dances
12:15 Gerðarsafn Kópavogur Art Museum

Thursday October 3rd

★ **Reykjavik International Film Festival** ★
Various times & locations
My Voices Have Tourettes
21:00 The Secret Cellar
Knitting Café
13:30 Reykjavik City Library Spöngin

Friday October 4th

★ **Reykjavik International Film Festival** ★
Various times & locations
A Nightful Of Wonda II: Sloppy Seconds Drag Show
21:00 Gaukurinn
Not So Secret Friday Show With Gisli Jóhann
21:00 The Secret Cellar

Saturday October 5th

★ **Reykjavik International Film Festival** ★
Various times & locations
How To Become Icelandic In 60 Minutes
19:00 Harpa
Svanurinn: Improv Comedy
21:00 The Secret Cellar
Saturday Night Showcase
21:00 The Secret Cellar

Sunday October 6th

★ **Reykjavik International Film Festival** ★
Various times & locations
Free Yoga Class
12:00 Loft
Guided Tour In English
11:00 National Museum Of Iceland
Party Bingo With Sigga Kling
21:00 Sæta Svinið
Icelandic Sagas: The Greatest Hits
19:30 Harpa
The Women's Story Circle: Let's Dance!
15:00 Reykjavik City Library Gerðuberg

Monday October 7th

Soulflow: Women & Queer Comedy Night
21:00 Gaukurinn
The Magic Viking
21:00 Secret Cellar

Tuesday October 8th

'Fleabag' National Theatre Live Screening
20:00 Bió Paradís
Funniest Four: Comedy Show
21:00 The Secret Cellar
Gógó Starr: Drag Pub Quiz!
21:00 Fjallkonan
Poetry Open Mic Night
20:15 Stúdentakjallarinn

Wednesday October 9th

Metallica & San Francisco Symphony: S&M2 Concert Screening
20:00 Bió Paradís
Reykjavik Feminist Walking Tour (Free!)
18:00 Meet at Alþingi
Golden Mic Stand-Up Comedy
21:00 The Secret Cellar
How To Become Icelandic In 60 Minutes
19:00 Harpa
Icelandic Sagas: The Greatest Hits
19:30 Harpa
Aristotle's Café: Discussion Hour
18:30 Reykjavik City Library Gerðuberg
Imagine Peace Tower Illuminated
17:45 Viðey

Thursday October 10th

Café Lingua: Language Rendezvous
18:00 Veröld
My Voices Have Tourettes
21:00 The Secret Cellar

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What a bold choice of shirt for a photoshoot!

MAKING OF AN ARTIST

Binging Bukowski While Battling Evil Forces

Frosti Runólfsson on family, television, and the cultural value of Kiss

Words: Frosti “Gringó” Runólfsson & Valur Grettisson Photo: Art Bicnick

Frosti “Gringó” Runólfsson is a well-known musician and filmmaker in Iceland as well as a larger-than-life figure. His band, Horrible Youth, is releasing their first album this weekend. Frosti is also a vocal advocate for homeless people, after one of his best friends, Loftur Gunnarsson, died far too young on the streets of Reykjavík. We sat down with Frosti to learn what made him the artist he is today.



Kiss, ‘Destroyer’

When I was four years old, my uncle gave me this album and I still have that exact, beat-up vinyl to this day. I was mesmerized by the cover artwork. They look like rock’n roll superheroes in the bowels of hell. I especially connected to a song called “God Of Thunder” because throughout the song you hear a little girl ranting and hollering and to me, she seemed to be in trouble and battling evil forces.



Television

My earliest memories are of watching random Harold Lloyd and Looney Tunes episodes on an old VHS tape. Later I’d watch ‘v,’ ‘Murder She Wrote,’ ‘Magnum P.I.,’ ‘Miami Vice,’ ‘Hunter’ and countless other TV shows. I loved being catapulted into this dreamworld of stories and beautiful characters—I still do. Every day after school I’d stop by the video rental store and get something freaky like ‘Maniac Cop’ or ‘Street Trash’ and watch these movies over and over again.



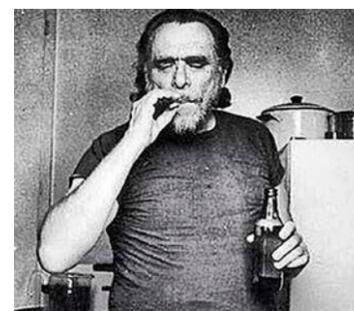
My Mom

My mom and I have always had a special relationship. I love her and I owe her everything. We’d go camping together and listen to Bubbi cassettes. Almost every weekend she’d cook me breakfast with my cartoons, then we’d go to Mokka Kaffi and later to the cinema. There was a scruffy looking weirdo who was ALWAYS sitting at Mokka Kaffi, smoking a pipe, and we nicknamed him “the smiling hippy” and made up stories about his life. Now, thinking about it, he must’ve been mentally ill. Mom made me learn Icelandic poetry by heart from this big old book she had, and on Fridays, I’d recite it to her and if I did well she’d give me 500 ISK. Looking back, I’m sure that that sculpted my passion for language and poetry. She’s a hip, hip lady!



My Brothers

My brothers are nine years older than me and they partly raised me, for good or bad. Mom and Dad would travel a lot and my brothers would throw debauched parties and I’d bear witness to all their twisted rituals. These parties lasted for days and there seemed to be a lot of throwing up? The Jet Black Joe crew used to hang out and I was stoked by their coolness, clothes, and carefree attitude. On my birthdays and for Christmas they would give me albums that they themselves wanted. So very early on I was well versed in music from The Doors, Sabbath, Zeppelin, Sados, Sex Pistols, Sepultura and everything in between. This threw me into a rock and roll journey on which I am still travelling.



Bukowski

As a teenager, I got heavily into Charles Bukowski and I still think he is one of the greatest writers to ever put down the written word. I collect his books, I have about 40 of them and one of them is an autographed and illustrated copy of “A Crucifix In A Death-Hand” published in 1964 in 3,200 copies! One day, while smoking pot in her kitchen, the Icelandic poet Didda gave me that book. Bukowski was a tough bastard, a tragic and drunken loner that understood humans to their core. His thoughts have taught me everything from endurance to originality, wittiness and humour, cats...compassion...curiosity, the beauty of simplicity and the common man. And of course a healthy disdain for the pretentiousness of artists! 🍷

**A GUIDE THAT
FUCKS YOU UP**

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in 101 Reykjavík

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Every day from
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Wine 800 ISK.

BIÓ PARADÍS
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Beer 800 ISK,
Wine 800 ISK.

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

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BRUGGHÚS**
Every day from
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Beer 700 ISK,
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CAFÉ BABALÚ
Every day from
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Wine 795 ISK.

DILLON
Every day from
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Wine 850 ISK.

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Every day from
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Beer 750 ISK,
Wine 750 ISK.

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

GEIRI SMART
Every day from
16:00 to 18:00.
Beer 500 ISK,
Wine 600 ISK,
Cocktails 1,200 ISK.

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

Wine 700 ISK.

ÍÐA ZIMSEN
Every day from
19:00 to 22:00.
Beer 495 ISK.

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

KAFFIBARINN
Every day from
15:00 to 20:00.
Beer 750 ISK,
Wine (On Wed.)
700 ISK.

KAFFIBRENNSLAN
Every day from
16:00 to 20:00.
Beer 550 ISK,
Wine 750 ISK.

KALDI
Every day from
16:00 to 19:00.
Beer 850 ISK,
Wine 850 ISK.

KEX HOSTEL
Every day from
15:00 to 19:00.
Beer 750 ISK,
Wine 750 ISK.

LOFT
Every day from
16:00 to 20:00.
Beer 750 ISK,
Wine 750 ISK.

LOFTIÐ
Wed- Sun from
16:00 to 21:00.
Beer 800 ISK,
Wine 800 ISK,
Cocktails 1,500 ISK.

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

MIAMI
Every day from
15:00 to 20:00.
Beer 500 ISK,
Wine 800 ISK,
Cocktails 1,000 ISK.

PABLO DISCOBAR
Every day from
17:00 to 18:00.
Beer 700 ISK,
Wine 1,000 ISK,
Cocktails 1,500 ISK.

**PAPAKU
REYKJAVÍK**
Every day from
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Beer 690 ISK,
Wine 800 ISK.

PRIKIÐ
Every day from
16:00 to 20:00.
Beer 600 ISK.

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

PETERSEN SVÍTAN
Every day from
16:00 to 20:00,
Beer 800 ISK,
Wine 1,000 ISK,
Cocktails 1,500 ISK.

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

**SESSION CRAFT
BAR**
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Wine 900 ISK.

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Every day from
12:00 to 19:00.
Beer 900 ISK,
Wine 900 ISK.

SLIPBARINN
Every day from
15:00 to 18:00.

Beer 500 ISK,
Wine 750 ISK,
Cocktails 1,200 ISK

SPÁNSKI BARINN
Every day from
14:00 to 20:00.
Beer 650 ISK,
Wine 850 ISK.

STOFAN CAFÉ
Every day from
16:00 to 18:00.
Beer 750 ISK,
Wine 950 ISK.

SOLO
Everyday from
15:00 to 18:00.
Beer 800 ISK,
Wine 800 ISK.

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

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

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

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



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Soup of the day
- 990 ISK

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

Tapas Barinn
Every day
17:00 - 18:00
Half off of
selected tapas
Various prices

Deig / Le Kock
Every day-All day
Donut, coffee &
bagel -1,000 ISK

KEX Hostel
Every day
15:00 - 19:00
Chicken wings -
650 ISK
Baked almonds -
500 ISK

Sushi Social
Every day
17:00 - 18:00
Truffle potatoes
1,000 ISK

Avocado fries -
690 ISK
Lobster sushi,
ribs & more -
890 ISK

**1,500 ISK
And Under**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

**2,000 ISK
And Under**

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

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

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

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

**5,000 ISK
And Under**

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lunch - 4,390 ISK

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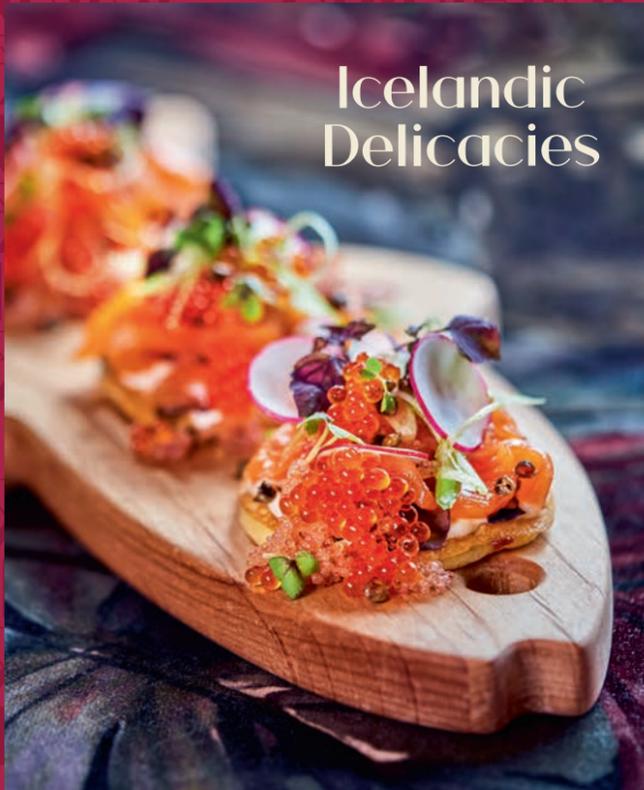
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- > Lamb tartar, chive mayo

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Books

The Reykjavik Grapevine 38
Issue 17—2019



Ian McEwan shows audience invisible apple

Interweaving Reality And Imagination

McEwan brings haunting realism to his fictional works

Words: Sam O'Donnell & a rawlings Photo: Art Bicnick

Halldór Laxness Prize

British author Ian McEwan awarded inaugural literary prize

Literature has always been integral to Icelandic culture, though literary awards are a relatively new feature of the country's heritage. In 1995, Halldór Laxness received the Nobel Prize for Literature, and remains the only Icelander to date to receive the honour.

The newest literary award on the block is named for Laxness, and was founded to support authors—via a 15,000 euro prize—who work to renew the narrative tradition. Shortly after publishing 'Machines Like Me' in April, British author Ian McEwan was announced as the first recipient of the Halldór Laxness International Literary Prize.

The decathlete of literature

Fast forward to September: literary enthusiasts crowded into the University of Iceland's Lögberg building and listened as Prime Minister Katrín Jakobsdóttir referred to Ian McEwan as "the decathlete of literature. He does not focus on just one sport, but competes in all of them."

The crowd—including President Guðni Th. Jóhannesson and former president Vigdís Finnbogadóttir—stood and cheered as she presented the inaugural award to Ian.

Naked hunger

His translator, Árni Óskarsson, addressed the crowd. "The warm

reception of McEwan's work can be attributed to the fact that he considers the pleasure of reading of the utmost importance," he said. "Ian sees it as his obligation not to be boring."

The author has invaded what he calls "the dead hand of modernism," and said that it is a major goal of his to incite a naked hunger in readers. Ian does this by weaving a sense of dread or unease into his work, and by setting his works in significant times in history.

All writers start as readers

Ian approached the podium and called the award an enormous honour. "All writers start as readers," he said before diving into his own background.

He did not come from a literary household. Both his parents left school at the age of 14. They had no notion of children's literature, so when Ian visited the library at the age of 8, he had no compass. Still, he had a desire to read, so he simply "chomped through books alphabetically."

He spoke extensively on the interpenetration of social realism with a world of imagination, fantasy, and a profound sense of the supernatural that permeated not only Laxness' work, but the work of many literary geniuses including Tolstoy and Kafka.

Profound reading experiences

Ian mentioned two profound reading experiences which coloured his experience as both a reader and a writer. At the age of 8, McEwan had the first of these reading experiences when he read a book called 'The Gauntlet,' about a boy named Peter who finds a rusty gauntlet that transports him to 14th century England. He was so enamoured by this story, he realised he didn't want to read any other book, so he reread 'The Gauntlet.' To this day, he feels that rereading is of the utmost importance.

"The warm reception of McEwan's work can be attributed to the fact that he considers the pleasure of reading of the utmost importance."

His second profound reading experience took place when he was in boarding school. He sat in an ornate reading room, all by himself, and read. One of the books he read was the famous British novel, 'The Go-Between.' One of the major plot points of this novel is a massive heat wave. On the hottest day of the year, (a satirical magazine in the novel) Punch acknowledged the heat wave with an illustration of the clown mopping sweat from his forehead with a handkerchief. When Ian read this, he put the book down and checked the archive in the library to see if this was a real magazine. He discovered that the heat wave was real, and so was the magazine. In that moment, he saw the interpenetration of the real with the imagined, and it haunted him ever since.

The Cockroach

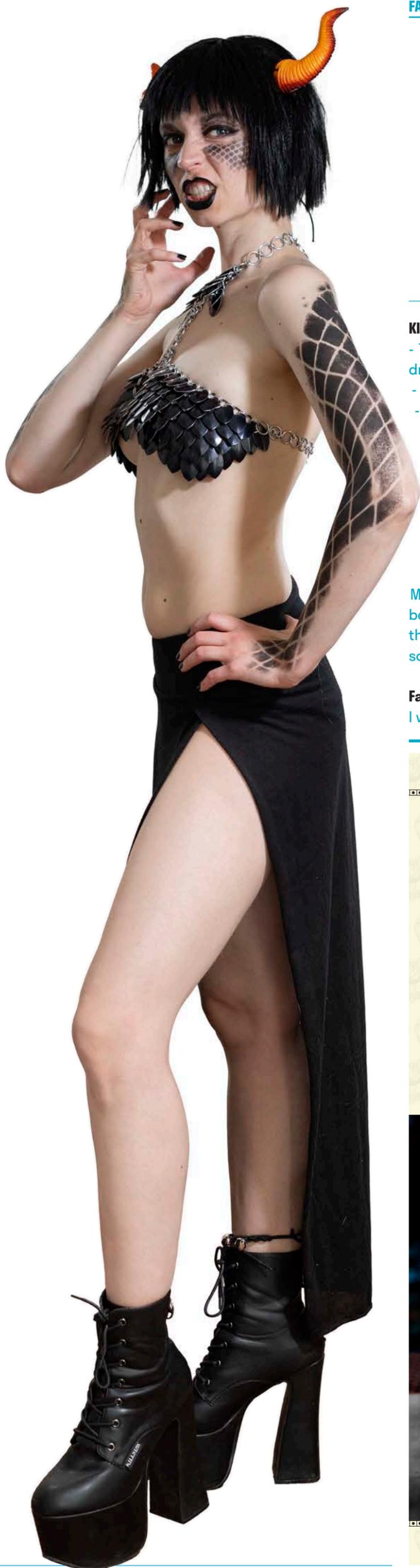
Ian's forthcoming book, 'The Cockroach,' makes intertextual reference to Kafka's 'Metamorphosis.' In Ian's novel, a cockroach wakes up to realize he is no longer an insect, but the prime minister of the United Kingdom. "I can't wait to have a discussion with the current prime minister of the UK about what he thinks of it," Katrín remarked to the laughing crowd. It will be released on September 27. 🍷

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

Kleine Konan

Kleine Konan is a model and cosplayer.

Words: Hannah Jane Cohen Photo: Art Bicnick



Kleine Konan is wearing:

- This is my dragon costume. She's a fierce dragon living in her own cave in Iceland.
- Bikini by Sternnebel
- Horns were a gift
- Most of this outfit were gifts, but usually I craft everything on my own.

Describe your style in five words:

Something colourful. Something crazy. All in-between.

Favourite stores in Reykjavik:

My favourite store is the flea-market (Kolaportið) because you can get so much amazing stuff in there. Usually when I need something, a belt, some shoes, I try to look there first.

Favourite piece:

I would say this wig. It's a very old one—I'm al-

ready the third owner of it. My friend didn't like the wig because it's over-cutted but for me, it's the most beautiful thing I own. I wear her a lot and she's amazing to me. I love her!

Something I would never wear:

There's not really anything I wouldn't wear. Back in the day I didn't like the sexy cosplays, but I changed my mind and now I am more into that. But a character I'd never cosplay is Amanda or Perkins from Detroit: Become Human. Those are two characters I would never do even if someone would give me money for it!

Lusting after:

I really want to cosplay Ryo from Devilman Crybaby. He has many wings and kind of looks like an angel but he's Satan. I would love to make that costume. ♡

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Food

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Pro-tip: Try the food

Steak Your Reputation

Up your steaks and meat your destiny

Words: Ragnar Egilsson Photo: Art Bicnick

Reykjavik Meat

Frakkastígur 8, 101 Reykjavik
rvkmeat.is

Just over a year ago, Reykjavik Meat joined the fray on the popular tourist trail Frakkastígur, a road book-ended by the Sun Voyager sculpture and Hallgrímskirkja church. Reykjavik Meat thereby joined a host of businesses on the stretch that have taken an English name and combined it with the name of our nation's capital (see the neighbouring Brew Dog Reykjavik, Reykjavik Ink, Reykjavik Fish, Reykjavik Roasters, etc).

According to interviews at that time, the restaurateurs felt Reykjavik was bereft of places serving high-end grilled beef steaks. This is despite the fact that Kol, Grillmarkaðurinn, Apótek, and Steikhúsið are all serving similar fare in the same price bracket (some even serving the exact same

cuts from Danish meat exporter JN Meat).

Everything about the place is there to tell you that you have entered a serious place for serious meat lovers. The lighting is dim and the colours are muted. It's a Friday night and couples stare in grim reverence at their steaks and bearnaise.

Hope it's chocolate

Around 40-minutes after ordering, we received our lobster soup with fennel and what seemed to be chunks of chocolate (2,690 ISK). At least I sincerely hope it was chocolate as my imagination is not able to come up with any pleasant alternatives. Not a bad soup overall.

The other appetizer was the "charcoal-grilled beet" with tarragon, pears and hazelnuts (2,490 ISK). I couldn't taste much pear but the sprig of tarragon was certainly present and the 2/3rds of a beet was indeed garnished with hazelnuts, providing crunch to an avocado-

textured root.

But who cares, right? This is a steakhouse, you don't go there for beets and lobster.

When it was time for the main event, we went with the Icelandic beef tenderloin (4,990 ISK for 7 oz.) and the Australian Aberdeen sirloin (6,590 ISK for 10 oz.)—beef from opposite ends of the planet should provide good range. Seeing as the sauces and sides were extra, this brought us to the top percentile in the world in terms of steakhouse prices.

Sour and funky

The first concern was when I had to ask the waiter if the tenderloin had been dry-aged. The waiter said 'no' and seemed unconcerned by my question. Had they inquired, they could have learned that I asked because the meat tasted sour and funky like a severe dry-ageing misfire. Now, normally I wouldn't jump to conclusions if it wasn't for the fact that a couple of other friends claimed to have had the same experience.

The Australian sirloin was flavourful and well-seasoned, but had a peculiarly grainy texture, as if the muscle fibre had been broken down with a tenderizer.

Fancified steakhouses

Soon after, we were graced with fried mushrooms (990 ISK), that managed to taste simultaneously greasy and dry, and sweet potatoes that came drenched in sriracha mayo and bacon bits (790 ISK). Too bad we were stuck into a \$250 restaurant experience because those sweet potatoes would have been perfect for a night on the couch watching the game. The bernaïse and demi-glace came at 590 ISK each.

Now, I am fully willing to acknowledge that Reykjavik Meat has its fans. I am also willing to admit I may not be the target audience—I enjoy a nice steakhouse but it's hardly the beginning and end of my restaurant universe and I am a reluctant convert to these fancified steakhouses. If I'm going all in, I'd usually opt for an old school classic like Brooklyn's Peter Luger. With Reykjavik Meat, either the prices need to drop or the quality needs to go up before I can hop aboard this gravy train. 🍴

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Zomming in on the sauce

The Icelandic Sauce Universe

Can't decide what sauce to pick?
What's to decide? Have them all.

Words: Ragnar Egilsson Photos: Art Bicnick

Whenever we talk about food in Iceland, there's an elephant in the room and that elephant is sauce. So much sauce. Sauce on everything. Like a pachyderm bathing itself in a lake of béarnaise. Like a dolphin porpoising through a cresting wave of mayonnaise.

Sauce's early years

The sauce tradition in the west was born out of the need to mask the aroma of sub-par ingredients. Much like how we came up with the cocktail to make dodgy bathtub gin potable.

The advent of sauce is usually attributed to France with their five mother sauces of béchamel, espagnole, velouté, tomato sauce and hollandaise. Add to that the French invention of mayonnaise and it's clear Icelanders owe them a serious debt.

Because it is from three French sauces that Iceland's drippy food pyramid rises: béchamel, béarnaise, and mayonnaise.

The unholy trinity

Béchamel is the simple combination of flour of butter, thinned out with milk until it forms a thick white sauce. In Iceland it is known as "jafningur." Without jafningur, the 70s in Iceland simply wouldn't have been the same. Still to this day, it's difficult to imagine

smoked lamb, bjúga (greasy lamb sausages), salted horse or Christmas potatoes without a white blanket of béchamel.

Béarnaise, meanwhile, is nearly always spelled "bernaise" in Icelandic and while it has always had a following in Iceland, it has seen an explosion in popularity in recent years. Now, you can expect to find it anywhere from high-end steakhouses to late-night take-outs. It's drizzled over steaks, burgers, fries and pizza without a second thought.

We got the cocktail sauce!

Although it literally means "cocktail sauce," Iceland's kokteilsósa has nothing in common with the tomato-based dipping sauce you'll find lurking under a prawn cocktail. No, no. This is our old friend "Too Much Mayonnaise" married to a teaspoon of ketchup and a drop of Worcestershire sauce. Ordering french fries in Iceland without kokteilsósa will get you placed in the stocks in the town square and pelted with tiny aluminium-covered tubs of the stuff.

"Sure you may not want a sandwich to be the consistency of baby food, but nobody wants paper cuts in their oesophagus either."

From kokteilsósa we get the derivative "hamborgarasósa" (hamburger sauce) which is literally the exact same thing as kokteilsósa except maybe with a pinch of paprika? No really knows and no one dares recreated it. You buy that thing in a squeezezy bottle, put it on a burger and never look back.

Digestive slip'n slide

Where does this national sauce craving come from? One could understand the need to cover food back when Icelanders knew only two spices: salt and time. The process would always be the same: grab some mutton or fish, salt it and/or leave it somewhere for as long as it took to develop flavour or rise from the grave. This, of course, didn't do the meal any favours appearance-wise so hiding it under some sauce seemed sensible.

In 2019, we have access to new fangled things like "fresh ingredients," "herbs" and "spices," so why does the over-saucing persist? My personal theory is that due to Iceland's wet climate, it is important to reach a liquid equilibrium by ingesting a lot of dripping wet food.

We laugh at mainland Europeans coughing their way through a dust storm of a baguette with nothing but a slice of ham and a quarter wheel of cheese in it. Sure you may not want a sandwich to be the consistency of baby food, but nobody wants papercuts in their oesophagus either—put some sauce on that sub!

Icelanders may have too much damn sauce—but at least it's too much damn something. 🍷



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Travel



Islands In The Steam

A day exploring Vestmannaeyjar's wild landscape and history

Words: Josie Gaitens Photos: Dominika Milek



Distance from Reykjavik:
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For most people, Iceland, with its population of only 360,000, fulfills the desire for rural island experiences. But if you're hankering after another level of remoteness, Vestmannaeyjar has got your back. At least, that's what I found when I hopped over to the archipelago with Hidden Iceland.

Vestmannaeyjar—or 'The Westman Islands' as they are often called—are a collection of around 15 islands and rock formations off the southwest coast of Iceland. Only one of these, 'Heimaey,' is actually inhabited year-round. The archipelago is steeped in history—both ancient and modern—and all kinds of wild tales originate there, from islands that rise suddenly from the sea, to marauding pirates, to children collecting lost baby puffins in cardboard boxes.

A ferry good arrival

But the first adventure that a trip to Vestmannaeyjar offers is actually getting there. The most common way to do this is by boat, although Heimaey does have an airport. In the winter the boat departs—when possible—from Þorlákshöfn for a three-hour journey. But in the gentler summer months, a faster service runs from Landeyjarhöfn, and takes only 30 minutes.

Arriving by boat, it's hard not to be struck by the islands' variety of incredible cliffs, caves, basalt columns and other geological features. The cliffs house Vestmannaeyjar's famed puffin colonies, which are some of the largest in the world. More than two million

puffins come to nest and raise their young during the summer months every year.

The proximity of the nest sites to the town on Heimaey leads to an adorable natural phenomenon every year, when the baby pufflings (yes, that's the scientific term) spread their wings and fly the nest. Like many hip young things, they are drawn to the lights of the big city—and unfortunately, find themselves stranded in the streets and gardens of the town. But there are helpers on hand to assist the poor pufflets (definitely not a scientific term). During the time in August and September that the fledglings are taking flight, local children are allowed to stay up late, roaming the streets to collect the baby birds and provide them with a safe haven for the night before releasing them back into the wild the next day.

Turbulent past

In addition to peculiar puffin pastimes, Vestmannaeyjar is also well known for its recent, turbulent volcanic history. The best place to learn about this is the Eldheimar Volcano Museum, which is housed in an impressive modern building on the hill above the town. The museum was created around the excavated ruins of a house that was completely buried by volcanic ash and tephra during the 1973 eruption. The story of this eruption and the consequent evacuation of Heimaey is one of the defining narratives of Iceland's recent history.

In the early hours of the morning on

January 23rd, 1973, the inhabitants of Heimaey were awoken by a violent volcanic eruption. In an incredible stroke of luck, stormy weather the previous day had inhibited the fleet of fishing boats from going out to sea, meaning they were all available to be used for a quick getaway.

In an impressively short amount of time, the majority of the island's 5,300 residents were evacuated to the mainland. The eruption lasted for 5 months, destroying around 400 homes and drastically changing the landscape of island. The Eldheimar museum effectively retells the story of this dramatic time in Iceland's history through personal stories of residents and interactive exhibits, and is well worth spending some time in.

Take it to the top

Another way to gain perspective on the 1973 eruption is to climb up the volcanic cone 'Eldfell' which it created. More than 40 years after the event, Eldfell is still starkly bare and lacking the plant life that covers nearby older peak Helgafell. What's more, in various rock cracks and crevasses on the hill, it is possible to reach down and feel the heat from the still slowly-cooling reaction. In fact, the warmth from the lava flows was harnessed by the islanders on their return to Vestmannaeyjar to heat the houses of Heimaey for years afterwards.

The short, steep hike up Eldfell offers panoramic views of the whole of

Heimaey and the surrounding islands, including Surtsey.

Another product of violent volcanic activity, Surtsey appeared as if by magic out of the ocean in a matter of days in 1963 and is now a highly protected UNESCO World Heritage Site. From the top of the hill, it is possible to make out its outline in the distance, looking like the curved side of a guitar lying half-submerged in the water.

Pirates!

Heimaey's geography hides a few more stories, many of which speak to the resilient and irrepressible nature of the island's inhabitants. One of the more tragic tales involves the invasion of Vestmannaeyjar by Algerian pirates in 1627. Around 500 people were living on the island and more than half were ultimately captured by the pirates, who transported them back to Algeria where they were sold as slaves. Many locations around Heimaey still bear names that relate to this time, including Hundraðmannahellir, 'the cave of the hundred', where 100 of the island's terrified residents were said to have hidden to try and evade the pirates.

Today, Vestmannaeyjar is calm and peaceful, with only the roaring wind from the Atlantic Ocean to liven things up. But it only takes a look at the landscape around you to remember the islands' rich history, and realise that there are plenty more stories yet to come. 🍷



Hey—you came to Iceland to see volcanos right?

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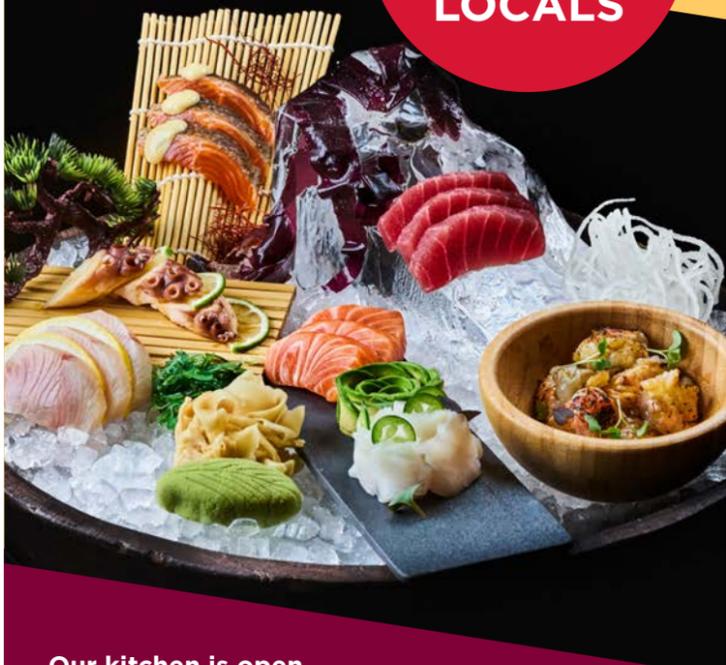
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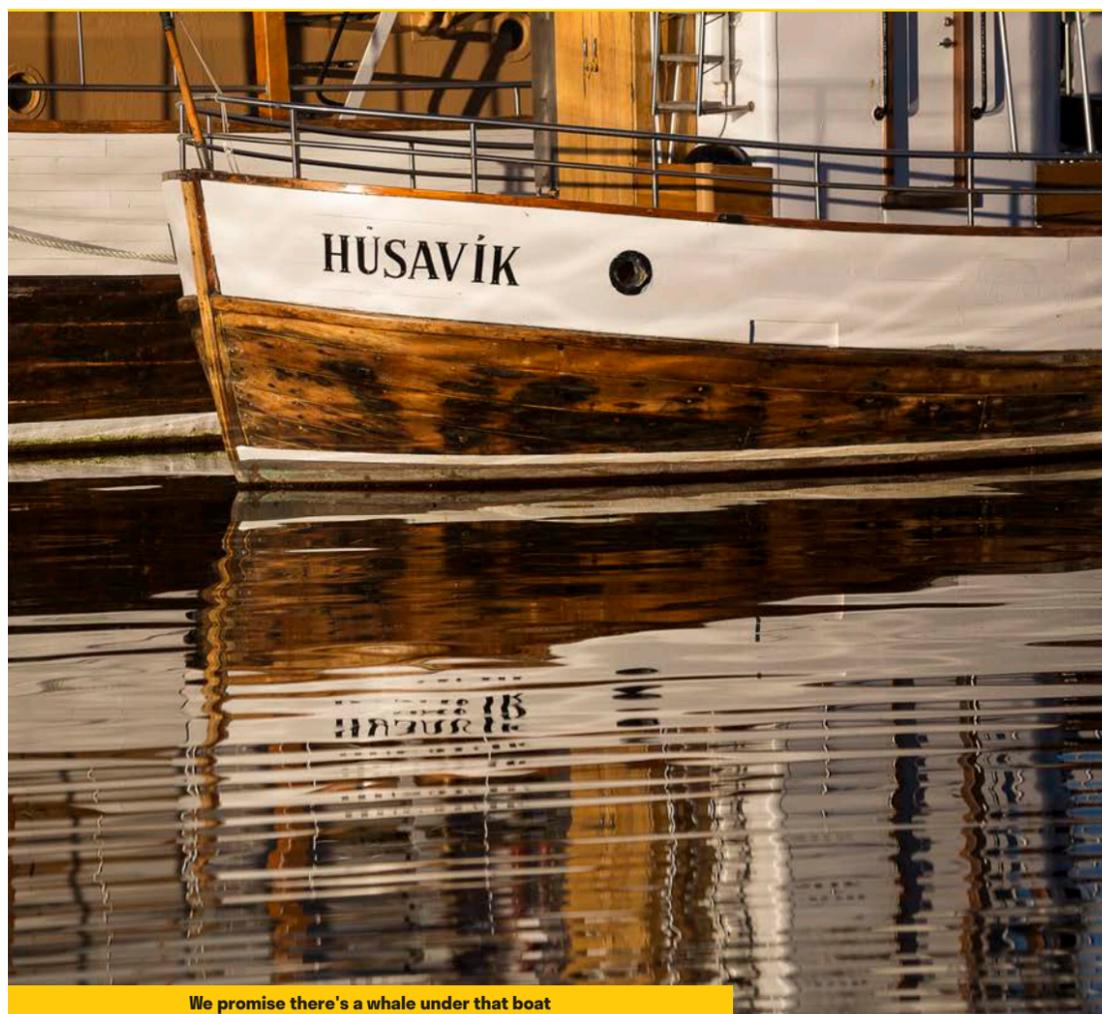


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Travel

Distance from Reykjavík: 539 km
How to get there: Route 1 north then
to route 85 through Húsavík



We promise there's a whale under that boat

DESTINATION

All About The Views

Húsavík is a town of hidden gems
and remote surprises

Words: **Lea Müller** Photo: **Art Bicnick**

When I first visited Húsavík in 2016, Northern Iceland felt like the edge of the world to me. Coming from a densely populated area in Germany—the city I grew up in had twice as many inhabitants as Iceland's entire population—I had never experienced such remoteness. Looking back, this sounds like a ridiculously biased view on things, but at the time I couldn't help but express this awe to my partner when we were standing on the beach and he pointed out to me that if the weather was really good, we would be able to see a tiny strip of Greenlandic shores in the distance. Of course, I learned quickly that the people living in the North are just as connected to the modern world as everyone else, but what remained is a deep appreciation for the quiet you can experience in the area.

Get active

Húsavík's reputation as the "Whale Watching Capital" of Iceland is perhaps the most significant incentive for tourists to make the six-hour drive from Reykjavík. Yet, the charming area has a lot more to offer for those who get seasick at the mere thought of being on a boat. There are many hiking trails, with popular ones leading around Botnsvatn Lake and to the top of Húsavíkurfjall, which is covered in lupine in summer and rewards hikers with a breathtaking view of Skjálfandi Bay from its peak. There is an option to drive up the mountain, something I would, however, not recommend trying in winter—it was the first time I legitimately thought I was going to die. Learn from my wisdom and please don't be *that* tourist.



Treat yourself to some cake

A short drive from town, a dirt road leads down to a lovely little guesthouse called Tungulending, which translates to "tongue landing" and refers to the shape of the landscape where fishing boats would come ashore. The property lies in a secluded bay and the German owners serve great cakes and hot drinks. I love this place, not because it's run by people that speak my language, but because it truly gives you the feeling that you're very far away from the rest of the world. Walking along the shore and marvelling at the mountains and the sea always takes me back to those first days of wonder in Iceland.



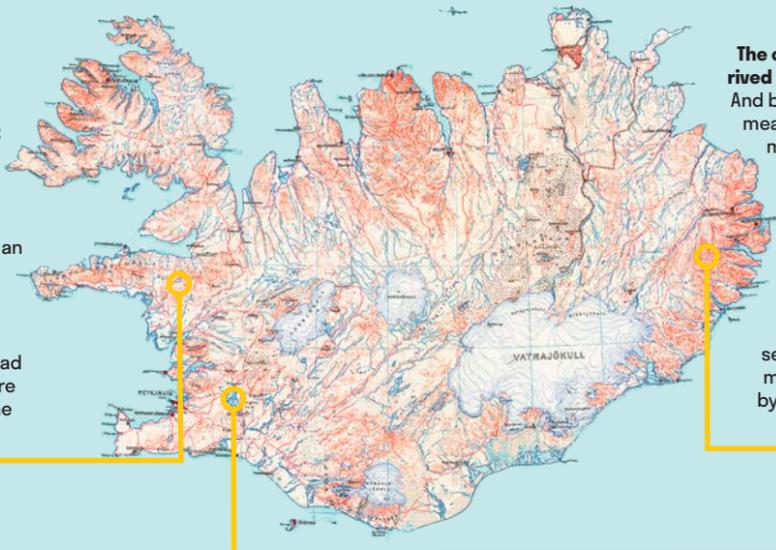
Soak it off

Just recently, Húsavík added a new gem to its crown of attractions. Geosea is a pool filled with a mixture of seawater and geothermal water that occurs naturally in a nearby well. Although my wallet certainly isn't approving of it, I treat myself to a dip once a year. From the infinity pool you look out over the bay and the snow-covered mountains across the water, which become especially magical as the sun sets—Húsavík really is all about this view. ☺

Island Life

News From The Icelandic Countryside

Words: **Andie Fontaine**



There has been considerable **flooding in West Iceland** lately, causing mudslides and temporary road closings in an unseasonably rainy late summer. As always, you should check road conditions before travelling into the countryside.

The cranes have arrived in East Iceland. And by that we don't mean the band; we mean the actual birds. They're not native to Iceland, but for some reason they're arriving in increasing numbers. Conservationists are more fascinated by the trend than worried.

A new species of trout may be evolving in Þingvellir lake. Genetic testing on some fish has shown significant divergence from the trout that already swim in this lake, but research is still ongoing. Still, "the Icelandic trout" sounds pretty cool, no?

Best Of Iceland

The best hotels in the West from our Best Of Iceland travel magazine



Hotel Búðir

If it ain't broke, don't fix it. Hotel Búðir is our favourite bolthole in the West once more. "It's still the best," one panellist declared. We can't argue. Inside and out, Hotel Búðir is a charming destination. Whether you explore the picturesque surroundings, with views of the majestic Snæfellsjökull one way and the sea the other, or plant yourself in the handsomely appointed lounge taking in the sights through Búðir's telescope.



Sigló Hótel

Fans of Scandi Noir may recognize Sigló Hótel from the Icelandic TV series 'Trapped.' Stately and on the harbour, the hotel boasts views onto the fjord, the mountains of the Tröllaskagi peninsula, and the Siglufjörður marina. Combining old Icelandic charm in its décor with Nordic luxury, each spacious room has a view onto the sea. With a fireplace indoors and a hot tub by the harbour, Sigló Hótel is comfort and romance incarnate.



Skálakot

Ideally located in the heart of South Iceland, Skálakot is our favourite from a considerable crop of recently-opened hotels. It's a new building, but you'd never know from the comfortable country manor vibe; every detail of the rooms is perfect, from the tasteful patterned wallpaper to the modernist kettles, slender coffee makers, cloud-like beds and deep bathtubs. The in-house restaurant is also excellent. It's like an Icelandic version of the Twin Peaks Great Northern Lodge.



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

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



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WELL, YOU ASKED



Hidden Folk, Hit Me Up

Words: Sam O'Donnell
Photo: Art Bicnick

Do the Huldúfólk watch TV? Do they use smartphones? Drive SUVs? Shop at Ikea and Costco? How about Elves and Trolls? -asking for a friend

Dear friend, I know you're asking for yourself, and that's okay. Own your question. It's good. The elves and huldúfólk are one in the same. They use our TVs when we're not home. They have their own streaming service, called Huldú. It's totally free, but only they can see it. You might have accidentally activated it. Any time your ChromeCast fails, you've switched to Huldú.

Smartphones cost money, and huldúfólk only have as much as they find around their elf-stones, portals to their world that resemble ordinary stones. (If you want to contribute to the huldúfólk, there is an elf-stone at Hafnarstræti 15. Every little bit helps.)

They can travel anywhere in our world through these stones, but some of them like driving. They think they're fantastic drivers, but they're maniacs and road-hogs. They do shop at Ikea. They don't buy anything; they like to browse. They never shop at Costco. Elves are surprisingly anti-American, and the idea of stepping into Costco sends them into an uncontrollable rage. Seriously, don't even suggest it to them.

There are many different kinds of trolls in Iceland, and they are all smarter than humans, elves or huldúfólk. I'll try to group them into two categories for you. Basically, there are the nasty trolls who don't go shopping. They simply take the humans who wander off the beaten path and cook them for supper. Then there are nice trolls who are wise and benevolent, so of course they don't shop at Costco. They go to Bónus for the deals. They don't drive SUVs because they care about nature. They might drive a smart-car, though.

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

HORROR-SCOPES

The Drawing Of The Taurus

The Pisces fled across the desert and the Scorpio followed

Words: Hannah Jane Cohen & Lea Müller Image: Kosmonatka

In HorrorScopes, Grapevine's dedicated team of amateur astrologists breaks down your upcoming weeks based on shit like what Mercury's up to.

Aries Liking Lana Del Rey's new album is not a personality trait, but it might mean you have to tackle your Daddy issues and depression.

Taurus You finish the Dark Tower series and the ridiculous ending promptly sends you into a nervous breakdown. Did he really just erase the villain of the entire story? Yes! He did. Did I actually just spend a year of my life reading this? Yes! You did. Don't worry, we've been there. Just remember: Ka is a friend to good as well as evil. Embrace the stupidity.

Gemini On the street, you run into the infamous naked-man-in-a-box Almar Atlason. He gives you a piece of saltfiskur and asks you to fuck off. This is as close as you'll ever come to fame, so treasure it.

Cancer Treat yourself! Brunch at the Laundromat is on us. Just kidding, you're paying.

Leo Take your S.O. on a romantic getaway to Húsavík. Whales are a surefire aphrodisiac.

Virgo You're too happy. Read 'Atonement' to dull yourself down.



A cancer, likely in the grip of a Scorpio

Libra The East of Iceland is an untamed getaway for those looking for mysterious ventures. Rent a van and "find your

self." What does that mean? We don't exactly know, but our crystal balls say it involves lots of stargazing, flat tires, and making out with other hippies. Avoid Scorpios.

Scorpio All of your friends have a group chat without you.

Sagittarius Horses run for fame but donkeys are the once to achieve it. Consider this in all business decisions.

Capricorn You'll be setting a new trend by wearing a pink vagina hat. Congratulations, not even Björk was able to do that.

Aquarius It's never too late to take out your Kony 2012 action pack and SAVE THE WORLD.

Pisces If you're a boss, give all your employees a raise! They deserve it. It's not like the publisher of the Grapevine is a Pisces, though. That would be totally unethical for us to write.

CITY SHOT by Art Bicnick



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