Foreign & Renting
News: The rental market is a poverty trap

Save Seyðisfjörður
Art: Artists lend to the relief effort

Bósi Ljósár!
Music: Inspector Spacetime heartbroken by action hero

Hjörleifshöfdi
Travel: Not to be confused with the Dagobah system

GIG GUIDE × CITY MAP × TRAVEL IDEAS × FOOD

JFDR
Bríet

THE 2021 REYKJAVÍK GRAPEVINE VIK MUSIC AWARDS
If you feel down because of the pandemic, the boring storms and the strong winds beating on you all the goddamn time, don’t despair: Reykjavík Grapevine’s Music Awards are out! We got an incredible panel to find out who were the best musicians of the dreadful pandemic year, and it turns out that we had some seriously good music this year. We have a new star rising as the artist of the year, Briet, who came literally like a storm to the Icelandic scene. Her album, Kveðja, Briet (first records, Briet) was one of the strongest debuts we have seen for years in Iceland. On top of that, she sang straight into the nation’s soul which couldn’t get enough of her best song of the year, Rögur Ólafur (Easy now, cowboy), which is not something many new artists manage to do.

An old friend of Reykjavík Grapevine, JFDR, showed the nation, once again, that she is one of Iceland’s top artists, and won the best album of the year award for her ethereal, sincere EP, Dream On. Both of these women have in common the courage to bore their soul, something that the Icelandic nation did not only appreciate, but needed in the odd time of social restrictions and distance from other people. The last year in music was good, but it was a seriously hard year for artists at the same time. Many have lost their living because of the strict social gathering rules while others used the time to record new music. Yet musicians did not forget their most vulnerable brothers and sisters: Frosti Jon Runolfsson made an incredible video of Jósi’s song, Siður sem aldrin kom (The summer that never came), where Frosti followed houseless people and their hard days in his shocking video, creating a true momentum in Iceland when the video came out. We also have unique artists, like Helka, who is one artist you should have heard. Her usage of the Theramin and her classical approach to it shows us that creativity in Icelandic music is bustling. The same goes with the odd couple in Holdgervlar, the one you should be watching. All in all, this year in Icelandic music was much stronger than anyone anticipated. So go to your streaming platform, or better, buy the albums you like, because, well, Icelandic artists are struggling like so many of us.

Valur Grettisson
Editor-in-chief
In the Westfjords of Iceland, what we call “downtown” others might refer to as “the Arctic.” Call it what you will. We just live here.

Keeping Iceland warm since 1926

Made for life

66° NORTH

Shop at 66north.com
Follow us on Instagram @66north
NEWS

Good news and bad news: the good news is, for a few days we had a reprieve from the endless stream of coronavirus-related news. The bad news is, it was because of the recent insurrection at the US Capitol that dominated headlines worldwide. Numerous Icelandic pundits weighed in on the events, with Prime Minister Katrin Jakobsdottir calling the riots “an attack on democracy” and political scientist Silja Baira Omsardottir astutely pointing out that they were a symptom of the divisiveness in the United States, which she predicts is not going away any time soon.

Other Icelanders were concerned about a Trump supporter at a Sacramento protest carrying the Icelandic flag, with speculation swirling about whether or not this person is Icelandic. The US embassy has, at the time of this writing, been completely silent on the matter. Reporters would later learn this was because they had been ordered to refer all press inquiries to a tweet by US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo or an angry face in response to questions. Those who react positively are thanked, those who react negatively are asked to explain what she can do better. She is, as far as we can tell, the first and only government minister in Iceland to try this.

Lastly, Minister of Justice Áslaug Arna Sigurbjörnsdóttir has been asking for public feedback on a special page of her official website. There, people can give a smiley face, a thumbs-up, a thumbs down or an angry face in response to her job performance. Those who react positively are thanked, those who react negatively are asked to explain what she can do better. She is, as far as we can tell, the first and only government minister in Iceland to try this.

What Are Icelanders Talking About?

The topics that are getting people banned from the comments

Words: Andie Sophia Fontaine

Yes, a bunch of far-right insurgents storming the legislature with the intent to kidnap and kill is just like Icelanders of all stripes peacefully demonstrating for the government to resign in the wake of total financial collapse—you literally can’t tell them apart!

Don’t worry, though; the coronavirus is back in the headlines— and most of the news has been quite positive. The rollout of the Pfizer vaccine has been going well and the first shipment of Moderna vaccine arrived on January 12th, with a deal with AstraZeneca expected to be finalised by the end of the month. Health authorities have been prioritising vaccinating the elderly and frontline workers, but it appears as though the vaccine should reach nearly every one by some time this summer. We say “almost everyone,” because there is still a very small minority of people who have no interest in getting vaccinated.

Most entertaining of all has been the Icelandic conservatives likening the Capitol riots to the 2008–2009 Pots and Pans Protests, with some Icelanders concerned about a Trump supporter at a Sacramento protest carrying the Icelandic flag, with speculation swirling about whether or not this person is Icelandic. The US embassy has, at the time of this writing, been completely silent on the matter. Reporters would later learn this was because they had been ordered to refer all press inquiries to a tweet by US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo or an angry face in response to questions. Those who react positively are thanked, those who react negatively are asked to explain what she can do better. She is, as far as we can tell, the first and only government minister in Iceland to try this.

Lastly, Minister of Justice Áslaug Arna Sigurbjörnsdóttir has been asking for public feedback on a special page of her official website. There, people can give a smiley face, a thumbs-up, a thumbs down or an angry face in response to her job performance. Those who react positively are thanked, those who react negatively are asked to explain what she can do better. She is, as far as we can tell, the first and only government minister in Iceland to try this.

What Are Icelanders Talking About?

The topics that are getting people banned from the comments

Words: Andie Sophia Fontaine

Yes, a bunch of far-right insurgents storming the legislature with the intent to kidnap and kill is just like Icelanders of all stripes peacefully demonstrating for the government to resign in the wake of total financial collapse—you literally can’t tell them apart!

Don’t worry, though; the coronavirus is back in the headlines— and most of the news has been quite positive. The rollout of the Pfizer vaccine has been going well and the first shipment of Moderna vaccine arrived on January 12th, with a deal with AstraZeneca expected to be finalised by the end of the month. Health authorities have been prioritising vaccinating the elderly and frontline workers, but it appears as though the vaccine should reach nearly every one by some time this summer. We say “almost everyone,” because there is still a very small minority of people who have no interest in getting vaccinated.

Most entertaining of all has been the Icelandic conservatives likening the Capitol riots to the 2008–2009 Pots and Pans Protests, with some Icelanders concerned about a Trump supporter at a Sacramento protest carrying the Icelandic flag, with speculation swirling about whether or not this person is Icelandic. The US embassy has, at the time of this writing, been completely silent on the matter. Reporters would later learn this was because they had been ordered to refer all press inquiries to a tweet by US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo or an angry face in response to questions. Those who react positively are thanked, those who react negatively are asked to explain what she can do better. She is, as far as we can tell, the first and only government minister in Iceland to try this.

Lastly, Minister of Justice Áslaug Arna Sigurbjörnsdóttir has been asking for public feedback on a special page of her official website. There, people can give a smiley face, a thumbs-up, a thumbs down or an angry face in response to her job performance. Those who react positively are thanked, those who react negatively are asked to explain what she can do better. She is, as far as we can tell, the first and only government minister in Iceland to try this.
NATURALLY PURE

ICELANDIC LAMB – BEYOND COMPARE

Icelandic lamb roam free in the pristine wilderness of Iceland grazing on wild berries and herbs like red clover, Arctic thyme, sedge, willow, thrift and angelica resulting in it having an unrivaled flavor profile. Infused with the flavor of nature, Icelandic lamb is fine-textured, tender and naturally rich in Omega-3 and iron. Icelandic lamb – an exceptionally pure taste experience.

Enjoy the best we have to offer, Icelandic food – naturally.
Nonbinary People Officially Recognised, For A Price

NEWS
Words: Andie Sophia Fontaine
Photo: Alisa Kalyanova

About a year and a half after Iceland’s gender determination law established that people must be allowed to register their gender as nonbinary, the National Registry has finally made that option available.

The law pertains not only to private companies, but also to government offices that issue official documents, such as passports and other IDs. This includes having passports and other such public documents offering X, in addition to M and F, and where applicable, the option to decline to state an official gender.

However, the cost of this registration, 9,000 ISK, is being criticised by Trans Iceland as prohibitively too high, in a statement posted to Facebook.

“It is unacceptable that trans people need to pay for such corrections and it is an important matter of justice that trans people have unhindered access to such changes,” the statement reads in part.

Trans Iceland points out that the fee can hit trans people especially hard as, for one, “trans people are more likely to have difficulties finding work, housing and attending school due to discrimination and prejudice.” In addition, there is the cost of having to completely renew all of their legal ID documents, such as passports and driver’s licenses.

On top of this, there are the costs trans people incur as a part of their transition, such as hormone replacement therapy and other processes that are not wholly covered by health insurance.

The fund begins

In an update posted by Trans Iceland, the National Registry replied saying they understand that the cost has been criticised as high, but that the money goes to the government treasury, not to the Registry. As such, the Registry has no power to eliminate the cost. Trans Iceland is now setting up a special fund for trans people who require financial assistance to register their proper name and gender markers. They are also working to update existing laws to make matters easier.

Trans Iceland objects to the high fee

The Reykjavík Grapevine
Issue 01 — 2021

First

Get Grapevine Merch!

shop.grapevine.is*

shop.grapevine.is*

shop.grapevine.is*

shop.grapevine.is*

shop.grapevine.is*

shop.grapevine.is*

*

You only need to type the URL in once

Don’t Hesitate! Act Now!

6

The Reykjavík Grapevine

Issue 01 — 2021

The Reykjavík Grapevine

Issue 01 — 2021
thing you need to know about Sif is that she has beautiful blonde hair. It's pretty much all anyone talks about actually. Of course, some refer to it as "golden locks" or "a mane the shining colour of wheat" but really, when you boil it all down, it's just beautiful blonde hair. She's a beautiful blonde-haired woman much like, oh, I don't know, January Jones. She's basically just January Jones with omnipotent powers and a way lamer name.

Some online bloggers try to argue that her golden hair represented wheat and then do some bizarre mental gymnastics to claim she was a fully-rounded character who was massively important despite rarely being mentioned (if at all). Some even go so far as to call her a feminist icon, which I totally agree with, as I'm so tired of knowing, supremely powerful being, in all the all we know about her is that she has a fiancé. Unfortunately, it's a dwarf who later gets turned to stone.

That said, Sif does have one moment in the sun. In the Prose Edda, there's this one moment where Loki does this sweet prank and cuts off Sif's hair, which we can only assume leaves her entirely devoid of half her life-force. But in the end, it's no big deal, because Loki just goes to the dwarves Brokk and Sindri and then performs what might be the first hair transplant on Sif and suddenly she has new locks that are made of actual, literal, gold. Really, in the end, Sif just rises stronger than ever.

So all hail Sif, our beautiful blonde wife. She's actually a big inspiration to me, as I once gleaned my hair too and hope to get married one day. Feminist icon, right? ☺

**First**

**Sif**

A totally fully-fledged character!

Words: Hannah Jane Cohen

Photo: Adobe Stock


The Goddess Sif, like most women in history, is primarily defined by her appearance and relationship to men. The wife of Thor and mother of Þrúðr, Sif is, um, well, she's, er, she's a great, like...well...uh...

Actually, you know what? Never mind. Skip this whole §%£¢’≤ article. Why? Because according to practically every online and literary source about Sif, there's only two notable things about the immortal deity. Despite being an invincible, all-knowing, supremely powerful being, apparently the bitch only has two characteristics worth documenting. And what are they? Hold your horses, mister! I'm going to attempt to spin them into a 500-word article, so strap on it.

**Beautiful blonde hair**

Yup, you guessed it. The number one

**Superpowers:**

Beautiful blonde hair. A great wife.

**Weaknesses:**

Beautiful blonde hair. A great wife.

**Modern Analogue:**

A great wife whose... beautiful blonde hair.

age, so I'm happy to see a revolutionary character like Sif in the Eddas, who gets to be reduced to her dead cells rather than her live ones. Wark sis! Yaaas!

But that's enough of that. Let's get onto Sif's second trait—it might shock you.

A great wife

Boom! I tricked you! I actually said Sif's second important characteristic in the first paragraph and it was so boring that I'm sure you thought, “There has to be more to her character than this!” Nope! Yes. Sif was the wife of Thor, who you might know for his passions, hobbies, flaws, strengths, multiple plot-lines, familial trauma, illegitimate children and many other things that culminate in a well-rounded character and lends itself well to franchise work. The two have one child together named Brúð, who is very much like her mother, in that in all we know about her is that she has a fiancé. Unfortunately, it's a dwarf who later gets turned to stone.

So, every time a new film is made, everyone's like, "Oh, hey, let's bring Sif back!" and no one actually does. But why? Because according to practically every online and literary source about Sif, there's only two notable things about the immortal deity. Despite being an invincible, all-knowing, supremely powerful being, apparently the bitch only has two characteristics worth documenting. And what are they? Hold your horses, mister! I'm going to attempt to spin them into a 500-word article, so strap on it.

**Beautiful blonde hair**

Yup, you guessed it. The number one

**Superpowers:**

Beautiful blonde hair. A great wife.

**Weaknesses:**

Beautiful blonde hair. A great wife.

**Modern Analogue:**

A great wife whose... beautiful blonde hair.

The Goddess Sif, like most women in history, is primarily defined by her appearance and relationship to men. The wife of Thor and mother of Þrúðr, Sif is, um, well, she's, er, she's a great, like...well...uh...

Actually, you know what? Never mind. Skip this whole §%£¢’≤ article. Why? Because according to practically every online and literary source about Sif, there's only two notable things about the immortal deity. Despite being an invincible, all-knowing, supremely powerful being, apparently the bitch only has two characteristics worth documenting. And what are they? Hold your horses, mister! I'm going to attempt to spin them into a 500-word article, so strap on it.

**Beautiful blonde hair**

Yup, you guessed it. The number one
Upon first moving to Iceland, the primary factor that must be arranged is a place to live; if one is from outside the European Economic Area, in most cases this has to be established before even setting foot in the country. For immigrants who are moving to Iceland on their own or with their family, this invariably mean renting a room or apartment.

Reykjavík’s rental market is daunting at best. Demand for affordable housing has increased while the supply has not. As a result, the cost of renting has been climbing steadily. But cost and availability are not the only challenges that immigrants hoping to rent in Iceland must face. A lack of knowledge about housing rights, a financial catch-22 created by the banks that locks the working poor (who are more often than not immigrants) and single parents out of housing loans and a reluctance by national and municipal actors to take a more active role in creating more affordable housing can keep many trapped in what is effectively a permanent underclass with potentially deadly consequences.

It does not have to be this way and authorities can take material steps to alleviate the situation—but they are not. In this article, we examine exactly what challenges await new arrivals to Reykjavík seeking an affordable place to live.

Who is the market?

One of the most expedient ways to search for a place to rent in Reykjavík is in any one of the Facebook groups dedicated to advertising rooms and apartments for rent. These groups, however, by and large favour property owners over tenants through an administrative double standard.

First off, many of the spaces for rent being advertised do not openly disclose what the actual rent and insurance deposit amounts are. Even when they
are, feedback from prospective tenants is often shut down with the admonishment from group admins that if someone has objections with the listing, they can simply keep scrolling. At the same time, a common response to “the asking price is too high for this kind of property” is clearly not deciding how much rent any given property can demand—raising questions about what is considered fair rent can be determined without renter feedback.

There is a fallacy hidden in this notion that renters on the open market decide how high the rents can go. Unlike a manufacturer of goods, a property owner is not mass producing apartments on an open market competing with other mass producers; most times they are offering a single space. The property owner, in a position where demand vastly exceeds supply, is also not trying to appeal to hundreds or thousands of customers to buy enough of their products to keep their business afloat. A property owner has a single unit and only needs one person to agree to the price. According to a Zenter poll conducted for Búðalanafjörður in 2018, the largest proportion of renters (35.1%) are renting from a single property owner; only 13.7% rent from an established rental company. This same poll showed that rental prices from individual property companies also tend to be much higher than those from other sources. It also bears mentioning that while a manufacturer sells a single unit once, a tenant buys a property owner’s “product” over and over, month after month, with the price almost always rising. The “market” is clearly not deciding how much can be charged for any given property; the person capable of paying the most for the least on offer decides.

When rental properties can advertise without disclosing the price, renters cannot provide public feedback on the asking price, so when the single highest bidder—not prospective renters—as a whole—determine what the highest rent can be, it stacks the deck against other prospective renters. Further muddying the waters is that available data on how much rent in Reykjavík has grown over the years— and it has nearly doubled since 2011—is based solely on properties that have registered with the district commissioner. Many renters, immigrants especially, live in places that are not registered, sometimes without even a valid contract. With that being the case, the real average cost of rent in Reykjavík is hard to determine, as a wide swath of properties being rented are not being factored into the total.

Why not just buy an apartment?

Icelandic culture leans heavily towards buying properties rather than renting them, so often times people are advised to buy apartments as a solution for getting out of the cycle of renting. However, this is not exactly an option for people who have newly arrived in the country. Furthermore, there is a vicious circle that arises for immigrants, who are more often than not minimum wage earners.

As rent in Reykjavík can be at least 50% of a person’s salary—and for minimum wage workers, even more—it is all too easy to fall behind on paying bills. Doing so, however, puts the debtor on a credit blacklist, which then automatically disqualifies them from being able to take out a loan to buy an apartment.

Laufey Líndal Ólafsdóttir is on the board of social housing for the city, Félagsbústaðir, and lives in social housing herself, succinctly answered the question of why more people don’t simply buy apartments: “Because they’re not allowed to,” she told us. “They don’t get the loans that they need. There’s no programme for social lending in this country.” You cannot qualify for loans if you’re on the blacklist for not paying bills, which is more likely to happen if you’re on minimum wage. And you’re more likely to be a minimum wage worker if you’re an immigrant. “This puts you on the rent market. As usual, being poor is more expensive than having money. This is why the poor keep being poor. It’s the poverty trap.”

Renting from your boss

One experience unique to immigrants to Iceland is the prospect of renting housing being provided by your employer. The quality of these places can vary, but they have far too often come up in the news for being overpriced and in poor condition. One prime example was in an investigative news story by Kveikur concerning largely Romanian workers. Up to ten workers at a time shared a single room, with each of them paying 50,000 ISK per month for this rudimentary shelter. Furthermore, they typically worked 220 hours per month, six days a week, for salaries that were far below the minimum wage. One of the workers interviewed said that after rental deductions and other charges he was paid a paltry 36,000 ISK for two weeks of work.

But the most notorious example is Bræðraborgarstígur 1, which in June 2020 was set ablaze by a tenant, killing three and leaving many more without a home. Apart from not even being registered as a residential property, making it illegal to rent the place out for people to live in, some 73 people were registered as living at the property, although the real number was likely close to a dozen. In 2017, Stundin interviewed a former resident of the house, who described the house as dilapidated, infected with mold and housing mostly foreign workers who paid as much as 90,000 ISK per month in rent for a small room, with no fire exit apart from the main entrance. In 2018, journalist Eiríkur Jónsson also reported on the unsanitary living conditions visible even from outside the house.

Sanna Magdalena Mörtudóttir, who is the Socialist Party representative for Reykjavik City Council, in fact cites company housing first amongst the challenges immigrants face on the rental market.

“If an Icelandic person is having certain problems [with the rental market], the problems are not going to be less for the immigrant.”

“Then you have to rely on your boss for both work and housing,” she points out, “I’ve seen cases where money for the housing is taken out of wages. Bosses may say ‘this is something they chose and are OK with.’ But at the same time, if you’re put in that situation, if you quit your job, are you also going to lose your home? Should they not be separate? Even if it’s not illegal, it’s definitely unethical.”

Ignorance not just of the law but also of social norms contributes to this. “People are coming to the country, maybe not knowing a lot about the country and think this is normal, maybe you don’t want to upset your boss,” she says. “You’re supposed to be paying people who work for you in money, not in something else. These two things need to be totally separated. It could be so dangerous, so many people living in one place. I think the city needs to take more action into this.”
The city and the national government has a lot of responsibility to socialise housing. It's a commodity now, but it shouldn't be.

The AirBnB Effect

While the pandemic has effectively torpedoed the market for AirBnB properties this year, in normal situations these properties can have an outsized impact on the rental market.

As one example, the law caps the amount of time per year that a property owner can rent their property on AirBnB to 90 days. While this sounds reasonable enough, a side effect of this is that it has become increasingly difficult to find renewable, 12-month contracts. Before the pandemic, it was very common to see properties being offered for rent specifying “available until June”, which is typically the start of the tourist high season. This puts renters in greater housing precarity; instead of being able to live in the same property, year by year, many renters face the prospect of having to find a new place to live at the start of each summer.

AirBnB had broader effects as well. Ólafur Heiðar Heigsson from the Housing Financial Fund (HFF), found that AirBnB has contributed to apartment prices increasing by 5% to 6% from 2015 to 2017. Ölafur added that landlords can often make twice the amount on AirBnB that they would make renting their properties out to locals, under-cutting incentives to provide housing for people who actually live here.

“The effect of AirBnB on the increase of property values are twofold,” a report from Arion Bank noted in 2017. “First of all, it leads to an increased expectation of profit for renting a room or apartment in that people are ready to pay a higher amount. Second of all, AirBnB reduces the supply in the apartment market. The first effect is difficult to quantify but carries with it the great increase of property values in downtown Reykjavík.”

And that’s just largely counting the landlords who are alighting the law. 60% of landlords using AirBnB beyond the 90-day limit did not register their properties as a vacation rental, depriv-
At the 2021 Grapevine Music Awards, the three biggest categories—Artist, Song and Album Of The Year—were decided the quickest. In fact, they were more or less unanimous the moment each was brought up, with little debate among the panel.

2020 was unequivocally the year of Bríet. From her explosive debut release ‘Kveðja, Bríet,’ to a slew of unforgettable livestream performances, to her opus—and our Song of the Year—‘Rólegur Kúreki,’ Bríet came onto the scene this year, made her own rules and consistently wowed. With such a legacy, it was no contest that she’d win Artist Of The Year too and while we’ve never given two of the biggest awards to one single artist, this year, to deny her one would be disingenuous. “Bríet deserves this and she’ll remind us of her one would be disingenuous. “Bríet deserves this and she’ll remind us of her right.”

On the album front, it was JFDR’s stunning ‘New Dreams’ that caught the panel’s eye. This was another moment where the moment the release was brought up, it was quickly decided on as a winner. “New Dreams’ sticks with us. It’s vulnerable in a way that’s so palpable, you can’t forget it. It’s an album that stays with you in your tracks,” raved another judge. “JFDR has done it again.”

Both ‘New Dreams’ and ‘Kveðja, Bríet’ are viscerally personal releases, which are viscerally personal releases, which is the so-called ‘Rólegur Kúreki,’ Bríet came onto the scene this year, made her own rules and consistently wowed. With such a legacy, it was no contest that she’s win Artist Of The Year too and while we’ve never given two of the biggest awards to one single artist, this year, to deny her one would be disingenuous. “Bríet deserves this and she’ll remind us of her right.”

One panel member concluded. “But then we were just doing the photoshoot for this and we had our faces next to each other and it was like, ‘Hello Bríet!’” She smiles broadly as she turns towards the pop star to her right.

“I kind of liked meeting in that way!” Bríet responds softly, a small grin illuminating her face. “It’s like well I’ve seen your face very closely now,” Jófríður says. “Yes, I know your eye colour,” Bríet interjects. And together, they laugh.

In truth, talking to them is like watching a yin-yang in real life. They are both somewhat the opposite of what you’d expect and of each other. Watching Bríet onstage, you might assume she’d be commanding or brash, but in truth, she’s extremely self-possessed and thoughtful. She pauses before she talks and chooses her words carefully—never uttering a superfluous line.

Meanwhile, Jófríður is animated. She speaks in a stream of consciousness style, constantly dissecting her own words and thoughts as she goes along as if she’s discovering herself at the same time you are. Hearing her answer a question is a bit like jumping on a sailboat. You don’t know where you’ll end up but you’re sure the view will be worth it.

Two personal albums
Both ‘New Dreams’ and ‘Kveðja, Bríet’ are viscerally personal releases, which is what initially made the panel decide to talk to them together. Each lay their songwriter’s stories bare—dissecting love, heartache, pain and regret with a fine-tooth comb.

“I feel like I manage to veil things enough for it to make sense to me because I’m not going into super-specific details, though I appreciate when people do that, like Joni Mitchell,” says Jófríður. “But I also think that what I do tends to be a bit cathartic at times and I imagine you [Bríet] feel the same way. There’s a catharsis in putting out your raw feelings, but there’s also—and this is maybe cheesy—the sense of a higher purpose as well. You’re placing something inside a little context, which is the song, and you’re releasing it so that other people can resonate.”

Bríet nods. “Writing while feeling. Exactly. My album is my journal,” she explains. “I don’t feel that I’m putting myself out there. It’s just what I’m doing.”

“I think that people sense that,” Jófríður says.

The panel certainly did, certainly when it comes to ‘Rólegur Kúreki.’ The smooth, acoustic country-pop track details a relationship with a partner that always puts you down and makes you feel bad. And in it, Bríet cuts to the core of the insecurity and doubt that kind of relationship creates.

“Rólegur Kúreki’ could just as easily fit at Þjóðhátið as it could at Prikið,” one panel member said. “A lot of people are jumping into the cowboy boots but not doing the line dance. And they’re not changing the line dance moves into their own, like Briet is doing,” another added.

The responsibility of vulnerability
“I knew a few people were meeting on Zoom to go through my album and analyse how my relationship was, and that’s so weird,” Briet says, looking down.

“How does that make you feel?” Jófríður asks.

“It made me feel like it was hard for him. Because I’ve dealt with it for some time, but for him, people talking about him—he found it very uncomfortable,” she responds quietly.

“Because he’s not the one in charge of the discussion,” Jófríður posits.

“That’s the hard part of having this responsibility of making art about feelings and people. That’s a lot of responsibility,” Briet concludes.

“It is a lot of responsibility,” Jófríður says calmly. “I think for me no one knows who I’m talking about. I hope not. I’m so private. But I also like it when people are brave enough to say, you know, this is what happened. This is me. This is my past. This is my future. I think it’s really cool to disclose it all.” She looks over at Briet—a fellow young, profoundly honest songwriter—and she shares a small smile. “I think it’s a very cool thing to do.”

A longer version of this interview will be available on grapevine.is
Get Grapevine Merch!

Enjoy the history of Icelandic rock and pop music.

Only 5 minutes away from Keflavik Airport!

Take a taxi or bus no. 55

The Reykjavik Grapevine
Issue 01 — 2021

Culture

Video of the Year: Jónsi — Sumarið sem aldrei kom

Honourable Mentions: GusGus — Higher ft. Vök, Sílvas — Dapply, OK泰安 — Tomorrow’s Heartache

Jónsi wanted to show the other side of Iceland, not the delusional version we’ve seen in the “Inspired by Iceland” campaigns. The flip-side of the coin—arguably the more real version of our country,” director Frosti Jón Runólfsson (Frosti Gringo) explains. The panel agreed with the vision, calling the result a living, moving tribute to Iceland in all its forms.

Joyful & melancholic

The video, a nitty-gritty and un-dramatised documentation of this county featuring everyone from swimmers to gymnasts to more downtrodden members of the city, is joyful and melancholic in equal measure. “It is Iceland and it isn’t. It’s not landscapes and frozen tundras, it’s likely and unlikely charac- ters that everyone has seen be- fore at one time in their life,” one panel member praised. In the end, it was close to a unanimous win for Frosti and Jónsi.

A moving tribute

“It was really touching to see the reactions. Both for me personally and for the people I had to expose their vulnerabilities and their personal moments in this video,” Frosti concludes. “Sadly the characters from the video passed away while I was ed- iting. He had been living hard for many years. After the video came out, the mother of his chil- dren actually contacted me and thanked me for the video, which is the most beautiful review yet.”

Welcome to the planet

The panel praised the interplay of Holdgervlar’s visuals and music, calling their project an all-en-compassing world. They are, quite literally, a group you just want to watch, one panel member empha-ised, and they’re built a world and a story into the foundation of their music, which must be applauded. They’re on their own level, or more accurately, their own planet (granted, they are cyborgs) and you can’t help but want to see what they’d do with a massive stage and large budget.

“The masks we wear on stage were first used as a tool against stage fright but quickly took over the whole concept and transformed it into what it wanted to be, these beings,” they explain, exposing their human roots for a bit of a mini- nute. “They pick their own scenes and depictions, ask and answer questions about human nature with humans as their mirrors.”

Artist To Watch: Holdgervlar

Honourable Mentions: GusGus, Ingiþrú Migís, Laufey Lín

“The Holdgervlar themselves are xenobots, ready-made organisms, with human roots. They look back with nostalgia at human cultures, with human roots. They’re beings of specula- tive sexuality, beauty and everyday function that experience emotion without its essence.” And so Holdgervlar, the winner of our “Artist To Watch” award, makes it clear that they are the ones watching us.

The seediest districts of space

Holdgervlar has lurked in the background of the alternative arts scene in Reykjavík for the last few years, but only came into the blacklight this year with the release of their debut effort, ‘Ger- vihol’; in September on Myrkfæl- ni’s newly-established label.

As you can expect from their
The Grapevine Music Awards

Honourable mentions: Prikið
Livestreams

Live From Reykjavík by Iceland Airwaves

“They went big. I appreciated the spectacle,” one panel member said of the Live From Reykjavík by Iceland Airwaves livestream, which featured high-production big numbers by artists like Hátari, Of Monsters And Men, JóóPé & Króli and more over a two day celebration. The panel enjoyed the ambition and execution of the project—with no Airwaves, it felt like a fitting tribute to the loss of the festival this year. “This might sound weird, but I wish I had been able to pay for it!”

Post-sessions

“The Post-Sessions that Post-Dreifing did are fantastic. They are also a great contrast to the Airwaves livestreams. They're currently 13 out, featuring live performances interspersed with mezzoforte and inimitable music videos this year including “Píla” by Joey Christ, Hekla’s has found deep and intense negative space or kind of a big black void of sound. On ‘Sprungur’ I was exploring imagery of mythical beasts and the dark cold winters.” The panel concluded that Hekla really found her own on this release, proving that she not only knows her sound, but that she’s confident in it. “I think the there-min is not an instrument you typically think could be emotional, but Hekla’s has found deep and intense emotion in its tones. Out of all the winners, I can’t wait to see what she does next,” one panel member said. “Can someone please give her a film score?”

Honourable mentions: HAM x Shoplift, Hljómskálinn, Vikingur, Bríet, Ólafsson.

Rough Cult:

Production company Rough Cult, the panel concluded, has a knack for elevating whatever song they’re entrusted to visualise. Composed of four key members—Baldvin Einarsson, Hekla Gísladóttir, Berglúfr Petra Guðmundsdóttir and Gabriel Benedikt Bachmann—the Cult has had their Kool Aid in a number of surreal, unforgettable films. The Grapevine Music Awards panel is composed of experts from many disciplines—we have tech-no fanatics, rap connoisseurs and many things in-between. None, unfortunately, are theremin devotees, but all were still completely enamoured with the eerie there-min stylings of Hekla Magnúsdóttir and her ‘Sprungur’ EP.

“I like to create terrifying sounds and big sounds in contrast with thin high pitched sounds,” Hekla explains. “I guess it explores negative space or kind of a big black void of sound. On ‘Sprungur’ I was exploring imagery of mythical beasts and the dark cold winters.” The panel concluded that Hekla’s 2020 debut album “Phantom Plaza” meanders seamlessly between heat-driven and jangly rock ‘n’ roll, 90s trip-hop, shoegaze and everything else. “It’s a kind of supergroup, with seasoned members of other projects, including Grísalappulsa, Káraín Mikla and Andi,” one panel member raved. “Fine-tuned vibes echoing the past so elegantly into the present.” The fact that RYBA didn’t get more attention this year was a sobering fact for many judges, and so the group was a shoe-in for the “You Should Have Heard This Award.” They’re currently working on their second effort, which you should also listen to.

“Post-Dreifing did are fantastic. They are also a great contrast to the Airwaves livestreams in that they are totally DIY,” the panel determined. The sessions, filmed in cozy venues across the city, showcased the best of Icelandic music in a totally lovable manner. There are currently 13 out, featuring live performances interspersed with interviews.

Honourable mentions: HAM x Shoplift, Hljómskálinn, Vikingur, Bríet, Ólafsson.

Rough Cult:

“Fine-tuned vibes echoing the past and stepping outside the box and step outside the box and try new—or old—things. We love an artist working with Rough Cult, you know it’s going to be something. They are upping the standard.”

RYBA:

RYBA’s 2020 debut album “Phantom Plaza” meanders seamlessly between heat-driven and jangly rock ‘n’ roll, 90s trip-hop, shoegaze and everything else. “It’s a kind of supergroup, with seasoned members of other projects, including Grísalappulsa, Káraín Mikla and Andi,” one panel member raved. “Fine-tuned vibes echoing the past so elegantly into the present.” The fact that RYBA didn’t get more attention this year was a sobering fact for many judges, and so the group was a shoe-in for the “You Should Have Heard This Award.” They’re currently working on their second effort, which you should also listen to.

“I see the album usually as a psychological voyage which was supposed to happen a few decades ago but it’s happening now like a ghost, it has some unresolved business,” RYBA told the Grapevine. “This album is not trying to meet anyone or help society to become better, more like using it and reflecting what we see in it a little bit like a ghost.”
Best of Reykjavík

Best of Reykjavík

Prices range from just a few hundred ISK for sweet pastries to 1,990 ISK for the Vegan Breakfast (vegan cream cheese and avocado bagel, a glass of OJ and any hot drink). The cinnamon rolls are also a great value because seriously: they’re huge. We’d put forth that they are not a dessert, not a snack, but in fact, a full meal. During your visit, you might also notice the 70s/80s U.K. music they’re playing—on my last visit, it was “Remains” by The Police—which makes this the perfect spot to hit if you’re a Brit missing home (like me).

Hamborgara Bullan’s Vegan Burger

This 1,190 ISK veggie burger—if you want it made vegan, you need to specify when you order—is hands-down the best vegan burger in Reykjavík (in my opinion, at least). The only thing that could be done to improve it would be if Bullan could add a slice of Violife cheddar but this burger is certainly impressive enough as it is. The glossy bun encases a deep-fried veggie patty, topped with crunchy lettuce and all the condiments you’d expect to find in a picture-perfect junk food burger. Go for the meal deal (1,990 ISK) and you get fries and a drink, too.

Taj Mahal’s Vegan Special

Tryggvagata 26

1,990 ISK might sound like a lot, but at Taj Mahal, that get you a main a side of rice and a whole naan bread.

The two vegan mains on offer are the Tofu Tikka Masala (bright red and perfectly spicy) or the Mixed Vegetable curry (equally yum and perfectly spicy) or the Mixed Vegetable curry (equally yum and perfectly spicy) or the Mixed Vegetable curry (equally yum and perfectly spicy) or the Mixed Vegetable curry (equally yum and perfectly spicy). The filling itself is a perfect blend of sweet and cinnamon crystals. The filling itself is a perfect blend of sweet and cinnamon crystals. The filling itself is a perfect blend of sweet and cinnamon crystals. The filling itself is a perfect blend of sweet and cinnamon crystals. The filling itself is a perfect blend of sweet and cinnamon crystals.

This humble dessert would definitely be classified as broadly Icelandic, but Iceland certainly knows how to do cinammon delights—you can buy a cinnamon roll for 600 ISK and top it with crunchy sugar. The filling itself is a perfect blend of sweet and cinnamon crystals. The filling itself is a perfect blend of sweet and cinnamon crystals. The filling itself is a perfect blend of sweet and cinnamon crystals. The filling itself is a perfect blend of sweet and cinnamon crystals. The filling itself is a perfect blend of sweet and cinnamon crystals. The filling itself is a perfect blend of sweet and cinnamon crystals.
In Your Pocket

January 15th—February 11th

Perfect Day

Dance, jive & have the time of your life

In the heat of the night

I would love to chill with friends and have nourishing conversations and play some music together. Let that inner child out a little bit and connect heart to heart.

Vital Info

Useful Numbers

Emergency: 112
On-call doctors: 1770
Dental emergency: 676 0505


Swimming Pools

Sunshine, the downtown pool at Babarůnstaður is an indoor swimming pool with hot tubs and a diving board. More pools: glasses.reykjavik

Public Toilets

Public toilets in the centre can be found inside the green-poster covered towers inside the Reykjavík City Hall and by Eymundsson. Public Toilets in the centre can be found inside the Reykjavík City Hall and by Eymundsson.

Museums & Galleries

Most museums are open 10–17, Sat–Sun 12–17. Exception: Ásmundarsafn, Lækjargata 2a and Arnarstapi, Lækjargata and by Eymundsson.

Bar & Restaurant  Hverfisgata 26

Bar & Restaurant  Hverfisgata 26

Bar & Restaurant  Hverfisgata 26

Bar & Restaurant

Hverfisgata 26

Don’t Hesitate! Act Now!

*You only need to type the 3 DIs once

Get Grapevine Merch!

shop.grapevine.is

shop.grapevine.is

shop.grapevine.is

shop.grapevine.is

shop.grapevine.is

shop.grapevine.is

shop.grapevine.is

shop.grapevine.is

shop.grapevine.is

shop.grapevine.is

shop.grapevine.is

shop.grapevine.is

shop.grapevine.is

shop.grapevine.is

shop.grapevine.is

shop.grapevine.is

shop.grapevine.is

shop.grapevine.is

shop.grapevine.is

shop.grapevine.is

shop.grapevine.is

shop.grapevine.is

shop.grapevine.is

shop.grapevine.is

shop.grapevine.is

shop.grapevine.is

shop.grapevine.is

shop.grapevine.is

shop.grapevine.is

shop.grapevine.is

shop.grapevine.is

shop.grapevine.is

shop.grapevine.is

shop.grapevine.is

shop.grapevine.is

shop.grapevine.is

shop.grapevine.is

shop.grapevine.is

shop.grapevine.is

shop.grapevine.is

shop.grapevine.is

shop.grapevine.is

shop.grapevine.is

shop.grapevine.is

shop.grapevine.is

shop.grapevine.is

shop.grapevine.is

shop.grapevine.is

shop.grapevine.is

shop.grapevine.is

shop.grapevine.is

shop.grapevine.is

shop.grapevine.is

shop.grapevine.is

shop.grapevine.is

shop.grapevine.is

shop.grapevine.is

shop.grapevine.is

shop.grapevine.is

shop.grapevine.is
Wine bar & food

5. Bastard Brew & Food
Vegamótstígur 4
This downtown drinking hole is something of a bear and bar-foood palace. It’s an English pub style environment, without the sense of history, but with eleven beers on tap, a great happy hour, and the phenomenally good ‘Fat Bastard’ burger on offer. It is a firm favourite. Their tacos are pretty notable, too.

Dining

1. Austur-Indiafélag
Laugavegur 56
Still going strong 20 years on, Austur-Indiafélag is an institution. Make a meal out of the delicate salmon pollicathu, kafka mappas and kulchas and share it family style. Keep your eyes peeled for the vegetarian and vegan dishes as well.

2. Gaeta Gelato
Aðalstræti 6 + Hlemmur Mathöll
Gaeta Gelato is owned by recently-opened Gaeta Gelato is owned by recently-opened Gaeta Gelato is owned by recently-opened Gaeta Gelato is owned by recently-opened Gaeta Gelato is owned by recently-opened Gaeta Gelato is owned by recently-opened Gaeta Gelato is owned by recently-opened Gaeta Gelato is owned by recently-opened Gaeta Gelato is owned by recently-opened Gaeta Gelato is owned by recently-opened Gaeta Gelato is owned by recently-opened Gaeta Gelato is owned by recently-opened Gaeta Gelato is owned by recently-opened Gaeta Gelato is owned by recently-opened Gaeta Gelato is owned by recently-opened Gaeta Gelato is owned by recently-opened Gaeta Gelato is owned by recently-opened Gaeta Gelato is owned by recently-opened.
under the radar since it opened, but
now we’re here to bring it out of the
shadows. The brewery and beer hall
offers a varied list of brews, most of
which they make themselves locally.
Come and experience your new beer-
adiction.

19. English Pub
Austurstraeti 12

True to its name, the English Pub
offers many different kinds of lager
on tap and a whiff of that genuine
UK feel. Try the famous “wheel of
fortune” where one can win up to
UK feel. Try the famous “wheel of
fortune” where one can win up to

20. Hildur Yeoman
Laugavegur 7

Hildur’s got a fresh new boutique
on Laugavegur. As well as selling
her own designs—women’s wear
characterised by flowing shapes
made from fine fabrics with
colourful, distinctive, busy prints—
Hildur Yeoman’s boutique also
features sunglasses by Le Specs,
jewellery by Vanessa Mooney, French
tea, and other interesting trinkets.

21. nomad.
Frakkastígur 8f

A relative newbie to the Laugavegur
scene, nomad. was a surprise
runner-up for the Best Design
Store at the 2020 Best of Reykjavík
awards. They have a fantastically
curated selection of books, lamps,
candles and more. Plus, the owner
is a photographer and often has
exhibitions on the lower floor.

22. Wasteland Reykjavík
Ingólfsstræti 5

For super à la mode downtown
Reykjavík looks—a.i. cheerleader
uniforms, Guy Fieri t-shirts, and
astronaut-esque jumpsuits—this
second-hand store is the go-to.

23. Lucky Records
Rauðararárstígur 10

Lucky Records is the punky
underground horse of the Reykjavík
record scene. It’s one of those shops
that is easy to get lost in—expect
to easily spend an entire afternoon
perusing their selection.

24. Melabúðin
Nágamel 39, 107

For foodies looking for artisanal
deli meats, fresh figs, rare cheeses
and all sorts of unexpected, hard-
to-find treats, Vesturbær’s beloved
Melabúðin should satiate your
desires.

25. Pastel Flower Studio
Baldursgata 36

Pastel Flower Studio is only open on

Chickpea
Hallgrímskirkja 1
Chickpea describes themselves as a
small, family-run, street food style res-
taurant with nutritious and authentic
food made from scratch, every day. Oc-
cupying the little nook next to Krónan,
they are also an extremely cute locale for
a nice lunch. So family-run? Nutritious?
Authentic? Cute? We’d be down for mak-
ing this our religion. All jokes aside, it’s
a true feat to open up a restaurant in the
midst of a virus pandemic and we seri-
ously need more good vegetarian/vegan
places. Especially as the Grapevine is cur-
rently undergoing Veganuary, NYC

Days and Saturdays from 13:00
to 18:00—so plan accordingly.
The studio uses cut, dried, and
fresh flowers to create unique
arrangements that reference
classic Icelandic nature in an
unexpected and innovative way.
Trust us: You won’t find a florist in the
city that’s in any way comparable.

26. Street Rats Tattoo
Hverfisgata 37

Kristófer, a.k.a. Sleeper Tattoo,
has proven himself to be a fresh,
experimental artist whose works
have become a somewhat coveted
symbol in the city. So if you’re
looking to get your travel tattoo,
go there. It’s way more interesting
than a Vegvisir.

Party Every Night. Cocktails!
Live Music. Live Sports Coverage
50 different kinds of beer.
Kitchen open from 11:00.
Ribs - Burgers. Chicken Wings!

AUSTURSÁRTI 8 • REYKJAVIK
In years prior, I used to always describe Núll with silly epithets like ‘The Most Ungodlyable Band In Iceland’ or other such nonsensical nonsense. I’m going to stop that now. There’s nothing funny about this group and to even approach their music with humour now feels totally disrespectful and idiotic. ‘Entity’—their sophomore effort, which came out in August—is so physical an effort, recording the album and working, recording the album and working, recording the album and working, recording the album and working, recording the album and working, recording the album and working. Nothing... The glorious shrine

A Glorious Shrine To Nothing...

Núll is the band to not-exist to

Words: Hannah Jane Cohen  Photo: Julie Schneider

...or a band full of epitaphs, doing both in a rather pithy manner, of their contemporaries don. But these aren’t laughs or stunts, no, just measures to point out the ridiculousness of everything—your expectations of a show included.

The album is even designed to feel uneasy. “I always thought it was a pretty funny idea to start with the longest and slowest song just to ruin people’s moods before they hear the rest of the album,” he continues. “And after that is the shortest song, which is possibly the easiest to digest out of the whole album. Then it just keeps on going down wards.”

Top, this is the picture they sent for their big magazine article

Taste the Best of Iceland

TAPASBARINN | Vesturgata 3B | Tel: 551 2344 | tapas.is

Starts with a shot of the infamous Icelandic spirit Brennivín

Followed by 7 delicious tapas

- Smoked puffin with blueberry “brennivín” sauce
- Icelandic Arctic Charr with peppers-salsa
- Lobster tails baked in garlic
- Pan-fried line caught blue ling with lobster sauce
- Icelandic Arctic Charr with peppers-salsa
- Smoked puffin with blueberry “brennivín” sauce
- Minke Whale with cranberry & malt sauce
And for dessert

- White chocolate “Spyr” mousse with passion cocus

8.990 kr.

The Reykjavík Grapevine

Issue 01 — 2021

Everything

‘[Entity] is pretty much the opposite of what Núll is,’ D.G. admits impas sively. “It’s ironic. It’s a sarcastic title.” Núll is notorious for such sarcasm. Over the years, they’ve consistently messed with what people would expect from them, showing up to gigs in Adidas track suits or drag—a far cry from the dark, ritualistic clothing many of their contemporaries don. But these aren’t laughs or stunts, no, just measures to point out the ridiculousness of everything—your expectations of a show included.

The album revolves around the absolute futility of anything. It’s nihilistic but not in the sense that we’re all beat up and sad about it, it’s just a statement of fact. Everything dissolves. Everything ends. Everything will return to nothing.” T.I. states simply. “It’s also kind of a sarcastic remark in itself. We spent so much time working, recording the album and making it sound as grandiose as we could because, like the rest of mankind, we are essentially building a glorious shrine to nothing.”

The Reykjavík Grapevine

Issue 01 — 2021

The glorious shrine

My first experience with ‘Entity’ was painful. It’s not an easily digestible listen, even to a black metal fan like myself. As soon as singer S.S.’s first screams hit a few minutes into the fittingly-titled opening track “None,” I felt visceraally uncomfortable. It’s been a while since a release affected me in such a way.

And that was just the first song. From there, things only got more intense, crescendoing into the last two minutes of “An Idiosyncratic Mirage,” which might be some of the most overwhelming music you’ll ever hear. “It’s supposed to be oppressive,” D.G. responds, when I tell him this. “You can’t control it. It’s just there. And it dawns upon you without a warning.”

The album is even designed to feel uneasy. “I always thought it was a pretty funny idea to start with the longest and slowest song just to ruin people’s moods before they hear the rest of the album,” he continues. “And after that is the shortest song, which is possibly the easiest to digest out of the whole album. Then it just keeps on going downwards.”

So it goes

While Núll’s overall veneer of pointlessness has provided an apt soundtrack for 2020, the album was written far before the pandemic. It was merely, as T.I. calls it, fate that it was released in the midst of it. But right now, the group is looking towards the future, awaiting the days they can play live shows again. But if not, as is fitting a band based around the concept of nihilism, they’ll deal.

“Wasn’t it Nietzsche that said that all an artist needs is bread and his craft?” T.I. questions. This earns a rare laugh from D.G. “I was reading that today!” he responds. “Twilight of the Idols.” T.I. smiles. “So when it all comes down to it, if we can sustain ourselves and practise our craft, we have enough. We would still be writing and recording music even if nobody was listening and we will continue to do it even if there are no gigs or audiences. That’s not what matters. And I mean, of course, this is Núll,” he concludes calmly. “Nothing matters.”
We’d have event listings here if Trump wouldn’t have fired all the virus experts way back when...
Together For Seyðisfjörður

Artists lend a hand in rebuilding the village

Words: Andie Sophia Fontaine
Photos: Lama-sea Dear

The devastating landslides that struck Seyðisfjörður in December are still wreaking havoc in their own way. While no one was killed or injured, 14 homes in the east Iceland village were destroyed and, while many residents were allowed to return soon after the entire village was evacuated, many are still without a place to live. Even for those who have been allowed to return, there are still extensive repairs to be done and the clean-up is daunting.

Fortunately, not everyone is sitting idly by. A new initiative, “Saman fyrir Seyðisfjörð” (“Together for Seyðisfjörður”) has been launched, a collaborative effort started by Lama-sea Dear, who lived in Seyðisfjörður for a year and has worked there periodically over the past five years.

“Something must be done”

“I'd recently moved to Copenhagen and was sitting on my computer refreshing the news and speaking to friends on the phone,” she recalls of the wake of the landslides, “I felt so far away and like there wasn’t anything I could do to help, so I came up with the idea for this project so that we could raise awareness for the town and do something. If I were there, I'd pick up a shovel and start digging, make someone a cup of tea, or at least hug my friends. This was my way of doing that.”

She contacted a couple of people, including Simon of the Heima Art Residency and together they have been running the project together along with the assistance of others.

“We've created a platform for Facebook and Instagram and are in the process of setting up a website where we will be able to host videos and art that have been donated by the Icelandic creative scene,” she explains. “In the spirit of Seyðisfjörður, it's a hodge-podge of wonderful creativity. "

A positive response

“People have been really positive, it’s been wonderful, you know,” she says. “The main point of us doing this is we are supporting the community of Seyðisfjörður, so we have been in communication with people who are in the town, because we wanted to make sure that they were ready for it, that it was something they were willing to accept and something that they wanted. We didn't want to be stepping on any toes and publicising something that is such a personal thing that all these people are dealing with.”

The team has been working in collaboration with the Icelandic Red Cross, where they set up a specific fund. All of the money will be used by the Red Cross, in collaboration with the town. They have also been in collaboration with the town, who will assemble a team to best allocate the funds for rebuilding the community.

“You can follow Saman fyrir Seyðisfjörður on Instagram at @saman__seydisfjord and on Facebook, with a website pending. You can also go to gefa.raudikrossinn.is/9544 to donate to the fund.”

Find today's events in Iceland!
Download our free listings app - APPENING on the Apple and Android stores
### Art Listings

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

Send your listings to: listings@grapevine.is

#### Opening

**REYKJAVÍK ART MUSEUM**

**Is The Spirit Aware of the Matter?**

Is the spirit aware of the matter? What Big question? Explore that query here with works by Ragnheiður Ólafsdóttir, Sigurður Þórarinsson and Þorlax Ólafsson in an exhibition that explores the systems that mankind has created for itself throughout history. Think social, economic, political, cultural and very serious stuff.

- Opens on January 19th, 2021
- Runs until February 28th, 2021

---

#### January 15th-February 11th

**Barren Land**

In 2004, landscape painter Georg Kolbe bought a plot of land and built a studio, which he entitled Baranur ('Barren Land'). This name could really be applied to all his works he created there—he are all touched with a rugged sensibility of the craggy weather-beaten barren land created there—they are all touched really be applied to all his works he

- Opens on January 15th, 2021
- Runs until February 11th, 2021

---

**Is The Spirit Aware of the Matter?**

The exhibition is a selection of works which dissect the theme of this exhibition. Always reference the artist has become known for.

- Opens on February 18th, 2021
- Runs until May 25th 2021

---

**World Is Melting**

The museum contains close to 100 artworks including a beautiful artist’s sculptures.

- Opens on January 31st, 2021
- Runs until January 31st, 2021

---

**Melckmeyt 1659**

A series of paintings which dissect the history of Icelandic fisher-ies from row boats to monstrous trawlers.

- Opens on January 16th, 2021
- Runs until January 31st, 2021

---

**Reklavík City Museum**

Settlement Exhibition

As Viking runs meet digital technology, this exhibition provides insight into Reklavík’s farms at the time of the first settlers.

- Opens on February 18th, 2021
- Runs until May 25th 2021

---

**Reklavík Museum of Photography**

Reklavík Museum of Photography

Reklavík Museum of Photography has no idea just how experimental this medium can be.

- Opens on January 19th, 2021
- Runs until January 31st, 2021

---

**Barrani**

An exhibition of water-based works by local goldsmith and artist Gunnar Hjaltason. The aim of the series is to explore contemporary sculpture and the development within three-dimensional art, not only as an important part of art history, but also as a living visual language within contemporary art. The series is intended to honor the sculptor Sæður Helgadóttir (1928-1970), who Reklavík Museum has named after.

- Opens on January 28th, 2021

---

**What Meets The Eye**

A retrospective of works by lo- cal goldsmith and artist Gunnar Hjaltason. He painted in oil, acrylics and watercolour, but this exhibition will focus on his prints. The images depict landscapes, town views of Hafnarfjörður and the Icelandic nature.

- Until January 31st, 2021

---

**Hafnarfjörður; Works from the collection**

The exhibition is a selection of works from the Hafnarfjörður collection that all showcase Hafnarfjörður in a unique way. Few towns in Iceland are as picturesque as Hafnarfjörður and the town also offers spectacular viewpoints of our. And we’re not just saying that be- cause our editor is from there.

- Runs until March 7th, 2021

---

**Fiðfolk**

Flame a better duo than fish and Iceland. You can’t. So come learn about the history of Icelandic fisher-ies from row boats to monstrous trawlers.

- Until January 25th, 2021

---

**Barren Land**

With two images of different origins against each other.

- Until January 9th, 2021

---

**Rekjavík Art Museum - Hafnarfjörður**

Ragnar Axelsson: Barren Land

What’s our favourite four-letter word? WOOL! Icelanders will proudly provide a visual experience, allowing you to enter a remote world that feels lost in time. 

- Until January 22nd, 2021

---

**Museum of Design and Applied Art**

**Sloans Art Museum**

**The Reykjavík Grapevine**

Issue 01 — 2021

---

**Kjarvalsstaðir**

REYKJAVÍK ART MUSEUM - HAFNARFJÖRÐUR

Ragnar Axelsson: Barren Land

- Until January 9th, 2021

---

**Museum of Design and Applied Art**

**Honunarsafn Islands**

Garðarg 1 - Ganhafar
Open Tue - Sun 12-17
www.honunarsafn.is

**Exhibitions**

100% Wool
Closing January 31
Designer in Residence - Trýrári
Opening January 21

**Icelandic Ceramics 1930 - 1970**

Opening February 13
Since opening our bakery in 1920, we have constantly pushed the boundaries of traditional Icelandic baking methods. Find us in the heart of Reykjavík serving piping hot, fresh pastries made from scratch, every morning from seven-thirty AM.

Not a sweet tooth? That’s OK. Come by for a savory brunch or taste one of our homemade sodas or craft beers.

THE SWEETEST CENTURY

Remember That Girl Who Cried, Left The Party And Moved To Berlin?

“Norms” is a web series about her
Words: Hannah Jane Cohen
Photos: Provided by Lost Shoe Collective

Album
“Norms” is available to watch until Jan. 17th on rvkfemfilmfest.is. Follow Norms on Facebook and @norms.webseries on Instagram for updates on release schedules.

“This is a story about a dildo.”

And so begins the trailer for “Norms”, a new web series by the Lost Shoe Collective that premiered on January 14th at the Reykjavik Feminist Film Festival. The series documents the life of Sara, a queer Icelandic woman who, in the midst of an impulsive, self-destructive breakdown, escapes Reykjavik for the noise of Berlin, or as it’s called, the “city of lost souls.”

It’s a tale as old as time: woman leaves her comfortable life to find herself in the fringes of society. That said, Lost Shoe Collective have put their own spin on this classic by centering their story around an openly queer protagonist, which is all part of their vision of telling stories that aren’t told and telling them in a funny, relatable, realistic manner. Hence, the dildo.

Queer reality
“I feel that the story is a representation of how we as queer people are just that—people, regular people that live regular lives, full of joyful, dramatic and funny moments,” writer Sólveig Johnsen explains in a COVID-safe virtual interview. Just like Sara, she identifies as a queer woman. “Our stories aren’t only about coming out, facing prejudices and so on, sometimes we are insecure in our life’s purpose or cheating on our spouse, just like anyone else of any sexual orientation or identity.”

The group, therefore, sought to portray the mundane, everyday struggles of Sara’s life and in doing so provide a more nuanced take on the queer female experience. And as a woman-led collective with a high percentage of queer members, this was certainly their story to tell.

“It was important to us from the beginning that Sara was someone everyone could see themselves in, in a way, but that she would be a flawed person who makes mistakes. [She] doesn’t always do the right thing—rarely even—but she tries,” director Júlíagrétta Einarsdóttir says. “Sara is just like so many European young adults. She has everything in a way: a well-paid job, a great group of friends and a girlfriend who cares for her… [But] Sara starts realising that there’s something missing in the relationship that causes an empty space within herself. She cheats on her girlfriend with someone who is exciting and excited about a part of her that Sara has been hiding from the world and herself.”

“In the end it’s not the world she needs to face, but her own demons, passions and struggles to find happiness,” Júlíagrétta continues. “Sara is clumsy, selfish, funny and adorable and I love her.”

No explosions here
Júlíagrétta approached the project with a concrete basis in realism, which was necessary to highlight the internal arc of the characters. “Nothing explodes, there are no dinosaurs, we’re not telling a story that’s never been told, no monkey-business,” she explains. “What makes the show interesting is the characters and how we relate to them so it was important to me that the scenes were realistic, that I got the tears, the laughter, the jokes and the pain at the right moment.”

And it’s a relatively personal story for Júlíagrétta, who experienced a similar struggle years ago, when, stuck in a job she didn’t like and feeling unfulfilled by life, packed her things up and moved to New York for film school.

“Even though they say that you can’t escape all your problems or your own demons—like we may learn from Sara in the show—you can definitely drown some of them in beers at a diner in Brooklyn while writing a movie-script and, as you might imagine, I don’t regret that decision,” she says. “Especially not today.”

“Sara is clumsy, selfish, funny and adorable and I love her.”

Not pictured: the dildo.

In the end it’s not the world she needs to face, but her own demons, passions and struggles to find happiness.” Júlíagrétta continues. “Sara is clumsy, selfish, funny and adorable and I love her.”

No explosions here
Júlíagrétta approached the project with a concrete basis in realism, which was necessary to highlight the internal arc of the characters. “Nothing explodes, there are no dinosaurs, we’re not telling a story that’s never been told, no monkey-business,” she explains. “What makes the show interesting is the characters and how we relate to them so it was important to me that the scenes were realistic, that I got the tears, the laughter, the jokes and the pain at the right moment.”

And it’s a relatively personal story for Júlíagrétta, who experienced a similar struggle years ago, when, stuck in a job she didn’t like and feeling unfulfilled by life, packed her things up and moved to New York for film school.

“Even though they say that you can’t escape all your problems or your own demons—like we may learn from Sara in the show—you can definitely drown some of them in beers at a diner in Brooklyn while writing a movie-script and, as you might imagine, I don’t regret that decision,” she says. “Especially not today.”

“I feel that the story is a representation of how we as queer people are just that—people, regular people that live regular lives, full of joyful, dramatic and funny moments,” writer Sólveig Johnsen explains in a COVID-safe virtual interview. Just like Sara, she identifies as a queer woman. “Our stories aren’t only about coming out, facing prejudices and so on, sometimes we are insecure in our life’s purpose or cheating on our spouse, just like anyone else of any sexual orientation or identity.”

The group, therefore, sought to portray the mundane, everyday struggles of Sara’s life and in doing so provide a more nuanced take on the queer female experience. And as a woman-led collective with a high percentage of queer members, this was certainly their story to tell.

“It was important to us from the beginning that Sara was someone everyone could see themselves in, in a way, but that she would be a flawed person who makes mistakes. [She] doesn’t always do the right thing—rarely even—but she tries,” director Júlíagrétta Einarsdóttir says. “Sara is just like so many European young adults. She has everything in a way: a well-paid job, a great group of friends and a girlfriend who cares for her… [But] Sara starts realising that there’s something missing in the relationship that causes an empty space within herself. She cheats on her girlfriend with someone who is exciting and excited about a part of her that Sara has been hiding from the world and herself.”

“In the end it’s not the world she needs to face, but her own demons, passions and struggles to find happiness,” Júlíagrétta continues. “Sara is clumsy, selfish, funny and adorable and I love her.”

No explosions here
Júlíagrétta approached the project with a concrete basis in realism, which was necessary to highlight the internal arc of the characters. “Nothing explodes, there are no dinosaurs, we’re not telling a story that’s never been told, no monkey-business,” she explains. “What makes the show interesting is the characters and how we relate to them so it was important to me that the scenes were realistic, that I got the tears, the laughter, the jokes and the pain at the right moment.”

And it’s a relatively personal story for Júlíagrétta, who experienced a similar struggle years ago, when, stuck in a job she didn’t like and feeling unfulfilled by life, packed her things up and moved to New York for film school.

“Even though they say that you can’t escape all your problems or your own demons—like we may learn from Sara in the show—you can definitely drown some of them in beers at a diner in Brooklyn while writing a movie-script and, as you might imagine, I don’t regret that decision,” she says. “Especially not today.”

“I feel that the story is a representation of how we as queer people are just that—people, regular people that live regular lives, full of joyful, dramatic and funny moments,” writer Sólveig Johnsen explains in a COVID-safe virtual interview. Just like Sara, she identifies as a queer woman. “Our stories aren’t only about coming out, facing prejudices and so on, sometimes we are insecure in our life’s purpose or cheating on our spouse, just like anyone else of any sexual orientation or identity.”

The group, therefore, sought to portray the mundane, everyday struggles of Sara’s life and in doing so provide a more nuanced take on the queer female experience. And as a woman-led collective with a high percentage of queer members, this was certainly their story to tell.

“It was important to us from the beginning that Sara was someone everyone could see themselves in, in a way, but that she would be a flawed person who makes mistakes. [She] doesn’t always do the right thing—rarely even—but she tries,” director Júlíagrétta Einarsdóttir says. “Sara is just like so many European young adults. She has everything in a way: a well-paid job, a great group of friends and a girlfriend who cares for her… [But] Sara starts realising that there’s something missing in the relationship that causes an empty space within herself. She cheats on her girlfriend with someone who is exciting and excited about a part of her that Sara has been hiding from the world and herself.”

“In the end it’s not the world she needs to face, but her own demons, passions and struggles to find happiness,” Júlíagrétta continues. “Sara is clumsy, selfish, funny and adorable and I love her.”
Through almost 100 albums over a span of 10 years, Möller Records has delivered cutting-edge premium electronic music to a market of just around 360,000 people. Arni Grettar, or Futuregrapher as he calls himself, compares the survival of the label to how people get wedded with golf and then just do it all the time forever. Pure resilience, he explains.

We couldn’t meet with Arni Grettar in person because of COVID-19 so we decided to talk together for three days through email about Möller Records’ upcoming anniversary and tenth release, which they are currently crowdfunding through Karolína Fund. Here is that unfiltered email conversation.

valur@grapevine.is

Now then, you started Möller records a decade ago in the turmoil of Iceland’s total financial collapse, a decade before the worst pandemic outbreak in the last 100 years and, during all that, there’s been an incredible global surge of populism, fascist ideology and just overall political insanity. How the hell have you survived all of this as a small electro-indie label in Iceland?

I would like to think that staying out of politics and what others are doing around you has helped quite a bit. And what has helped a small label like Möller to stay alive and to grow is the drive from the inside—because if we look into the whole electronic scene here in Iceland, then it’s quite big if you compare it to other countries. We have many artists and a lot of labels who are doing great here. And the music is getting around globally—thankfully—and that is first and foremost because of the quality. Lastly, I would like to say that all good things come out of passion and love—and we got that here. And Frosti (Bistro Boy) has held this together very nicely the last few years. He is the Obi-Wan and has the best ear. I started this with Jóhann (Skurken) only to release music—so you get weirdly obsessed with golf and then just do it all the time forever. Pure resilience, he explains.

ag@mollerrecords.com

Tell me more about this project about the hundredth album you are crowdfunding for? What artist will they be? What do they get their collected royalties from? What do they get their collected royalties from? What do they get their collected royalties from? What do they get their collected royalties from?

The 21st Century

Möller Records turns 10 years old

We couldn’t meet with Arni Grettar in person because of COVID-19 so we decided to talk together for three days through email about Möller Records’ upcoming anniversary and tenth release, which they are currently crowdfunding through Karolína Fund. Here is that unfiltered email conversation.

valur@grapevine.is

So what’s your saying is that you are technically on another planet, where you have nothing less than Techno-Jedis? Makes sense actually. But it’s true what you say, the scene here is quite strong in electronic music. Why is that? Does the Icelandic scene have a unique sound? And I can’t help wondering—what Jedi or space creature would Futuregrapher be?

ag@mollerrecords.com

Maybe we are... far, far away in another galaxy. But yeah, if you look at it, we have such a strong scene. I think it is because it starts from digging yourself out of something. And Icelanders are good at that, right?

You get a drum machine, you get a synth and you try to make it work. And in the meantime there is really bad weather outside—windy and cold—and so you just stay inside until you have mastered the craft.

The Icelandic scene has a bit of a brilliance in it all and is very experimental. We have great talents in all genres of the electronica world, but to me, there is a great soundtrack to them all. That cold, windy stuff... yet beautiful.

I am a Han Solo type. The Jedis are the likes of Bistro Boy, Skurken, Ruxpin and such.

valur@grapevine.is

Talking about cold, windy stuff. How the hell has Möller records managed to release 99 albums? Have you not slept for a decade? And what was the hardest one to get out or the most memorable (you have to choose one biz story here)?

ag@mollerrecords.com

Well, it takes hard dedication to do pretty much nothing else than focusing on music. Which I do pretty much myself, [as do] Frosti and the people around us. We are just those kinds of people. Some people play golf—we do this. The first releases were mastered by Jóhann (Skurken) and then I took over in some projects and for the last few years Frosti has been managing this with pride. Not every release is physical, so that helps. But still a lot of work. But we like it. The hardest one to put out at first was probably my first solo album as Futuregrapher which was entitled “LP” and came out in 2012 (Helga012). It was supposed to be one of the first releases, but I was still drinking at the time and partying so it always got postponed. But after many sleepless nights—literally—it finally came out in August and I sobered up and have been sober ever since.

Also me and Jóhann were good friends with Bjössi Biogen who was also my mentor in the biz. We were talking about putting out an album with stuff from him. He was excited and we were stoked. But he said goodbye before that happened. We still miss him and I will always love him. Möller wouldn’t have happened without him, because I met Skurken through Bjössi at a Weirdcore event at Jacobsen many moons ago.

ag@mollerrecords.com

We have to talk about money. I’m truly sorry, everybody hates it but needs it at the same time. How does one finance such an underground label in such a niche market? Is an electro musician perhaps the poet of the 21st century, always broke but full of wonderful ideas?

ag@mollerrecords.com

Haha, I like that. Poets of the 21st century is one that said. There is little or like no money in this business. That’s why we all have day jobs. Like I said, to us... it is like golf. A hobby. We try to be good at it, for sure, but we aren’t working professionals. Some might think we don’t take it seriously then, but the beauty is in the eye of the beholder. This is what makes us happy.

We have always kept a policy at Möller Records that the artists own the rights to their songs and if they want to do physical copies of their releases, then the artist themselves will pay for it and get all the money for those sales themselves. We help them to make it happen and point them to the right direction. But mainly we are focusing on Spotify, handcamp and the digital venues. Many artists on the label also have got some help financially in making their physical copies from applying for national grants or to make it happen via Karolína Fund (like we are doing now).

And because the artists own their songs they get their collected royalties via Stef or another collecting society. Möller is kinda like an umbrella over the artists who are releasing here.

valur@grapevine.is

Tell me more about this project about the hundredth album you are crowdfunding for? What artist will be on it, and how has the older stuff aged?

germammadison.com

This is basically music from most of the artists that have been releasing on Möller for the past 10 years and will be available in double LP—which will be four albums in total. Bistro Boy, EinarIndra, Skurken, Futuregrapher, Steve Sampling, Tanya & Marlon, Ólafur Kinder,合唱家, Futuregrapher, Steve Sampling, Tanya & Marlon, Róbert Subminimal, Gunnar Jónsson Collinder, Fu Kaisha and many more will be on it. We are working on the final arrangements, so the tracklist isn’t 100% ready, but it will be a great spotlight on all those years and great compilation. The older stuff has aged really well and the first few albums on Möller got a lot of praise and were critically acclaimed.

Listening back to the catalog is great and some of the first albums are in my opinion very, very good. It will be a great addition to the collection for any electronica fan.

Emails have been edited for formatting.

This is the first project of the 21st century, all the other stuff is from before. It’s a Solo album and Möller for the past 10 years and will be available in double LP—which will be four albums in total. Bistro Boy, EinarIndra, Skurken, Futuregrapher, Steve Sampling, Tanya & Marlon, Róbert Subminimal, Gunnar Jónsson Collinder, Fu Kaisha and many more will be on it. We are working on the final arrangements, so the tracklist isn’t 100% ready, but it will be a great spotlight on all those years and great compilation. The older stuff has aged really well and the first few albums on Möller got a lot of praise and were critically acclaimed.

Listening back to the catalog is great and some of the first albums are in my opinion very, very good. It will be a great addition to the collection for any electronica fan.

Emails have been edited for formatting.
ICELANDIC SEAFOOD
makes world’s best sushi

The best of Icelandic produce with a nod to Japan and South America. Modern Icelandic flavours, share plates and award winning cocktails.

Our kitchen is open
17.00–23.00 Fri.–Sat.
17.00–22.00 Sun.–Thu.

ICELANDIC SEAFOOD
makes world’s best sushi

Our kitchen is open
17.00–23.00 Fri.–Sat.
17.00–22.00 Sun.–Thu.

Our kitchen is open
17.00–23.00 Fri.–Sat.
17.00–22.00 Sun.–Thu.

SUSHI SOCIAL
Sushi Social
Binghóllstræti 5 • 101 Reykjavík
Tel. 568 6600 • sushi@social.is

SOCIALIZE WITH THE LOCALS

‘Inspector Spacetime’
By Inspector Spacetime

Space is really the most dramatic location for a dance party

Words: Hannah Jane Cohen  Photos: Art Bicnick

Track By Track

Check out Inspector Spacetime on all streaming platforms.

Dance-lovers Inspector Spacetime— Egill Gaasi Sigurjósson, Vaka Agnaradottir and Elías Gátar Öskarsson—walk us through their debut effort track by track.

Intro

The simplest track on the album is the silliest at the same time. The sample at the beginning is the origin of the band’s name, which is from ‘Community.’ This summer we basically only spoke in ‘Community’ references, which was very annoying for almost everyone involved—except for us, of course.

The intro was based on this goofy baseline. It’s very simple and fun, which was convenient because Elías accidentally deleted the whole album this summer. So we had to remake everything and it actually sounds a lot better now.

Do deleting everything was maybe a blessing in disguise!

Dansa og bánsa

This is probably the most energetic tune on the album. It’s definitely the happiest one. We made it on the first day we officially created the band and just kept throwing vocals on and creating huge choruses of funniness. The lyrics are basically “I like to dance and bounce and dance and bounce” so it’s basically a song for children. All our songs are basically songs for children. We make songs to help children practise their grammar. We try to give back, you know?

When we had nearly finished it, we thought it needed something a little more extravagant so we decided on a flute solo. We wrote one and showed it to our flute-playing best friend and apparently, it was just impossible to play—just the worst notes you could possibly play on flute! So she helped make it not so disgusting and now we love this fun, fantasy-disco song.

Teppavirki

“Teppavirki” means “Blanket Fort.” It’s definitely a lyrical miracle. Our original concept was a love song about blanket forts because they are so cute and soft and comfy and cozy. It’s a bit dramatic but many people have made their own meanings of it, which we love.

Litta míga

This U.K. garage track follows every rule of pop music. Verse, chorus, verse, chorus, bridge, breakdown and then final chorus. We should have had a key change, but there are some extra special harmonies on the last chorus, so that adds something. Still, the lack of a key change is a huge regret of ours in this juicy, cheesy pop song.

“Bloop de bloop de bloop” sample is our friend Finnur and sample at the beginning is our friend Finnur and sample is our friend Finnur and the “bloop de bloop de bloop” sample is our friend Finnur and the “bloop de bloop de bloop” sample is our friend Finnur and the “bloop de bloop de bloop” sample is our friend Finnur and the “bloop de bloop de bloop” sample is our friend Finnur and the “bloop de bloop de bloop” sample is our friend Finnur and the “bloop de bloop de bloop” sample is our friend Finnur and the “bloop de bloop de bloop” sample is our friend Finnur.

Inspector Spacetime

The “bloop de bloop de bloop” sample is our friend Finnur and was recorded at a pool party for the freshman at our school. We tried to put it in as a joke and it just fit the vibe of the song—a little too well actually.

Bósi ljósár

Bósi ljósár – Buzz Lightyear! In this song, Inspector Spacetime and Buzz Lightyear have a passionate love affair. But then Buzz goes back to space. He takes the kids, the dogs—it’s a very messy, horrible divorce, leaving the Inspector heartbroken. It’s deep, dramatic stuff. We’re getting into real troubles here—the nitty-gritty of modern-day relationships—in space of all places, which is really the most dramatic place to have a love affair.

Head um or

We are so nostalgic for this song that it’s kind of embarrassing. It feels like years since we released it but it’s only been like six months.

We like our house tunes and if you are going to dance and bounce, you need a house song, so we made one and thought it’d be the perfect first single. A safe, solid house track. It’s always good to drop a safe song first so you don’t get judged. We at Inspector Spacetime are—say it with me—afraid of being judged! Definitely.

Inspector Spacetime

The titular track. Two words. Inspector Spacetime.

We love drum and bass so we had to have a drum and bass song. It’s a simple song and the one where we show our tough side. We are not to be messed with on this track! No, the claws are coming out, buck! That’s definitely the vibe we try to give out. We are, as we said earlier, afraid of being judged but also don’t mess with us… because we WILL be afraid! That’s an important message and one I think we are very successful at conveying on this album.

Music

The Reykjavík Grapevine
Issue 01—2021

Reading for the 8-7 Dimensionizer

Bósi ljósár

Bósi ljósár – Buzz Lightyear! In this song, Inspector Spacetime and Buzz Lightyear have a passionate love affair. But then Buzz goes back to space. He takes the kids, the dogs—it’s a very messy, horrible divorce, leaving the Inspector heartbroken. It’s deep, dramatic stuff. We’re getting into real troubles here—the nitty-gritty of modern-day relationships—in space of all places, which is really the most dramatic place to have a love affair.

Head um or

We are so nostalgic for this song that it’s kind of embarrassing. It feels like years since we released it but it’s only been like six months.

We like our house tunes and if you are going to dance and bounce, you need a house song, so we made one and thought it’d be the perfect first single. A safe, solid house track. It’s always good to drop a safe song first so you don’t get judged. We at Inspector Spacetime are—say it with me—afraid of being judged! Definitely.

Inspector Spacetime

The titular track. Two words. Inspector Spacetime.

We love drum and bass so we had to have a drum and bass song. It’s a simple song and the one where we show our tough side. We are not to be messed with on this track! No, the claws are coming out, buck! That’s definitely the vibe we try to give out. We are, as we said earlier, afraid of being judged but also don’t mess with us… because we WILL be afraid! That’s an important message and one I think we are very successful at conveying on this album.
Cheap Food

Cheap Food
ISK–Vegan option
toppings -1,000
pizza with 3
Medium Sized
Tuesdays–All day
Dominos
Every day from
14:00 to 20:00
Bir 500 ISK,
Wine 750 ISK,
Cocktails 1,200
IK
SUPEIRBARN
Every day from
15:00 to 18:00
Bir 500 ISK,
Wine 750 ISK,
Cocktails 1,200
IK
SPÁRSKIR BARIN
Every day from
14:00 to 20:00
Bir 650 ISK,
Wine 745 ISK,
Half-priced
cocktails.
SÓLÖN
Every day from
15:00 to 18:00
Bir 800 ISK,
Wine 800 ISK,
SUSHI SOCIAL
Every day from
17:00 to 18:00
Bir 645 ISK,
Wine 745 ISK,
Sónica
Every day from
14:00 to 19:00
Bir 550 ISK,
Wine 720 ISK,
Vínbúðin have
many locations

Cheap Food

Cheap Food
ISK–Vegan option
toppings -1,000
pizza with 3
Medium Sized
Tuesdays–All day
Dominos
Every day from
14:00 to 20:00
Bir 500 ISK,
Wine 750 ISK,
Cocktails 1,200
IK
SUPEIRBARN
Every day from
15:00 to 18:00
Bir 500 ISK,
Wine 750 ISK,
Cocktails 1,200
IK
SPÁRSKIR BARIN
Every day from
14:00 to 20:00
Bir 650 ISK,
Wine 745 ISK,
Half-priced
cocktails.
SÓLÖN
Every day from
15:00 to 18:00
Bir 800 ISK,
Wine 800 ISK,
SUSHI SOCIAL
Every day from
17:00 to 18:00
Bir 645 ISK,
Wine 745 ISK,
Sónica
Every day from
14:00 to 19:00
Bir 550 ISK,
Wine 720 ISK,
Vínbúðin have
many locations

Cheap Food

Cheap Food
ISK–Vegan option
toppings -1,000
pizza with 3
Medium Sized
Tuesdays–All day
Dominos
Every day from
14:00 to 20:00
Bir 500 ISK,
Wine 750 ISK,
Cocktails 1,200
IK
SUPEIRBARN
Every day from
15:00 to 18:00
Bir 500 ISK,
Wine 750 ISK,
Cocktails 1,200
IK
SPÁRSKIR BARIN
Every day from
14:00 to 20:00
Bir 650 ISK,
Wine 745 ISK,
Half-priced
cocktails.
SÓLÖN
Every day from
15:00 to 18:00
Bir 800 ISK,
Wine 800 ISK,
SUSHI SOCIAL
Every day from
17:00 to 18:00
Bir 645 ISK,
Wine 745 ISK,
Sónica
Every day from
14:00 to 19:00
Bir 550 ISK,
Wine 720 ISK,
Vínbúðin have
many locations

Cheap Food

Cheap Food
ISK–Vegan option
toppings -1,000
pizza with 3
Medium Sized
Tuesdays–All day
Dominos
Every day from
14:00 to 20:00
Bir 500 ISK,
Wine 750 ISK,
Cocktails 1,200
IK
SUPEIRBARN
Every day from
15:00 to 18:00
Bir 500 ISK,
Wine 750 ISK,
Cocktails 1,200
IK
SPÁRSKIR BARIN
Every day from
14:00 to 20:00
Bir 650 ISK,
Wine 745 ISK,
Half-priced
cocktails.
SÓLÖN
Every day from
15:00 to 18:00
Bir 800 ISK,
Wine 800 ISK,
SUSHI SOCIAL
Every day from
17:00 to 18:00
Bir 645 ISK,
Wine 745 ISK,
Sónica
Every day from
14:00 to 19:00
Bir 550 ISK,
Wine 720 ISK,
Vínbúðin have
many locations

Cheap Food

Cheap Food
ISK–Vegan option
toppings -1,000
pizza with 3
Medium Sized
Tuesdays–All day
Dominos
Every day from
14:00 to 20:00
Bir 500 ISK,
Wine 750 ISK,
Cocktails 1,200
IK
SUPEIRBARN
Every day from
15:00 to 18:00
Bir 500 ISK,
Wine 750 ISK,
Cocktails 1,200
IK
SPÁRSKIR BARIN
Every day from
14:00 to 20:00
Bir 650 ISK,
Wine 745 ISK,
Half-priced
cocktails.
SÓLÖN
Every day from
15:00 to 18:00
Bir 800 ISK,
Wine 800 ISK,
SUSHI SOCIAL
Every day from
17:00 to 18:00
Bir 645 ISK,
Wine 745 ISK,
Sónica
Every day from
14:00 to 19:00
Bir 550 ISK,
Wine 720 ISK,
Vínbúðin have
many locations

Cheap Food

Cheap Food
ISK–Vegan option
toppings -1,000
pizza with 3
Medium Sized
Tuesdays–All day
Dominos
Every day from
14:00 to 20:00
Bir 500 ISK,
Wine 750 ISK,
Cocktails 1,200
IK
SUPEIRBARN
Every day from
15:00 to 18:00
Bir 500 ISK,
Wine 750 ISK,
Cocktails 1,200
IK
SPÁRSKIR BARIN
Every day from
14:00 to 20:00
Bir 650 ISK,
Wine 745 ISK,
Half-priced
cocktails.
SÓLÖN
Every day from
15:00 to 18:00
Bir 800 ISK,
Wine 800 ISK,
SUSHI SOCIAL
Every day from
17:00 to 18:00
Bir 645 ISK,
Wine 745 ISK,
Sónica
Every day from
14:00 to 19:00
Bir 550 ISK,
Wine 720 ISK,
Vínbúðin have
many locations

Cheap Food

Cheap Food
ISK–Vegan option
toppings -1,000
pizza with 3
Medium Sized
Tuesdays–All day
Dominos
Every day from
14:00 to 20:00
Bir 500 ISK,
Wine 750 ISK,
Cocktails 1,200
IK
SUPEIRBARN
Every day from
15:00 to 18:00
Bir 500 ISK,
Wine 750 ISK,
Cocktails 1,200
IK
SPÁRSKIR BARIN
Every day from
14:00 to 20:00
Bir 650 ISK,
Wine 745 ISK,
Half-priced
cocktails.
SÓLÖN
Every day from
15:00 to 18:00
Bir 800 ISK,
Wine 800 ISK,
SUSHI SOCIAL
Every day from
17:00 to 18:00
Bir 645 ISK,
Wine 745 ISK,
Sónica
Every day from
14:00 to 19:00
Bir 550 ISK,
Wine 720 ISK,
Vínbúðin have
many locations

Cheap Food

Cheap Food
ISK–Vegan option
toppings -1,000
pizza with 3
Medium Sized
Tuesdays–All day
Dominos
Every day from
14:00 to 20:00
Bir 500 ISK,
Wine 750 ISK,
Cocktails 1,200
IK
SUPEIRBARN
Every day from
15:00 to 18:00
Bir 500 ISK,
Wine 750 ISK,
Cocktails 1,200
IK
SPÁRSKIR BARIN
Every day from
14:00 to 20:00
Bir 650 ISK,
Wine 745 ISK,
Half-priced
cocktails.
SÓLÖN
Every day from
15:00 to 18:00
Bir 800 ISK,
Wine 800 ISK,
SUSHI SOCIAL
Every day from
17:00 to 18:00
Bir 645 ISK,
Wine 745 ISK,
Sónica
Every day from
14:00 to 19:00
Bir 550 ISK,
Wine 720 ISK,
In Iceland, you can be sure that two things happen every year in January: bad weather and the Icelandic Book Prize. 2021 is no different, although this iteration of the Iceland Book Prize is an annual Grapevine parlour game—the sole purpose of which is to let you in on what’s new in literature these days. That said, only one of these books has been translated to English.

So, here are the contestants for the Icelandic Book Prize, who we will think will win and who we think should win. Just keep in mind that last year, we didn’t predict a single winner correctly, so just assume we’re full of it. In fact, if you’re an author, maybe you should hope we don’t choose you.

Fiction

Critics have said that this wasn’t a particularly lively Christmas book season, but 2020 did bring us some pretty strong fiction. The buzziest buzz was around Olaður Jóhann Ölafsson’s ‘Snerting’—One Station Away—is available in English translation—which was the most sold book this year at the biggest Icelandic bookstores—no small feat considering that 2020 saw a popular release by the Icelandic crime king himself, Arnaldur Indriðason. Anyway, it seems to be the general consensus that ‘Snerting’ is not only well-written, but powerful in a quiet way. That said, it might be a little too quiet for some readers, but Olaður Jóhann is no doubt a frontrunner here. In 2019, he received the prize for his short story collection ‘Áldin-gupurrina’ (‘Valentines’) so this could be his moment to win the big award.

‘Snerting’ would be a no-contest winner if it wasn’t for the widely-loved and adored Aubur Aur Ólafsson’s ‘Dýralíf’—Life Of Animals. Aubur kind of snuck through the backdoor of the world of Icelandic literature. She is wildly famous in France and was nominated for the Nordic Council Book Prize in 2009 for her novel ‘Alþegjãrinn’ (‘The Greenhouse’). But she wasn’t nominated for the Icelandic Book Prize that year. Her sales in Iceland were actually quite low compared to her acclaim abroad, which perhaps explains her absence from the list, but the snub was still a scandal. Aubur didn’t really find fame here in Iceland until she won the Nordic Council Book Prize in 2016 for her book ‘Or’ (‘Hotel Silence’), for which she was also awarded the Icelandic Book Prize that year. She could easily take it again this year. But there is another option—a larger-than-life bohemian genius who could also grab the gold. Elísabet Amelía og Ættbrókin, which is not translated into English for normal mystery novels. Other authors, so she’s not our top prediction, but who do we think is going to win? ‘Honour Sem Kjós – oldar-saga’ or ‘Women That Vote’ by Erla Hulda Haldorsdóttir, Kristín Nava Tomasdóttir, Ragnarður Kristjánsson and Poggerður H. Þorvaldsdóttir. This work is a culmination of years of academic research on the struggle for gender equality for over a hundred years. It also takes a look at the political and cultural sides of gender studies in Iceland.

Non-Fiction

Honesty, we won’t go as deep into the non-fiction category. It’d be an article in itself and unfortunately, these books tend to be not translated into English for some reason. That said, our favourite is ‘Fuglirn sem gat ekki flögri’ or in English, ‘The Bird That Couldn’t Fly’ by Gísli Pálsson. The book delves into the history of the wonderful, weird great auk, which went extinct around 1900. The book does have a twist though—as much as a non-fiction book can—when it shifts its focus to the extinction of animals in Iceland in the face of global warming.

That said, there is a rule though when looking at literature in Iceland and that is never underestimate the up-and-coming writers. Jonas Reynir Gunnarsson as well as Arnalds Pórarinsdóttir are two young and incredibly talented nominess. Jonas Reynir has a serious contribution with his novel ‘Dauði Skágar’ (Death Of A Forest) and is a name you should memorise. He could definitely take the awards unexpectedly—deservingly so. Arnalds, meanwhile, is the poet of the year. Every year, there is always one at the Icelandic Book Prize and unfortunately, they never win, which always raises the question if there should be a specific category for poets.

Children’s Books

Icelanders understand that the only way to make a book-loving person is to grab them while they’re young, so the children’s book category is both good and very ambitious every year. Our favourite is of course Lóa Hjálmsjötdóttir, which we readers know very well through her fantastic comics that have graced the pages of our magazine for many years. Her book, ‘Grísafjörður’ (‘The Fjord Of Pigtails’) has Lóas’ characteristic warm sense of humour as well as her fantastic artwork. Call it nepotism, but we favour her when it comes to the best children’s book of the year. And hey—it’s Iceland. When has a little nepotism ever hurt anyone?

Other nominees are Hildur Knútsdóttir for her young adult novel ‘Skógurinn’ (‘The Forest’). She won in 2016 and the panel tends to choose new writers rather than awarding already decorated authors, so she’s not our top prediction. Another new writer, Yrsa Sigurðardóttir, is nominated for her book, ‘Herra Bóbó, Amelia og Ættbrókin’, which is an interesting side project to her normal mystery novels. Other books are ‘Blokkin á heimsenda’ by Arndís Þórarinsdóttir—nominated above for her poetry collection—which she wrote with Hulda Sigrún Bjarnadóttir. There’s also ‘Dulstafir – Dóttir hafsins’ a young adult adventure written by another new writer, Kristín Björg Sigurvinzdóttir. And as we said earlier, never underestimate them. 

We’ve let our whole life savings on these winners.
Logi Þorvaldsson is a film producer.

Wearing:
- Everything is thrifted! Nothing new.
- Vest from Spúútnik
- Shirt is my Dad’s Christmas shirt
- Scarf is vintage Chanel
- Pants are from Samhjálp
- Shoes are Red Cross
- Jewellery from Viðja Jewellery

Describe your style in 5 words:
70s dude. Leather rock-star. Forever-evolving.

Favourite stores in Reykjavík:
All the thrift shops. Hertex, Rauðikrossinn, Spúútnik and Waste-land, but my all-time favourite is Samhjálp. That’s a hidden gem.

Favourite piece:
This Viðja jewellery gold dragon necklace—it’s my favourite piece ever. It’s custom-made so there’s only one in the world and it’s by an Icelandic designer. I also recently bought these leather Versace pants in London, where I live, but when I came to Iceland this year, I thought I was only going to be here for a month so I left them behind. But now I’ve been there for six months and I’ve thought about them every day.

Something I would never wear:
H&M. Fast fashion is horrible.

Lusting after:
I’m craving something Dior. The dream would be a proper full-on Dior suit, but I’ve also been eyeing some sporty vintage 90s Dior sunglasses. I’ve been scouring only vintage sites.

---

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

---

Icelandic Delicacies

Must try dishes

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

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

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

THE LAMB BURGER
Bacon, mushroom & date duxelle, pickled red onions, pickled cucumber, radish, smoked cheese, fries

SKYR ETON MESS CHEESECAKE
White chocolate “Skyr” mousse, meringue, raspberries, raspberry sauce
Restaurants Reshaping In The Midst Of The Crisis

How restaurants in Iceland are surviving in these volatile times

Words: Shruthi Basappa Photos: Art Bicnick

“You smear the butter all over the dosa,” my Dad demonstrates. “Like this,” he says, as he tenderly traces the masala dosa with a blob of white butter. I watch, mesmerised, as the fat glistens and disappears, leaving a milky streak behind, glossing the already lacquered dosa with a fresh sheen of fat. I’m about six or eight years old and we are at one of many popular ‘darshinis’ in Bangalore—fast food joints that are ironically named as most of the menu is a tribute to dishes that are laborious and notorious to make. My normally impatient father slows down here. How to eat a dosa is a secret shared; a little bridge between us. I understood even then that going out to eat is special. There is an air of generosity in restaurants, a magical slowing of time and it touches everyone in it. And I felt lucky to be in on the secret.

As I’ve grown older, I’ve continued to enjoy dining out just as I did so long ago as a child. So much so that I have made a career out of it. Restaurants still hold all the magic of Neverland for me. Where your only responsibility is enjoyment while the hubbub of regular life thrums away ceaselessly outside its doors. It is its own spectacular bubble. Everything’s better when dining out. Be it at starred restaurants taking you on a culinary adventure spanning textures, flavours and ingredients or bustling street side joints where smoke singed plates of sizzling deliciousness make mundane evenings memorable.

But the pandemic changed everything. Almost overnight, restaurants had to turn their entire operating principle on its head. For an industry that was just starting to come to terms with the latest union negotiations, gathering restrictions seemed to be another nail in the coffin. Tourist footfalls form a large bulk of business for the F&B industry and subsequent relief measures seemed to be another nail in the coffin. Tourist footfalls form a large bulk of business for the F&B industry and subsequent relief measures seemed to be another nail in the coffin. But as infection rates go down and restrictions lift, I am fervently hoping that chefs are ready to flex those creative muscles and reward us with an unbridled explosion of palate-singeing fireworks.

How Iceland is reshaping

Iceland, for all its reputation of being expensive has successfully catered to various budgets, the 1500ISK sad sandwich notwithstanding. Travellers have made exclusive plans just to dine at Dill, Iceland’s only Michelin starred restaurant, and waiting lists are the norm at Ox, an exclusive intimate chef’s table experience. It isn’t an exaggeration to say that a taste of local produce and pristine Nordic cooking has been its own draw.

Pandemic food trends

Accessible menus

“If people cannot come to the food, then the food will come to the people,” seemed to be the mantra in those early days of the pandemic. Recreating the restaurant experience at home seems straightforward but it is not without its own challenges. Chefs had to be quick footed and adapt dishes that would travel well, reheat well and in many instances, make their food accessible and bridge generations. While this served well in the early days of the pandemic, it quickly proved to be a stop-gap solution. Dine-in menus too reflected a shift; there has never been an influx of ‘safe menus’ as in 2020. But as infection rates go down and restrictions lift, there has never been an influx of ‘safe menus’ as in 2020. But as infection rates go down and restrictions lift, chefs are ready to flex those creative muscles and reward us with an unbridled explosion of palate-singeing fireworks.
Food

Digital and delivery innovation

For a small country, Iceland can be painfully slow to adapt to change. Globally, third-party platforms surged ahead leaving restaurants overwhelmed with deliveries. The absence of a robust delivery infrastructure here is telling. Both restaurant self-delivery and digital platforms need an overhaul (early adopter Fönix has done notably well in this aspect). Customers have moved their lives indoors and online and this would be a positive for the industry. Meanwhile, we can continue to enjoy the discounts offered on take-aways to take away the sting of navigating cumbersome websites.

Seasonal restaurants

It is easy to forget that Reykjavik isn’t Iceland. The loss of tourism has hit places outside the capital deeply. Reliant on both foreign labour and footfalls, many like Fisherman’s in Suburbryi completely shut shop for the foreseeable future. While the success of ‘ferðum innanlands’ brightened the summer, it was quickly overshadowed by rising infections that followed. What this summer will bring remains to be seen. Veterans like Slippurinn and Norðaustur are tangible cultural treasures that need to be protected.

Pop-ups and locals

In Reykjavík, restaurants outside the capital area proved successful with their local clientele. They also became mobile. Deig travelled around Iceland with their baked goods. Fine opened a take-away only window in Hafnarfjörður and, quelling rumours of a closure, have opened their doors again on Rauðarárstígur.

Alcohol reform

Guessing the alcohol tax would make for a great drinking game if only it weren’t so steep. Cooped up at home with people you may or may not like are conditions ripe to drown one’s miseries and no amount of tax was deemed too steep to tide over the pandemic. Unsurprisingly, alcohol consumption was through the roof in 2020. While monopoly is our mantra second only to ‘þetta reddast’, the relationship with alcohol here is a curious one. Indeed. You can only buy alcohol from state-owned stores. You cannot buy alcohol online locally. It is illegal. One can shop for spirits from international stores. That is legal. We’ve been through enough, just lower the taxes, allow restaurants and wine bars to sell alcohol online and usher in modern reform already.

Cloud kitchens

At the peak of the pandemic, while the rest of the world seemed to be baking, we were busy pickling. Granted, one couldn’t turn a corner in their kitchen without a sour-dough starter staring them in the face, but kimchi kitchens seemed to mushroom everywhere and so-called medias pages were hotbeds of activity (Veterans like Slippurinn regularly extended its reach, birthing an off-shoot burger joint that turned into a gourmet delicatessen. Folks from Mat Bar and Makake joined hands and brought us Dragon Dinsum, a six-week pop-up that proved so successful that it is now a steady fixture. The 106-seater Skelfisk-bar-café has successfully been turned into street food hall, Götumarkaðurinn. Gandhi is now an Indian-ish lounge bar at a new location and Chickpea at Hallgrímskirkja is keeping the vegetarian high-street food flag high.

Natural wine bar Mikki Refur, which has been quietly plying us with bubbles and soup from none other than chef Gunnar Karl, will offer wine-paired pop-ups in 2021. The bad boys of Vinsælikinn Tiu Sopar are working on a hush-hush restaurant-bar café at the renovated Radisson Blu 1919.

Bottom Line

History is proof that periods of hardship, war and prohibitions are almost always followed by exuberant freewheeling, cue the roaring 20’s and swinging 60’s. The pandemic is changing life in tangible ways. While travel may be a distant reality, adventures are to be had right here, right now, to far away distant lands, to the corners of one’s own land and to see and taste a future yet to be imagined. And it’s yours for the taking at your favourite restaurants.
**WELL, YOU ASKED**

**Go Agrarian, Not Vegetarian**

Words: Jeffree Star & Kanye West

The Grapevine team of amateur astrologists followed all pandemic restrictions over their cosmic New Year’s celebrations. They, along with all 88 constellations, remained light years away from each other while they partied, so you can trust that no fever is adding their minds during these predictions.

**Gemini**

Your landlord is ghosting you for a reason, Gemini. Our spiritual consultants say it’s because you resemble his childhood bully. Sorry.

**Aries**

You’re right! Learning Latin is a great New Year’s Resolution, Cancer. Especially if that one film you watched while drunk is correct and you will one day accidentally stumble upon a time machine and wake up in Rome circa 250 CE. Just kidding—the Latin you’re learning is a mixture of tens centuries worth of language with a modern, ecclesiastical-tradition pronunciation and without a doubt, no one in the empire would understand you. You useless bitch.

**Leo**

What’s the point of life? We know you spend a lot of time mulling over such deep questions, but if we are all going to die in the end, what’s the point? Live in the moment, girl. Stop spending your weekdays dissecting the nature of godliness and spend it Zooming with hotties like the goddess you are. And no, don’t you dare start unpacking the term “golden”.

**Virgo**

Remember that anime phase you had, Virgo? Well, it shouldn’t have been a phase. You messed your fate up the moment you sold your manga, but the gracious planetary bodies are now giving you a moment to rectify it. Here’s your second chance. Don’t blow it.

**Scorpio**

We’re proud that you’ve kept the temperance movement. Oh! It’s time to pump some iron to Five Finger Death Punch. Don’t believe it’s time to make “amends.” Yes, it’s a common misconception and one that’s definitely contributing to the declining rate of communes worldwide. But don’t worry—we got you, you future farming legend.

**Taurus**

Wow! An Apple Watch for Christmas? Groundbreaking. Flex on all your haters by pointing it out at every given moment.

**Capricorn**

None.

**Aquarius**

He it up this year Aquarius. We stan an empowered woman.

**Pisces**

Don’t blow it this year Pisces. In fact, actively not blow it up and loudly judge anyone who does. For more inspiration, check out the temperance movement.

**Sagittarius**

FAME. FORTUNE. LOVE. These are just a few of the blessings you can expect in 2021 if you keep a positive, open mind. ‘The Secret’ who?

**Aries**

When you heard the voices of the cosmos tell you to “go vegetarian” for 2021, you misunderstood. They actually meant “go agrarian.” Yes, it’s a common misconception and one that’s definitely contributing to the declining rate of communes worldwide. But don’t worry—we got you, you future farming legend.

**Leo**

Sit down, Aries. We—along with many dwarf stars—are worried about how many Yummy Mummy blogs you have already consumed in the first week of 2021. It’s not healthy and so we’re going to tell you the hard truth: No one in the empire would understand you. You useless bitch.

**Taurus**

You are white, right? Sim- ple. I’ll find the elevator, you draft the parameters. (You are white, right?) Sim- ple. I’ll find the elevator, you draft the statement. I’m thinking of quitting social me- dia. Convince me otherwise.

Well, first of all, think about Mark Zuckerberg’s kids. How are they gonna feel about you leaving their father with- out even saying goodbye? Second of all, think about all of the people that will not get the chance to listen to your hot takes on the current issue. How will they get throughout the day without being inspired by your deep, intellec- tual thoughts on the world’s problems? And finally, what about us?! How are we gonna reach you? Please email your phone number at least!

For advice, send your quandaries to grapevine@grapevine.is.

**Will 2 Power**

Words: Valur Grettisson

Got a burning question? In desperate need of advice? We at the Grapevine are here to help.

So, I’m really inspired by the coup thing in the US, but I live in Iceland. How exactly would one plan a coup in Reykjavík, I mean, does anyone even have to use a gun to take power?

Best, David.

I’m so glad that you asked, David. I’ve been thinking about this myself. You even have to use a gun to take power? Even have to use a gun to take power? And what’s the best way to keep it? Keep on rocking this week, Libra. And what’s the best way to keep on rocking? Pepper your next texts with rocking emoticons like 😱 or, for more advanced rockers, 😱تحويلاتامدخندلبة. All that’s left is to pump some iron to Five Finger Death Punch.

**Horror-Scopes**

**Go Agrarian, Not Vegetarian**

Words: Jeffree Star & Kanye West

The Grapevine team of amateur astrologists followed all pandemic restrictions over their cosmic New Year’s celebrations. They, along with all 88 constellations, remained light years away from each other while they partied, so you can trust that no fever is adding their minds during these predictions.

**Gemini**

Your landlord is ghosting you for a reason, Gemini. Our spiritual consultants say it’s because you resemble his childhood bully. Sorry.

**Aries**

You’re right! Learning Latin is a great New Year’s Resolution, Cancer. Especially if that one film you watched while drunk is correct and you will one day accidentally stumble upon a time machine and wake up in Rome circa 250 CE. Just kidding—the Latin you’re learning is a mixture of tens centuries worth of language with a modern, ecclesiastical-tradition pronunciation and without a doubt, no one in the empire would understand you. You useless bitch.

**Leo**

What’s the point of life? We know you spend a lot of time mulling over such deep questions, but if we are all going to die in the end, what’s the point? Live in the moment, girl. Stop spending your weekdays dissecting the nature of godliness and spend it Zooming with hotties like the goddess you are. And no, don’t you dare start unpacking the term “golden”.

**Virgo**

Remember that anime phase you had, Virgo? Well, it shouldn’t have been a phase. You messed your fate up the moment you sold your manga, but the gracious planetary bodies are now giving you a moment to rectify it. Here’s your second chance. Don’t blow it.

**Scorpio**

We’re proud that you’ve kept the temperance movement. Oh! It’s time to pump some iron to Five Finger Death Punch. Don’t believe it’s time to make “amends.” Yes, it’s a common misconception and one that’s definitely contributing to the declining rate of communes worldwide. But don’t worry—we got you, you future farming legend.

**Taurus**

Wow! An Apple Watch for Christmas? Groundbreaking. Flex on all your haters by pointing it out at every given moment.

**Capricorn**

None.

**Aquarius**

He it up this year Aquarius. We stan an empowered woman.

**Pisces**

Don’t blow it this year Pisces. In fact, actively not blow it up and loudly judge anyone who does. For more inspiration, check out the temperance movement.

**Sagittarius**

FAME. FORTUNE. LOVE. These are just a few of the blessings you can expect in 2021 if you keep a positive, open mind. ‘The Secret’ who?

**Aries**

When you heard the voices of the cosmos tell you to “go vegetarian” for 2021, you misunderstood. They actually meant “go agrarian.” Yes, it’s a common misconception and one that’s definitely contributing to the declining rate of communes worldwide. But don’t worry—we got you, you future farming legend.

**Leo**

Sit down, Aries. We—along with many dwarf stars—are worried about how many Yummy Mummy blogs you have already consumed in the first week of 2021. It’s not healthy and so we’re going to tell you the hard truth: No one in the empire would understand you. You useless bitch.

**Taurus**

You are white, right? Simple. I’ll find the elevator, you draft the statement. I’m thinking of quitting social media. Convince me otherwise.

Well, first of all, think about Mark Zuckerberg’s kids. How are they gonna feel about you leaving their father without even saying goodbye? Second of all, think about all of the people that will not get the chance to listen to your hot takes on the current issue. How will they get throughout the day without being inspired by your deep, intellectual thoughts on the world’s problems? And finally, what about us?! How are we gonna reach you? Please email your phone number at least!

For advice, send your quandaries to grapevine@grapevine.is.
Hjörleifshöfði is a curious place. At once bleak and majestic, the vast black sands and sweeping panoramas tell ancient and mysterious tales of murder, elves and alien planets.

Hair-raising moments

Named after Hjörleifur Hróðmarsson, the brother of the first Norse settler in Iceland, Ingólfur Arnarson, Hjörleifshöfði was, for a short time, Hjörleifur’s home—until he was brutally murdered by his ill-treated slaves, that is. His burial mound can still be seen at the top of the mountain, along with the graves of later settlers who lived on a farm in the shadows of the mountain. The weather was perfect for the hike up. A popular area with walkers, the path up the inselberg is a relatively simple one—if a little steep—with easy paths winding up to the peak and back down the other side. We set off on our jaunt at about 11 a.m. and, despite a couple of hair-raising moments in which I casually declared I have a heart condition that was playing up and we all genuinely questioned whether or not I’d make it to the top without having a heart attack, the climb was pleasant. We reached the top by noon and were instantly blown away—metaphorically by the views and almost literally by the crazy wind. Sprawling beaches, foaming seas and snow-capped mountains dominate the landscape and, in clear weather, you can see for kilometres. Here we sat for a while, catching our breath and regaining our composure, before heading to Hjörleifshöfði’s famous cave.

Super-skilled Jedi Knights

Heading down the mountain, we pass by the eerie ruins of an old farmstead. Hikers beware, here be elves. Legend has it that hidden folk dwell among these stones, wreaking havoc on those who dare linger. Ever since the time of the settlement, Hjörleifshöfði has been known as a place of mysterious happenings. Many who come here still experience unexplainable things, and are drawn back to the area again and again to try and figure out their cause. Fortunately for us, the only unexplainable thing that happened that day was me making it the entire way without falling on my arse or needing helicopter rescue.

Like many parts of Iceland, Hjörleifshöfði has become film-location famous, posing as the planet Lah’mu in Star Wars: Rogue One. [Editor’s note: Hjörleifshöfði was not featured in the film. Our journalist succumbed to fake space news. Oops! The area wasn’t particularly popular with tourists until the film was released in 2016, but it now welcomes thousands of visitors who long to take a photo on alien sands. The highlight for many is the cave. We were surprised to learn that this cave was, in fact, not one of the reasons this location was chosen for the film—despite the fact it is shaped, rather uncannily, like Yoda. Of course, knowing that we were going to be spending some time here, the ever-prepared Art Bicnick packed some lightsabers allowing Iona and I to enjoy a few moments pretending we were super skilled Jedi Knights.]

While we were keen to get home, we made sure to stop for lunch in Vik. It’s well worth exploring this cute little town on your way to or from Hjörleifshöfði. The black beaches are a must and the view from the church is sure to get you all the Instagram likes. Having been fairly sedentary within the confines of the city lately, the climb was the most exercise we had done in almost three months. We left the south coast behind us and headed back to the city: tired, windswept and glad that there is still plenty of adventure to be had in Iceland. Even in the midst of the pandemic.
“[The album] revolves around the absolute futility of anything. It’s nihilistic but not in the sense that we’re all beat up and sad about it, it’s just a statement of fact.”

The most ungoogleable band in Iceland, Núll, explains the idea behind their album. P18

“It’s always fun to play, of course, but you do miss the element of people in the room because [live music] is nurturing for both the audience and the performer. I see the good in it, but I’m looking forward to when we can play live more.”

Bass wonder Ingibjörg Turchi misses playing live. We all do. P19

Glacier Walks & Ice Climbing
FROM Skaftafell, Vatnajökull N.P.
Book online or call our sales office from 9:00am - 4:00pm
mountainguides.is • info@mountainguides.is • Tel: +354 587 9999