Re-ruption!

News: The headline says it all. It’s going off again.

Magnús Jóhann

Music: The hardest working man in Icelandic showbiz.

Tarot Reading

Culture: Do we even want to know the future?

Skagaströnd

Travel: Ghost town or boom town?

Joint Album Of The Year:

sóley
It’s that time of the year. The Reykjavík Grapevine Music Awards are in the house. After a harsh debate, a brutal fallout between members of the panel and a serious threat of full-blown cultural war, we have come to the conclusion that there was just too far much too much very good music coming out of Iceland this year to keep things civil—a reality reflected in the final list of award recipients. For example, we have two albums of the Year. And those two are perhaps the most revealing when it comes to the past year in music.

On one hand, we have the darkness of sóley’s ‘Mother Melancholia’, which reflects the somber vibe of another COVID year. On the other hand, there’s the light and emotional pop of Ísafélix. That same brightness is delivered by the young styler in Inspector Spacetime—our Artist of the Year—who encourage listeners to dance and bounce. Simple as that. The band has been like a beacon of fun, even in the heaviness of the pandemic. And that is no small feat.

Unintentionally we have established a battle between light and darkness in our award and we are left with the question: Unintentionally we have established a battle between light and darkness in our award and we are left with the question: Where do we want to go from here when it comes not only to music but art in general?

While amazing music continues to be produced, musicians’ earnings have dropped by a staggering 87% since the start of the pandemic. One doesn’t have to have a PhD in anything to realise that this could dramatically change the industry in the coming years. There are many obstacles musicians have faced through the pandemic, but artists have risen through it all to provide sustenance for our pandemic-beaten souls.

Music is not only important for human beings, it’s vital. It reflects us, the times in which we live, and the world around us. We would all do better to remember this simple truth. We hope that we are seeing the end of the pandemic and that the world can unite once again on the dancefloor, singing and bouncing, or going on soul-changing introspective journeys with musicians like sóley.

We hope you like our decision; if not, you can always check our honourable mentions in each category. And if you still feel raw about it, we’ll be waiting.

Happy New Year to all of you.

Valur Grettisson
Editor-in-chief

John Pearson, the Grapevine’s culture editor is a Reykjavík resident with professional backgrounds in live music events, broadcasting, and writing. He is a big fan of photography, is himself unphotographable and under-water photography. We suspect that he just likes to collect job titles. He is a big lover of puns, alliteration and lists that have three things in them.

Arctic, the Grapevine’s video magician and photographer, is himself unphotographable. He is due to the fact that he consists mainly of stars—s a handy characteristic that enables him to float smoothly across rocky mountain terrain, and through apparently solid objects.

Polly is a hard-working journalist by day and an enthusiastic ball-catcher by night. A five-year-old dachshund mix with an IQ of a five-year-old human, Polly is Chief Morale Officer at the Grapevine, and a regular contributor to the Grapevine Newscast on YouTube. Woof!

Johanna Solberg, journalist and YouTube Content Coordinator, is also an arts worker, musician, and writer from the Scottish Highlands. She was once erroneously referred to as the Queen of Scotland by a Malaysian newspaper and has been falsely using that title ever since.

Catharine Fulton is a writer who has been involved with the Grapevine for many years—possibly too many—serving as journalist, food editor, and news editor before settling on copy editor. When not widening her red pen she is often found opening up Canadian politics (professionally), and bitching about Icelandic politics (for fun).

Sharifa Seagap is one of Iceland’s most knowledgeable foodies. She’s covered local restaurants for years and has also been involved in various food competitions in Iceland, such as Food & Fun and more. By day, she works as an architect at Ici Studio.

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

Rasta Nuits is a Finnish student who moved to Iceland to become an au pair, and decided to never fully leave the country. She aspires to become a journalist, and what would be a better place to start than Grapevine? You can probably spot her at Kafla Vast, where she spends most of her free time.

Valur Grettisson is an award-winning journalist, author and playwright. He has been writing for Icelandic media since 2005. He was also a theatre critic and one of the hosts of the cultural program, 69ísvegan, on RÚV. He is not to be confused with the dreadful football club that bears the same name.
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What Are Icelanders Talking About?

The machine must be fed

Words: Andie Sophia Fontaine
Photos: Art Bicnick & John Pearson

January 4th to January 9th, in the face of recommendations from chief epidemiologist Pólitur Gudnason. Not only that, but he also told reporters that it was absolutely crucial to send kids back to school, despite this variant showing particular virulence amongst children. On top of all this, hospitals are already stretched to the limit, but many health care workers have had to go into quarantine or isolation on account of coronavirus infections or the risk of it. All this being the case, we probably shouldn’t expect to get out of this pandemic any time soon.

As the Omicron variant runs rampant across this country, Icelanders were more than a little bit confused by Minister of Health William Pét Ólafsson announcing new pandemic “restrictions” that essentially amounted to little more than slightly lowering the social gathering limit and re-enacting the two-metre rule. This was followed by Minister of Schools and Children’s Affairs Ásmundur Einar Daðason announcing that he was not going to extend the end of winter break for schools from

Fireworks were briefly a hot topic in the run-up to New Year’s Eve. Every year, there were people pointing out how polluting fireworks are, how they frighten animals, and how hazardous they can be in the hands of intoxicated people. Whenever any of these things were pointed out on social media, there was always a cadre of people who baulked at the suggestion of buying fewer or no fireworks, with some vowing to buy even more. Come New Year’s Day, winds mercifully swept the heavy metals and other pollutants away (from us, at least), but already overstretched hospitals reported treating numerous firework-related injuries, and brush fires caused by fireworks cropped across a significant portion of South Iceland.

**News**

You’ve heard of COVID fatigue; now get ready for volcano fatigue. A series of earthquakes near Eiríkajökull that began on December 23rd caught more attention with international readers than it did with the locals. The quakes have since calmed, prompting a number of scientists to compare the situation to the run-up to the eruption last March — without explicitly saying that another eruption is on the way. This news has been greeted with more of a shrug than a shriek, probably due to no small part to the current disaster we have going on in the pandemic, which leads us to...

**Vaccinations**

Vaccinations are back in full swing at Laugardalshöllin one of Reykjavík’s most historical buildings. We specialize in fresh seafood and local ingredients prepared with a modern twist.
The taste of Icelandic lamb is unrivaled. Our pure bred lambs graze free in the pristine wilderness of Iceland, eating luscious green grass, berries and wild herbs such as red clover, Arctic thyme, sedge, willow, thrift and angelica. The end result is a tender fine-textured meat that is both naturally rich in Omega-3 and iron and infused with the flavor of nature. Icelandic lamb is a taste experience beyond compare.

www.icelandiclamb.is
Old Sluts Taking Over

Browsing through RÚV’s website, you come across a headline stating that people in Hrísey and Grímsey are living under a fear of old sluts taking over the islands. Confused, you rub your eyes. Are Iceland’s northern islands overrun by promiscuous geriatrics? As you read through the sentence again, you realize that Google has made a serious error. You are appalled. What a load of crap!

You are wondering what the future of Icelandic looks like. We sought an answer to this question from Eiríkur Rögnvaldsson, professor emeritus in Icelandic Language and Linguistics. Eiríkur tells us that since Icelandic is used in all the domains of society, for example in government and administration, education, media and cultural life, it’s on firm footing in Iceland and should therefore be safe. However, during the last decade, Iceland has gone through dramatic societal and technological changes that have led to a massive increase in the use of the English language in the community, which has in turn increased the external pressure on the Icelandic language.

According to Eiríkur, the survival of Icelandic depends entirely on its users. The language community needs to value Icelandic by raising awareness of its cultural importance. It is also vital to put more effort into teaching Icelandic to immigrants.

If the language community doesn’t continue using Icelandic in all domains of society and teaching it to foreigners, the language might lose its position and become endangered. However, Eiríkur points out that English is not the enemy, and that Icelanders should respect people’s right to speak it if they haven’t learned Icelandic. If the community continues valuing Icelandic, it can have a prosperous future.

Watch Grapevine

ON YouTube
In many languages that have gendered nouns, the sun is often gendered male; this is the case in Latinate languages, for example. However, in many Germanic languages that still retain gendered nouns, (English apparently having moved beyond this concept), the sun is female, and Icelandic is no exception. In fact, to Norse pagans the sun wasn’t just a feminine noun; she was a goddess in her own right: Sól.

Sól had an auspicious beginning. Fathered by Mundilfari, (whose name has the perplexing meaning of “the one moving according to particular times”), along with her brother Máni (which literally means “moon”), it wasn’t her original intention to become a goddess. She was just so beautiful that Mundilfari named her after the sun. This didn’t sit well with certain other gods, who decided to punish Mundilfari by making Sól carry the literal sun in a chariot across the sky. Which, when you think about, doesn’t seem like much of a punishment. She took to the job as if she were made for it. In a way, you could say she was destiny’s child.

But if you’ve ever wondered why time flies so quickly, it’s because Sól is relentlessly pursued by a wolf named Sköll. Like Beyoncé, yes, Sól has a dedicated hater. On occasion, he even catches up with her, which is why we have solar eclipses.

During Ragnarök—a kind of Nordic End Of Times event—Sköll eventually catches Sól and swallows her whole. However, a daughter of Sól, who is reportedly just as beautiful, takes up the crown and continues the sun’s journey again.

The entire myth just shows that you can’t keep a good woman down for long. And if you think you can, well, you must know nothing about her.
he says of his finger-slip, and the subsequent process of "I’m very proud of it! Because we had to do it again, " saw the light of day, due to the fact that Elías accidentally travelled British phone box. We suspect that they d actually set the controls for late-nineties London clubland—their spiritual home—but once it dawns on them that they’ve won our Artist Of The Year award, the trio of energetic young danceheads couldn’t be happier.

“This is a huge honour that I didn’t expect us to have,” says Elías Geir Óskarsson, de facto leader of Inspector Space-time, (only because he’s the one who answers the group’s emails).

“Yeah I was not expecting this either, and I’m really surprised!” Egill Gauti Sigurjónsson chimes in. He formed Inspector Spacetime materialise unexpectedly in the middle of the Grapevine Awards party, and tumble out of their time-travelling British phone box. We suspect that they hadn’t done that, maybe we wouldn’t be here today.”

The world would certainly be musically poorer had Inspector Spacetime never travelled back and changed the past for the better. The album, which finally emerged at the start of 2021, is an energetic, eclectic bounce around all the best touchstones of dance—from the sweet UK two-step of the song “Hitta Mig” to the frenetic drum ’n’ bass of the titular track—and all stops in between.

In a year of firsts and new experiences for Inspector Spacetime, a definite highlight was their biggest gig yet at LungA Festival in Seyðisfjörður. Besides the novelty of being put up in a hotel—and we do hope that they hit that minibar—there was a fog on the bay lending everything a mystical air, and painting the whole site in hues of pink once the sun started setting. It was an all-day celebration of being together, of music and art and dancing, and of accomplishing something together."VG

Best concert: Rave in the time of COVID-19

2021 was nothing less than a rollercoaster ride for anyone trying to organise a party or, god forbid, a concert. Countless events were cancelled due to COVID-19 and many had to change their settings to adjust to whatever the rules were at the time. But one party, one concert, was a smash hit: the rave. BUXUR (simply means pants) at the artist-run space Fúsk.

A group of artists, and even an international techno star, were the brains behind the operation held last summer in Guftunes. Among them were Elsa Jónsdóttir, one of two artists in the art gang called Krot&Krass, and Atli Bollason, a visual artist and sometime musician.

“Well, we wanted to have some kind of an opening party,” Elsa explained when asked about the thought process behind the rave that attracted hundreds of partiers. “It's a great title to have,” says Vaka, “and I love that people love us!”

With one remarkable album, a couple of great videos and twelve months of unmissable high-energy gigs under their belt, Inspector Spacetime have earned the accolade of winning the world’s most unmissable high-energy gig under their belt, Inspector Spacetime have earned the accolade of winning the world’s most unmissable high-energy gig under their belt, a de facto leader of Inspector Space-time, (only because he’s the one who answers the group’s emails).
’Mother Melancholia’ is a dark, deep exploration into the feeling of the end of the world, imminent death and destruction, as well as the complexity of a feminist riot surging within the heart of a woman. This is an unusually visceral album, almost like a film without the film. It also shows incredible depth within Sóley as a musician. In some ways, she says that she has broken free from the box that she had built around herself the last decade, intentionally or not.

“After I finished my record deal with my publisher, I felt like I had a new sense of freedom. This is not to be understood like I had any problems with my record company or other albums, but in some sense, being without a record company, freed me from the pressure of the music industry,” she explains. “I was starting to find myself in a box that wasn’t right for me. Perhaps it’s this feeling that you have to please the invisible listener, the one you think is there, sitting on the other side of the screen, listening and judging what is right and wrong in art. But then I reminded myself to never underestimate the listener. It’s really interesting how the music industry can be helpful in some ways, but also destructive in others,” she explains.

The result of her newfound freedom is ‘Mother Melancholia’, an album that is dark, haunting, slow and, most of all, without compromise. Asked about this, Sóley laughs: “Well, I wasn’t trying to make a difficult album to listen to.” And she is absolutely right, because there is a beautiful ethereal atmosphere above all the dark tones, like a colourful sky in the winter darkness.

“I’m scared shitless when it comes to death,” she says, “and that’s the spark for this album. The album is also born from my obsessive interest in movies. The title itself is a homage to the two movies, ‘Mother!’ and ‘Melancholia’.” That’s when I found some connection in the album and the feeling that I had within myself.

She says that the movies inspired her to ponder the complexity of Earth, God, the end of the world. And being a woman, “I found some feminist riot within myself, a strong feeling I want to work more with,” she explains. Soley self-published the album, a process she says was a feeling I want to work more with, “she explains. “I was starting to find myself in a box that wasn’t right for me. Perhaps it’s this feeling that you have to please the invisible listener, the one you think is there, sitting on the other side of the screen, listening and judging what is right and wrong in art. But then I reminded myself to never underestimate the listener. It’s really interesting how the music industry can be helpful in some ways, but also destructive in others,” she explains.

Sóley self-published the album, a process she says was a tough learning experience, but one that saw her grow as a person and an artist. Asked if she was afraid that her new learning experience, but one that saw her grow as a musician. In some ways, she says that she has broken free from the box that she had built around herself the last decade, intentionally or not.

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“ONE TO WATCH: SUCKS TO BE YOU, NIGEL

“The name is kind of just, nonsense,” says Krummi Ólafsson, one of the founders of the grassroots punk band, Sucks to be you, Nigel. The Reykjavík Grapevine Music Awards panel chose the band as one of two artists to watch this year. In some ways, an unorthodox selection for the panel, since the band is not even a year old and hails from a small underground scene. But they have used their time in an incredibly efficient way, publishing their first album, ‘This is Nigel’, earlier this year. The album is humorous raw punk, with titles like, ‘Is It Un-PC To Cut Children In Two?’. The answer is “yes,” if you’re wondering. It’s also highly illegal, in case you’re still unsure.

Putting their music to the side for the moment, our first question upon meeting with the band is simple: Who the hell is Nigel? Are you talking about Nigel Farage?

“A lot of people have asked us about that,” Krummi answers and his bandmates chuckle. “Me and Vigfús (Þórar Ingólfsson) were driving, and this was a running joke, like saying, it sucks to be … whatever. All of a sudden, we saw this number plate, and the name appeared to us in traffic: It sucks to be you, Nigel.

The band is young. Krummi and Vigfús started it and found some band mates in the COVID-summer of 2020. But this is punk, and stuff moves fast, so they lost some members and gained some others. But it wasn’t until they found Silja Rún Hignadóttir that everything came together.

So you’re the singer, I ask? "Well, I consider myself more of a screamer than a singer,” she explains. And what a powerful screamer she is. She is a long-time friend of Krummi and Vigfús, but it took time for them to realise that she was the perfect fit for this odd band.

“We asked her if she was up for singing for us after the former singer quit,” says Vigfús. “I told them that I couldn’t really sing,” Silja explains. But they answered, in true punk DIY style: “Well, it doesn’t really matter!”

 Asked how they managed to record an album in such a short time, they say that it’s more or less thanks to their good friend Hlúmur Sævarsson, a member of Icelandic indie band Trailer Todd.

Asked about the future, Silja says that they don’t want to take themselves too seriously. “We’re just playing and having fun ourselves. We love to play concerts,” she says. “It’s liberating.”

SHOUT OUT: MINNINGAR

Every year, the Grapevine Music Awards give a shout out to someone who has made the musical world a better place over the preceding 12 months. But for 2022, we’re highlighting a project that set out to make the actual world a better place too.

So we doff our caps to Minningar, a collective that evolved around musicians Daniele Girolamo and Eyrún Engilbertsdóttir, who met while studying music in Reykjavík. They decided to create a project to document the tragic beauty of Icelandic glaciers as they disappear due to human indifference, which led to the magnificent album: ‘From the Ocean/To the Ocean (Memories of Snæfellsjökull)’.

After teaming up with Eyrún, Daniele had a chance encounter with location sound recording expert Magnus Bergsson—a man renowned for his work capturing the audio of natural environments. “I asked him one night if we could create some musical art from what he was doing,” says Daniele, “and he agreed.” Daniele then asked musical synthesiser innovator Úlfur Hansson to complete the project team “because I love his music, and he’s an amazing composer and musician.

The quartet decided to focus on Snæfellsjökull glacier in West Iceland. They named themselves Minningar—which means “memories”—to reflect their mission to create an audio documentary of what may soon be gone.

Weekends spent recording in the field yielded hours of pristine natural sounds; wind, water and shifting ice all contributing to the rich soundscapes captured by Magnus. Many of those recordings were earmarked to appear on the album in their raw form. Others acted as guiding scores for the three musicians when they later laid down studio tracks to accompany the natural sounds. The rule was that the music should never eclipse the sounds of nature. “The subject is the field recording,” says Daniele, clarifying the priorities in that creative process. “Our music is like a frame.”

A cave on the glacier also offered the chance to record music on location in a unique acoustic, which Daniele wasn’t able to resist. “I was thinking of bringing the cello that day, but we had so much stuff for recording,” Daniele recalls. So instead he took a kalimba, (a small thumb-piano), as a more portable alternative, and created a track for the album.

‘From the Ocean/To the Ocean (Memories of Snæfellsjökull)’ is a sonically striking work evocative of the wild expanses at its source, and poignant in the message that it carries. Its powerful effect isn’t lost on Eyrún. “The whole project has been very eye opening for me, sonically and just showing a new way to play,” she says. “It’s very different to the other projects that I’ve been working on.

The experience—along with the audience reaction to the album, and their live performance of it—has inspired Minningar to continue their work. Recordings are currently taking place on Sólheimajökull glacier for a second album due later this year.”
**ALBUM OF THE YEAR: KEF LAVÍK**

Musical duo kef LAVÍK have been lauded by Grapevine for a few years now, even before they were willing to disclose who they were. But Einar Birkir Bjarnason and Ármann Örn Friðriksson have dropped the defining party album of the year in ‘Eilífur Snjór í Augunum’, and that’s part of the reason why they’ve won our Album of the Year award.

We were able to track down the elusive Ármann and we had just one question in mind: who are you guys anyway? Why the mystery? Turns out, they’re far more approachable than you might think.

“Our defining characteristic is that we are friendly guys making art pop.” Ármann tells us. “We’re from the countryside of Iceland, Höfn. One chef and one computational engineer trying to be funny and emotional at the same time.”

What makes ‘Eilífur Snjór í Augunum’ special is it sounds like it was written for a stir-crazy populace itching to get out and party as the pandemic concludes its second year. It turns out this was just an accident of fate rather than the album’s intent.

“I think the album is really based on six months in 2020,” Ármann says. “So it’s really, really pre-pandemic. When the pandemic started, we switched projects and made [the EP] ‘Heim Eftir 3 Mánu í Burtu’. But this album had been ongoing for two years before we released it, and the lyrics are really only about pre-pandemic stuff. But I guess it’s good to release music that’s based on partying and getting your jam on in the pandemic; I think that’s the music that really resonates with people right now, rather than the serious stuff.”

Ármann was nearly speechless upon learning kef LAVÍK had won this award, but somehow managed to tell us: “We are always happy to get recognition for our process. We’re just happy to accept this award and get recognition for this album.”

‘Eilífur Snjór í Augunum’ is one of two albums of the year.

**Honourable mentions:**
- Studum Pungglyd... en altaf
- andfasísk - BSÍ
- Possimiste, You Stay By The Sea - Axel Flovent
- Hellraiser IV, Aron Can - Andi, Lil, Hjarta, Sál

**VIDEO OF THE YEAR: MANÍ SIGFÚSSON**

Kælan Mikla are a band with a very particular visual aesthetic, and it came as no surprise to the awards panel that one of last year’s strongest videos was theirs.

Their track “Hvítir Sandar”, which translates as “White Sand”, is a collaboration with French band Alcest. Stylistically it blends Kælan Mikla’s trademark dark take on early eighties alternative with Alcest’s “blackgaze”, (that’s an un holy confluence of black metal and shoegaze, in case you’re wondering). The mood of the track is slow and epic; the sound rich in texture, dense yet expansive.

To translate these elements into visuals Kælan Mikla got in touch with Maní Sigfússon, a director with a strong track record of working with Icelandic artists of an independent bent. But it wasn’t the first time that Maní had worked with the band.

“They had just started out,” Maní recalls of their first collaboration, “and Iceland Airwaves festival was making these promo videos. They paired directors with bands to do stuff. I worked with them on an announcement clip, and they came back ten years later and said that they wanted something similar for their video.”

That request for “something similar” has resulted in this sumptuous slow-moving mix of live and computer generated images. Flecks of light hover and dance; surreal fabrics slither and morph. The three band members are represented only in oblique terms: either as shrouded marble mausoleum statues or in extreme close-up, allowing stark, high-contrast studies in the detailed texture of hair, skin and blood. In terms of concept the only thing the band wanted was texture,” Maní explains, “and we talked about having the video in black and white. It’s shot in colour, but everything is black and white. The band members are painted white.”

The threads of some of these distinctive stylistic themes run through Maní’s work, which started some 14 years ago when he made his first music video for his brother Sindri, (also known as the artist Sin Fang).

“I was in film school in Amsterdam, and as soon as I got back to Iceland my brother, who was in the band Seabear, asked me to do a music video for them. And after that the requests kept coming, and haven’t stopped since,” Maní says.

Icelandic artists such as Ægirsey, sóley, Olafur Arnalds and Jóhann Jóhannsson have all trusted Maní to weave their music into the magic of his visuals. But The Rolling Stones and Shawn Mendes have also knocked on his door to create video packages for their live shows. So given his day job at an ad agency, Maní always has numerous professional plates spinning—including a new Seabear video to coincide with their first album release in 12 years.

Musicians just keep coming back to him for more; check out the Grapevine’s crowned Video of the Year and you’ll see why.

**Honourable mentions:**
- Sin Fang - Soy Un Animal
  dir. Magnús Leifsson, Ógíslept - Skrattar Dir. Frosti Óttarsson, Dómina og Hekla - Inspector Spacetime, *Crystallized* - The Vintage Caravan, Vesturbæjar Beach - BSÍ
- russian.girls - The Dance (LHÍ graduation collab piece), Russian girls - The Dance (LHÍ graduation collab piece)
- Hálfa afram
YOU SHOULD HAVE HEARD THIS: SUNNA FRÍÐJÖNS

Listening to Sunna Friðjóns’ new album, ‘Let the Light In,’ is to be transported to another world. The mystically flowing songs evoke scenes that are easy to retreat into when you feel the need to escape this pandemic-infused reality for a moment. It’s no wonder that this year’s You Should Have Heard This award goes to Sunna.

It’s rare to come across music that paints such vivid pictures in your mind. When music is composed for movies, the films are usually created first and the music is added afterwards. Sunna’s albums do just the opposite: it’s like you’re constructing a film in your mind around the music you’re hearing.

“People tend to say that my music feels like it should be a part of a movie,” Sunna laughs, adding that it’s actually a dream of hers to compose a soundtrack for a film that she connects to.

Sunna’s music could be categorised as Chamber Pop, as she is using instruments typical to chamber music to form modern melodies. Her background in classical music pushes through in her compositions, but she’s freed herself of the strict rules of the genre.

“I feel like I never belonged in that box. However much I loved the music and playing in youth orchestras, I didn’t fully fit in it. I needed to find something that would suit me better,” Sunna explains.

Sunna’s music is based on how she perceives the world and energies around her. “I try to translate my feelings into music. Even when I’m not certain how I actually feel about something, the outcome makes sense when it’s put into a musical form,” she describes.

This translation process results in cinematic pieces where every little detail matters, with each adding a little something to the aural world being created. Filled with particular sounds and moments, the songs truly are more than the sum of their parts. “I’m very sensitive to sounds and want to add texture to my music through them,” Sunna says.

Sounds are not the only thing Sunna is sensitive to. She’s very aware of the energies around her, which has led her to become a healer as well. She has experimented with combining the two fields together, and in the future we will see more of her signature group healing concerts. “I won’t stop making music as is, but I do want to organise more of these healing events,” she promises.

We’re happy to hear that Sunna will continue to make more masterpieces. After all, she seems to have managed to transfer her healing abilities to her music, too—whether it was intentional or not.

SONG OF THE YEAR: VESTURBÆJAR BEACH

The song Vesturbæjar Beach by RÍI is not only our Song Of The Year. It is, in some ways, the most telling song about the COVID-year of 2021. It describes awful summers in Iceland, as well as the will to do the best in whatever the situation is. It was also a break-out track for a new band that has become one of the most exciting in Iceland; an incredible fact, if only for the reason that the two band members—Silla and Julius—had no idea how to play instruments when they started the band.

“It’s never really summer in Iceland,” Silla explains, and adds that the song was a humorous attempt to create more summer for her homeland. The video itself underlines this, with hilarious settings where the bandmates try to sunbath on roundabouts in crappy weather.

Silla and Julius didn’t expect that the song would get the attention it did in Iceland, and Silla actually first noticed it when she was at a family reunion. “Then someone asked, so you’re making music?” Silla says and laughs. “And I didn’t really understand what was going on until some nieces and nephews started talking about it.”

The band just released their album—‘Stundum Bung-lynd...En Alftaf Andfasísk’ (‘Sometimes Depressed... But Always Antifascist’) and they are already preparing to release more music. “We are working on something,” Silla answers the journalist cautiously when asked if more is on the way.

Whatever the plan is, the band is now on the map, and nieces and nephews are paying attention, as well as the nation.

Honourable mentions: À knjánum - Hipsumhapo, Skin - Vök, Manstu - kfl Lavík, russian.girls - Hálfa álfram, SKRATTAR - Drúlissama

PANEL

Alexander Jean de Fontaney - Music expert, DJ and art student  
Amir Isgart Thorisdóttir - Journalist and PhD in Socio-musicology  
Rúnar Jóns Jóhannes - Former cultural editor at Reykjavík Grapevine, and performing artist  
Nína Mírton - Cultural journalist at Fréttablaðið and a musician  
Valur Brettschneider - Editor-in-chief at The Reykjavík Grapevine
It's sad but true: when a lot of people talk about “vegan food” or “vegan restaurants,” what they all too often mean is “vegan analogs of my favourite Western foods.” While there’s no disputing the tastiness of a good vegan burger done right, there are cultures all over the world who have been making food without animal products for millennia. So let’s give them some love, shall we?

Hrálestin
Numerous locations, but we like Lækjargata 8
Consistently one of the best places for Indian food, (itself a super broad umbrella), they’ve got something for everybody here. Their expansive menu can be a little overwhelming, but you can’t go wrong by just ordering the vegan thali—a platter of many smaller portions of some of the best food you’ll ever taste. Round it off with a vegan masala chai and roll yourself happily home.

Noodle Station
Laugavegur 86
You’ve just trundled off the bus at Hlemmur after a long and harrowing journey into town. You’re tired, you’re cold, you’re hungry and you’re vegan. You want—nay, need—to eat now. What do you do? You walk no more than half a block from where you are to Noodle Station and order the vegetable bowl. You can even add some of your favourite extras for just a few coins more.

Ali Baba
Austurstræti 12a
If you have a hankering for some good Syrian food sans animal products, then this is a great choice, especially for takeaway. Take your time savouring the falafel plate, or get the fully loaded falafel wrap up in your face. Friendly, affordable and consistently tasty, it’s absolutely a top pick, whether after a night of partying or for a quick lunch break.

Krua Thai
Skólavörustígur 21a
Already a respectable Thai restaurant in its own right, Krua Thai goes one step further for those avoiding animal products. For literally any dish on their menu, you can substitute the meat with tofu. Is tofu Thai? We don’t know, but it tastes like whatever you cook it in, so it makes for a fine substitution in any of their sumptuous, tasty dishes.

You could be forgiven for having never heard of this Szechuan restaurant located just a few blocks south of Hlemmur. Heck, you might have even walked right past it numerous times without even noticing it. But Fine Restaurant is an absolute gem: cozy, reasonably priced, and consistently better than the more popular choices in town for Chinese food. We highly recommend their mapo tofu, which will make you forget about all your troubles, if only for a moment.

There are likely many places we’ve forgotten. All we ask is that when looking for vegan food, you explore beyond the boundaries of seitan burgers. You won’t regret it.
Elísabet Pálmdóttir works as a specialist in natural hazards at the Icelandic Met Office. During the course of this year, she has been busy explaining the acts of Fagradalsfjall volcano to us common people. She is probably the only person whose perfect day includes a natural disaster.

Even though I really love my job, I enjoy the first day of vacation a lot. So my perfect day would be the start of a holiday after a long week of shifts at the Met Office. My dog would wake me up around nine or ten, beginning an easy morning. My husband and I would cuddle for a bit before feeding the dog. I might also make a celery juice for myself if I feel like it.

Walking, brunching and napping
When our dog would have eaten, we would take him out for a walk in sunny weather. We would either walk along the shore near our neighbourhood, or go for a hike. Our neighbourhood is right next to the sea, and we often walk around the shore since our dog loves to swim. We would have a ball with us and we’d throw it to the sea, and he would fetch it. However, if we would be longing for a hike, we would head to one of the many mountains near Reykjavik, like Úlfarsfell or Helgafell. Anyhow, the three of us would be walking outside for at least an hour before returning home.

After the walk, I would go to the gym to do some hot yoga. After a refreshing yoga session, I would have brunch with my sister and friends—preferably somewhere within walking distance from my home, so I could have a few drinks on the side. Back home after brunch, I would enjoy a moment by myself. I would probably take a nap to recharge my energy for the evening.

Staycation on the side of an eruption
On a perfect day, my husband and I would have booked a hotel for the night, so after my nap we would head there and just chill for a while. We would have also reserved a table at a nice restaurant, where we would go in the evening.

After the satisfying meal, we would travel to see an eruption that would have started during our dinner—because naturally the perfect day of a volcanologist includes a natural disaster. Ever since I was a kid I’ve been obsessed with volcanoes and eruptions, and witnessing them truly makes my day. We would hike to the volcano and watch the mesmerising lava flow together for a good while before returning back to the hotel and falling asleep on the comfy bed.
Dining

1. Blackbox Pizza
Borgartún 26
Blackbox is a solid competitor for best pizza pie in the city. Thin crust, inventive toppings, delivery—what else could you ask for? We’d particularly recommend the Parma Rugosa, which serves up at the parma ham goodness you could wish for. For those journeying outside the city, they’ve also got a location in Akureyri.

2. Chíkin
Ingólfsstræti 1
This ain’t your mama’s KFC. No. Chíkin—Reykjavík’s first dedicated hot chicken and bao joint—manages to be at once both totally sophisticated foodie cuisine and also food that’ll definitely fill the hole in your soul you usually quench with a sandwich. So grab some chicken with pickled daikon, shiitake mushrooms, miso mayo and lots of other delicacies.

3. Hosiós
Hverfisgata 12
A newcomer on the block who has certainly made a big stir! Hosiós is a small spot—seating around 30 patrons at full capacity—that offers an eclectic rotating menu of local fresh food. The offerings feature meals from around the world, from French cuisine to Northern Africa goodness, and much more.

4. Kaffi Laugalaður
Laugavegur 74a
For many a young parent, the cafe stop at the end of a long stroll is the proverbial pot of gold. Kaffi Laugalaður is especially popular with new parents—with a special kids’ corner for crawlers and drawers. The generously topped chicken and pork ‘töltu gæa hamán’ and the ‘shármávamá’ are our top lunch picks. Also, if you’re keto, don’t miss ‘om.’

5. Braú & Co
Frakkastígur 16
First off—don’t miss Braú & Co’s pretzel croissants unless you really don’t want to have a spiritual experience. We also swear by their “snúkur”—cinnamon bread rolls smothered with a sugary glaze. They take it a step further and stuff the classical with blueberries and whatnot, eliciting inappropriate satisfied moans. Get there early to snatch a warm one.

6. Snaps
Bórsstaða 1
Year after year, regardless of how many restaurants open and close. Snaps remains a timeless classic. Be it lunch, date-night dinner, lazy weekend brunches or a boisterous Christmas work party, Snap’s is the perfect venue for a boastload of memories. Steady standbys include the deeply savoury onion soup (with a union of its own we suspect), the house-made fries with crispy rosemary that begs to be a meal on its own, and a tattooed crème brûlée topped with an amuse snap.

7. Hlemmur Mathöll
Hlemmur
Once a bus station and now a bustling lineup of the best DJs in Iceland. It’s a union of its own we suspect), and a textbook crème brûlée topping with an envious snap.

8. Dragon Dim Sum
Bergstaðarstræti 4
For those of us longing for dim sum in Reykjavík, cravings have often had to be satisfied with daydreams of visits past to dim sum houses of Chinatowns abroad. But then Dragon Dim Sum arrived with their fans, which is the perfect marriage between local Icelandic ingredients and labouring of Asian dim sum passion. Don’t miss their bao or shao mai, and don’t worry, their carrot vegan dumplings are also sublime.

9. Lamb Street Food
Bændagardur 7
Pure Icelandic lamb with a middle eastern twist—that’s what you’ll get at this juicy local eatery where pure kebab is served up with no processed meat. For all you vegans though, never fear, the fresh made salads and hummus are equally pleasing. Why isn’t your regular kebab spot a union of its own we suspect), and a textbook crème brûlée topping with an envious snap.

10. Laundromat
Austurstræti 8
Have you ever wanted to have lunch and do your laundry in a public place? You’re in luck. The Laundromat Café on Austurstræti is open (again) for business. Whether you want brunch, a sandwich, or a burger, they have a quality selection of food made to order. Their brunch ain’t nothing to scoff at either.

11. Nauthöll
Nauthölsvegur 106
Of the many nation-themed drinking establishments in Reykjavík, the Icelandic Bar is the one only that is also a restaurant. So be there at night and maybe you’ll meet an off or Björk or something—that’s all people know about Iceland anyway.

12. Prikkið
Bankastræti 12
Prikkið is the bar version of the “I’m going to bed early tonight vs. me at 3 a.m.” meme. At 22:00 you’ll have a bunch of regulars relaxing at the bar sipping brews, but arrive at 3:00 and it’s Project X. Their outdoor smoking area should be applauded too. Hang out long enough and you’ll be sure to buddy up and find an afterparty.

Drinking

13. Röntgen
Hverfisgata 12
If the cancellation of literally everything is damping your glamorous rock and roll style, Röntgen at Hverfisgata 12 will cure that feeling. As the house-made fries with crispy rosemary that begs to be a meal on its own, and a tattooed crème brûlée topped with an envious snap.

14. Húrra
Klapparstræti 33
Húrra is BACK! ARE YOU SERIOUS? YES, WE ARE! After a despairing absense weeks they’ve been open, the bar/restaurant is open (again) for business. Whether you want brunch, a sandwich, or a burger, they have a quality selection of food made to order. Their brunch ain’t nothing to scoff at either.

15. Ægisí
Húrra
Austurstræti 9
ÆGISÍ is the most sophisticated bar, but they’ve also been known to occasionally rock out. Whether you’re planning a night out long enough and you’ll be sure to buddy up and find an afterparty.

16. Íslenski Barinn
Bergstaða 1
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17. Mál og Menning
Hverfisgata 1
Austurstræti 9
Mál og Menning is one of those places that downtown Reykjavík rats might call “too far away,” but with the opening of plenty of outdoor stops you can arrive there in style in but 15 minutes. Without hyperbole, there probably isn’t a better outdoor venue in the city than this place—and their Scandinavian fare is good too.
18. **Dillon**
Laugavegur 30

A mix between grunge and classy, Dillon Whiskey Bar dominates their little stretch of Laugavegur. Crammed most nights with rockers, metalheads, and tourists looking for a place to mumble AC/DC songs into their beer. Dillon boasts a wide selection of over 100 whiskies and hosts some of Iceland’s best hard rock bands on the weekends.

19. **Petersen svítan**
Austurstræti 12

The sun is finally out, which means it’s time for your annual pilgrimage to Petersen svítan. Never been? Well, make sure to bring your sunglasses because this place has one of the best views in Reykjavík and also very fashionable clientele. Look over the city and have a beer in almost entirely direct sunlight (!!!!!!!).

**Shopping**
20. **Íslenska Höfdilfurðustofan**
Ingólfsstræti 3

This classic shop caters to all styles, with a roster of artists that serve up everything from realism to new-school and more. We’d particularly recommend the hand-poked pieces by Hábba (gshhabberottattoo). Not only are they gorgeously ornate in that straight-out-of-80s-AD-way, but they might save you from spirits elsewhere in Iceland and all of them have a slightly different, edgy take on the island, instead of adding to the abundance of touristy subjects.

21. **Nielsen Sérverzlon**
Bankastræti 4

Way more than your average design store, Nielsen is filled to the brim with knock-knocks from all over from gorgeous diaries to cozy towels and all the candles you could desire. Stop by, grab something for a gift and don’t forget a little something for yourself.

22. **Fótógrafi**
Miklabraut 22

Fótógrafi claims to have been one of the first photo galleries in town. While its interior is tiny, there’s a surprising number of photos to be found inside. The pictures on display are mainly shot in Reykjavík or elsewhere in Iceland and all of them have a slightly different, edgy take on the island, instead of adding to the abundance of touristy subjects.

23. **Stefansbú/p3**
Laugavegur 7

Stefansbú showcases local designers and second-hand high-fashion finds (hello 1990’s Gucci) as well as accessories from quirky international brands. Fun and zany, you don’t know what you’re going to find but you know it’ll be exciting.

24. **Lucky Records**
Rauðarárstígur 10

Lucky Records is probably the biggest record shop in Iceland, with shelves upon shelves of new and used vinyl and CDs on offer. If that’s not enough, they’re notorious for their export staff whose knowledge goes far beyond the latest Björk or Sigur Rós offerings. In fact, it’s best if you just let them take the lead.

25. **Húrra Reykjavík**
Reyðugata 18A

This minimalist streetwear/athleisure store serves up a mixed selection of classic items and trendy cuts. They were massively hyped when they opened a few years ago and have stayed hyped because they know what they are doing and are damn good at it.

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**New In Town**

Hóðinn
Seljavallagarður 2, 101 Reykjavík

If the restaurant scene in Iceland was a multiverse, Hóðinn would be the one with the elegance of Dr. Strange and the flashy, cool vibe of Tony Stark. The interior design at the place is out of this world, but at the same time grounded and firm. The restaurant has half of the Icelandic national team of chefs at the helm, producing mind-boggling dishes that could unexpectedly tear a rift in your universes. Hóðinn is one of Reykjavík’s most ambitious projects, and a must-visit.

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Welcome to our legendary record store, label, venue, bar & café

Open every day of the week

Horníð
opened in 1979 was the first restaurant of its kind in Iceland, a restaurant with a true Italian atmosphere. Horníð is known for good food made out of fresh raw materials, good pizzas baked in front of the guests, good coffee and comfortable service.

Let us offer you the food and service you expect from us, and the food and service you deserve.

Horníð
Lýsi
Reyðugata 18A

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Renaissance Man
Magnús Jóhann: pianist, producer, composer, arranger, synth wizard, vibes dude and the hardest-working man in Icelandic showbiz

Words: John Pearson
Photos: Dóra Dúna

Magnús Jóhann is a tad late for his Grapevine interview. Not rockstar late, you understand, although given his emergent position in the Icelandic music scene he could probably pull that kind of crap and get away with it, if he wanted. But that’s not really Magnús. Instead he politely excuses his mild tardiness, revealing that he has just been for a COVID test in order for him to play six gigs in two days: clearly, this is the kind of crap and get away with it, if he wanted. But that’s not really Magnús.

Instead this was an exercise in refreshing to do it this way, Magnús says. “Just like ‘OK, we’re together in the studio. And the takes are just gonna be the takes. And no bullshit.’”

The resulting record is a beautiful bullshit-free jazzy blend of Magnús’ piano and Skúli’s acoustic bass guitar, based on scores sketched out by Magnús for use as improvisational springboards. Skúli has decades of experience as a professional musician, working with the likes of Laurie Anderson and Ryuichi Sakamoto, and was always the collaborator that Magnús had in mind for Án Tillits.

No tinkering, no tarting

The theme of candid honesty permeates Án Tillits, the remarkable record that Magnús made last year in collaboration with legendary bass guitarist Skúli Sverrisson. All ten tracks were laid down live by the pair in a single day, with none of the overdubbing, tarting and tinkering that can rob a performance of its vital organic nature. Instead this was an exercise in two elite musicians being present in the studio together, and simply weaving their magic to capture a moment.

“In this day and age, when everything can be edited and fixed, it feels refreshing to do it this way. We’re together in the studio. The takes are just gonna be the takes. And no bullshit.”

Mutual appreciation

“He has incredible chops,” Magnús says of his musical counterpart. “What I really like about him is that Skúli is one of the most accomplished and most skilled, dexterous musicians I know. Like he can play sixteenth notes at 300 beats per minute, but it’s never about musical showmanship, he plays what is being called for.”

The admiration is mutual. The pair met in 2018 when Magnús needed a tutor for the final year of his studies at FH/MIÍT, a jazz conservatory in Reykjavik. He approached Skúli who agreed, having been impressed by the potential he saw in Magnús. Their professional relationship grew as the mentorship developed, with the album emerging from the music that Magnús composed for the two of them to play at his graduation concert.

My generation
Since graduating Magnús has released a solo album but also carved himself numerous other niches in Iceland’s musical landscape, reflecting his skills not just as a composer and keyboard player, but as a producer, arranger and musical director; he even played vibes on last year’s album by Ingibjörg Turchi. Consequently he has become the go-to guy for many young Icelandic musicians—such as GDRN, Briet and Hipsumhaps—who need someone with the experience and the chops to take their craft to the next level. But, crucially, also someone who is still in their early twenties, and is rooted as much in Icelandic hip-hop as in its conservatoires.

“I tend to get involved with my generation of musicians when they’re doing big shows, or want to start playing with a band or something,” he says. “Then I’m one of the guys that has experience in arranging some of that modern music for performance. Programming the playback, synthesiser sounds, drum pads and so forth. So I’ve been heavily involved in that whole scene in various different ways.”

You might need a sit down after all that

Asking Magnús about current and future projects elicits a dizzying torrent of examples, including: a solo album sculpted from material he wrote for a theatre piece; a score for a short film; a piano and vocals duet record with GDRN; and the release concert for Án Tillits, denied so far to him and Skúli by the pandemic.

It sounds like his recent experience of six gigs in two days will have been a good rehearsal to get Magnús through the next 12 months. It’s already in his diary to meet up with The Grapevine at the end of 2022 to tell us how it all went. Let’s hope he remembers.

You can buy a vinyl copy of albums by Magnús at shop.grapevine.is

gpv.is/music
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Event Picks

Dark Music Days Festival
Jan 23rd to 29th - Multiple locations and prices

As usual it features festival which has been Dark Music Days, a Jan 23rd to 29th - Multiple locations and prices

January 7th — February 3rd

Send upcomin

Wednesday January 26th

Women In Composition (Dark Music Days)
13:00 Nordic House
\nJóhannes Fludin Ensemble - Insight (Dark Music Days)
17:00 Nordic House
\nWâko 20:00 Skuggabaldur

Thursday January 27th

Island Symphony Orchestra - Journey Without Destination (Dark Music Days)
20:00 Harpa
\nCraig Taborn
20:15 Safariur
\nWâko 20:00 Skuggabaldur

Friday January 28th

Island Symphony Orchestra - Bâra and Gunner Andreas (Dark Music Days)
12:15 Harpa
\nJohn McCowan and Matthias Engler - The Cartography Of Time (Dark Music Days)
17:30 Harpa
\nHeiða and Tinna - En Ñúna? (Dark Music Days)
19:30 Harpa
\nNorður Affekt - Surfacing (Dark Music Days)
21:30 Harpa
\nSkúuggamýndir Fríða Brandís
20:00 Skuggabaldur

Saturday January 29th

Sigrúður Arnarsdóttir - Band (Dark Music Days)
15:00 Harpa
\nSóley - Harmonik (Dark Music Days)
17:00 Harpa
\nReykjavík Chamber Orchestra (Dark Music Days)
20:00 Harpa
\nLínun 20:00 Skuggabaldur
\nIsland Symphony Orchestra - Island Symphony - Chamber Music Club (Dark Music Days)
16:00 Harpa
\nRósull Elvarsdóttir - Riddar (Dark Music Days)
20:00 Hálgrimskróki
\nKatrín Hallbór Sings the Songs of Jon Malt - Release Concert (2020)
20:00 Harpa

Monday January 24th

The Emotional Carpenters - Just A Closer Walk With Thee (Dark Music Days)
20:00 Harpa
\nPodium (Dark Music Days)
13:00 Nordic House
\nMáni Júlíus - Monday Night Jazz Jam 20:00 Skuggabaldur

Tuesday January 25th

Art Beat - Love Boringiosa And Hurts 12:15 Harpa
\nPodium (Dark Music Days)
13:00 Nordic House
\nThe Caput Ensemble (Dark Music Days)
20:00 Baroque, Opera, Jazz - Þíðra Series 19:30 Safariur
\nÓlafur Sverrir Traustason Trio 20:00 Skuggabaldur

Wednesday January 26th

Live Music Happy Hour 18:00 Jónasgræn Kitchen & Bar

And to the bad news. The Composer's Rights Society of Iceland (STEF) reported that the Icelandic music scene has faced 47% in earnings since the beginning of COVID. These numbers are downright shocking, and show just how brutally the pandemic has impacted the music industry. The chairman of STEF is urging politicians to roll out more support for the industry, and points out that other Scandinavia-ian governments have stepped up to back their artists during the pandemic. Meanwhile the mentality in Iceland has been that artists should simply quit, and find a day job.

Remember the early noughties? Rarely, if ever a year went by without a few bands who had a hit and found instant success. One day, one of the band members would step out from the back of the bus, and find themselves being hailed as one of the big things in Iceland. Some bands like Nylon and Skítamórall (shitty morals, Morál) and Kjallamóður (country band) by Icelanders. Nylon was a band created by all the girls in England at the time and had more or less the same impact in Icelandic culture. That is, none of the band members went home, youngsters were obsessed with bands like Nylon and Skítamórall (shitty morals), these bands were called ‘exclusively Icelandic’ by Icelandic audiences. It’s enough to make a band president of the Icelandic Music Industry Association, Guðmundur Hjartarson, feel very proud. He wrote the song ‘When I’m Gone’, performed by no other than Lady Gaga (who is one of the lead vocalists in the song, and a pretty nice pop star). Before that, Amina also wrote music for Pápa’s heartthrob Taylor Swift. In short, Amina is becoming Iceland’s biggest international pop artist. So, rock on, Amina.

Free Admission

Wednesday January 19th

University Welcome Week Festival 22:00 Safariur
\nDúst Elda - The World Stage 19:30 Harpa

Wednesday January 12th

Sigmar Pór Trio
20:00 Skuggabaldur

Tuesday January 11th

Duó Plus Trio
19:30 Safariur
\nBúmaður Borgþríðir Trio 20:00 Skuggabaldur

Monday January 10th

Máni Júlíus - Monday Night Jazz Jam 20:00 Skuggabaldur
\nFreystaðinn 20:00 Mál og Manning

Sunday January 9th

Danes For Children - Dagdræmaur 15:00 Borgarhúsið
\nRúyjavík Big Band - The Golden Age of Swing 20:00 Harpa
\nGýfrá Swærin Traustason Trio 20:00 Skuggabaldur

Saturday January 8th

Island Symphony Orchestra - Vienna Concert 19:30 Harpa
\nJoel Palsson Krætt 20:00 Skuggabaldur

Friday January 14th

Rjóðinok 20:00 Harpa
\nIceREAM Symphony Orchestra - Young Soloists 2019 19:30 Harpa
\nHáló quartet 20:00 Skuggabaldur

Saturday January 15th

Rjóðinok 20:00 Bâbarjári
\nMáni Júlíus - Monday Night Jazz Jam 20:00 Skuggabaldur

Monday January 17th

Máni Júlíus - Monday Night Jazz Jam 20:00 Skuggabaldur
\nFreystaðinn 20:00 Mál og Manning

Sunday January 16th

Sigmar Pór Trio 20:00 Skuggabaldur

Tuesday January 18th

Andrías Pór & Bílmur Jónsson 20:00 Skuggabaldur

Wednesday January 19th

University Welcome Week Festival 22:00 Safariur
\nDúst Elda - The World Stage 19:30 Harpa

Thursday January 20th

Thunder Purple - The Music Of Deep Purple 20:00 Bâbarjári
\nChamber Music Club 16:00 Harpa
\nIceREAM Symphony Orchestra - Stokolovich and Barber 19:30 Harpa
\nSuna Dunna Ýaquet 20:00 Skuggabaldur

Friday January 21st

Los Bomberosen 20:00 Skuggabaldur

Saturday January 22nd

How To Become Icelandic In 60 Minutes 19:00 Harpa
\nOut In The Islands - Island Concert 20:00 Harpa
\nBjörg 20:00 Skuggabaldur

Sunday January 23rd

The Emotional Carpenters - Just A Closer Walk With Thee (Dark Music Days)
20:00 Harpa
\nPodium (Dark Music Days)
13:00 Nordic House
\nMáni Júlíus - Monday night Jazz Jam 20:00 Skuggabaldur

Tuesday January 25th

Art Beat - Love Boringiosa And Hurts 12:15 Harpa
\nPodium (Dark Music Days)
13:00 Nordic House
\nThe Caput Ensemble (Dark Music Days)
20:00 Baroque, Opera, Jazz - Þíðra Series 19:30 Safariur
\nÓlafur Sverrir Traustason Trio 20:00 Skuggabaldur

Wednesday January 26th

Knitting Evening 20:00 Kex Hostel

Friday January 19th — 20:00 - Kex Hostel - Free Admission

Drop into this knitter’s circle and see what you can create. Given a little wool and a pair of needles. Everyone is welcome—from beginners to experts—and naturally the event is inclusive, so everyone is very welcome. Bring your own tools and yarn, and enjoy a crafty discount at the bar.

Thursday January 20th

María Bliss 10 - 20:00 Sigrún Ólafsdóttir Museum - 3000 to 4500 ISK

The Seiðla music festival was creat-ed by the Icelandic Schumann Soci-ety to celebrate the 19th-century De-mocratic composer Robert Schumann. Maríak Blíz (Hjónabandsala in Iceland), is an event in which so-ro pianists put together pieces connected to Schumann’s own life and his relationship with his wife, Clara.

Upcoming Events

Events are currently subject to pandemic restrictions, and may change at short notice. Please check with the venue before travelling.

Send upcoming event details to: events@grapevine.is
A Very Cultured January

Some of the more intriguing exhibitions this month

Words: Andie Sophia Fontaine  Photo: Art Bicnick

Although the winter solstice was last month, bringing more moments of daylight with each passing day, January can still be an awfully dreary month. The lingering darkness is only abating incrementally, and the weather is arguably worse than in December. To save your brain from sensory deprivation, it is highly advisable to seek out stimulation indoors, and there are few better places to do that than art galleries.

However, Reykjavík is positively brimming with galleries and museums, making it very daunting to parse it all and figure out what’s worth seeing. To that end, we have compiled some of the very best stuff currently being shown in our fair capital.

A Bra Ka Da Bra – The Magic of Contemporary Art

Hafnarhús, until March

If you only have time for one exhibition, you could do a lot worse than making it this one. It boasts a couple of dozen artists of diverse backgrounds, with works spanning multiple media. You can easily spend an afternoon checking it all and figure out what’s worth seeing. To that end, we have compiled some of the very best stuff currently being shown in our fair capital.

AD INFINITUM

Gerðarsafn, January 14th until March 27th

Rent a car—or better still, hop on a public bus—and get down to Kópavogur for this very special joint exhibition of acclaimed visual artist Elín Hansdóttir and renowned musician Úlfur Hansson, (probably best known as the inventor of the magnetic harp). By their powers combined, they have created an enigmatic exhibition guaranteed to delight both eyes and ears alike.

Dieter Roth

I8 Gallery, until January 29th

You can’t go wrong with the classics. This Swiss-German artist has been exciting and intriguing people for decades, and he apparently had a special place in his heart for Iceland, too, as this exhibition attests. Mostly it focuses on his works on paper, but it spans multiple genres and decades—specifically the 60s and 70s. A fine reminder that art has always been, and always should be, deeply weird.

Fylgjur

Kling&Bang, until January 23rd

In Icelandic mythology, a fylgja was a kind of guardian, a spirit guide and protector who followed generational lines, often appearing as an animal or a woman. In this group exhibition from Halla Einarsdóttir, Hanna Kristín Birgisdóttir and Smári Rúnar Robertsson, these artists will undoubtedly explore the concepts of myth, generational baggages, and the cultural markers that follow us all. As Kling & Bang never disappoints, this is another exhibition well worth checking out.

Redeconstruction

Hverfisgallerí, until February 12th

This is a solo exhibition by Hrafnkell Sigurðsson, with a very compelling backstory. The artist says he was living in Siglufjörður last year, working at a remotely located hotel and feeling entirely detached from Iceland not to mention the rest of the world. But then an avalanche struck—not for the first time in the area, and certainly not the last. Visiting the site of destruction, he observed how nature had effectively deconstructed the things built by human beings, which in these works, he re-assembles and deconstructs again. Ergo, redeconstruction. It’s absolutely worth your time in these bleak winter days.
January 7th — February 3rd

**Art Exhibitions**

For complete listings and detailed information on venues, visit grapevin.is/happenings.

Send your listings to: events@grapevin.is

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### Opening

**EXETER HOTEL GALLERY**


decorated with light and fire

Captured by a beauty of detail and taste that filters through the female torso. The paintings take on a new dimension in the dark, when the palette of the women on the canvas are reduced to the colours of the aura bireaux. This pop-up exhibition is in Reine for a week and only so, so pop it in your diary.

- **Ons Kaprans 29th**
- **Runs until January 30th**

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### Art Exhibitions

**Gardarinni Kopavogur Art Museum**

Ad infinitum

Icelandic artists Birn Blandadoddur Östur and Ólur Hannson work in Berlin and New York respectively, but have come together to create this installation where strangers cross paths and maintain contact, it serves a purpose similar to the plaza in warmer climates, the pub in England or the café in France. It is a source of well-being, and a part of everyday life. This exhibition traces the development of public pools in Iceland from the beginning of the 20th century when the focus was on learning and physical education. It illustrates how the outdoor, geothermal pool became a key element, then brings us to the present day, present when a pleasurable, spa-like experience is often the goal. Architects and designers of various disciplines have taken a part in shaping this story, in collaboration with the public, the cities and the municipalities which operate them today.

- **Ons kaprans 29th**
- **Runs until March 22nd**
- **Until March 27th - Reykjavik Art Museum**
- **Until January 23rd**

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### Ongoing

**National Gallery of Iceland**

Of the North

This permanent exhibition — where Viking ruins meet digital technology — provides insight into past in-depth research. This is a mid-career retrospective of the artist Dieter Roth — a life of many talents: a poet, a painter, a sculptor, a tinsmith, an artist who compared himself to a caged songbirds adorning windows. From microscopic and macroscopic viewpoints, a video installation by Sigurður Torfason is a highly prolific artist who made use of most artistic media over his career, including music and writing in the form of novels, plays and poetry. However this retrospective exhibition features the visual aspects of Parade's creativity, focusing on the sculptures, installations, pieces, paintings and objects he has created or performed as part of his art path. This is a mid-career retrospective of the artist Dieter Roth — a life of many talents: a poet, a painter, a sculptor, a tinsmith, an artist who compared himself to a caged songbirds adorning windows.

- **Ons kaprans 29th**
- **Runs until January 18th**
- **Runs until January 18th**
- **Runs until February 20th**

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### Reykjavík City Museum

Settlement Exhibition

This permanent exhibition — where Viking ruins meet digital technology — provides insight into past where princesses live in castles and knurk. This exhibition brings together a selection of paintings from the National Gallery, all inspired by Iceland and created from the 19th century onwards.

- **Ons kaprans 29th**
- **Runs until May 31st**

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### Reykjavík Museum of Photography

Yfirgoflin Set

Deralic farmsteads in the Icelandic countryside have long inspired Artist Dieter Roth. The artist first made use of most artistic media over his career, including music and writing in the form of novels, plays and poetry. However this retrospective exhibition features the visual aspects of Parade’s creativity, focusing on the sculptures, installations, pieces, paintings and objects he has created or performed as part of his art path. This is an exhibition that explores the interplay of rule, repetition and deviation.

- **Ons kaprans 29th**
- ** Runs until May 31st**

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### Exhibition

**Reykjavík Art Museum**

Kjarvalsstaðir

Opus-Opus

Artist Birn Blandadoddur Östur – Iceland's most artistic media over his career, including music and writing in the form of novels, plays and poetry. However this retrospective exhibition features the visual aspects of Parade’s creativity, focusing on the sculptures, installations, pieces, paintings and objects he has created or performed as part of his art path. This is an exhibition that explores the interplay of rule, repetition and deviation.

- **Runs until January 31st**
- ** Runs until May 31st**

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### Reykjavík Art Museum - Kjarvalsstaðir

Opus-Opus

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- ** Runs until May 31st**

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### Reykjavík Art Museum - Hafnarhús

A Bra Ka Da Bra - The Magic Of Contemporary Art

This exhibition aims to open the world of contemporary art up to a new generation. The titular magic word links magic and art in the wonder that both can combine up in children and young people.

- **Runs until March 20th**

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### Reykjavík Art Museum - Hafnarhús

Bathing Culture

Bathing culture

Best book design from all over the world 2020 - 2021 until 30.01.2021.

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### Behind the Scenes

Archiving Architectural Drawings of Högna Sigurdardóttur until 13.03.

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### Exhibition

**Culture House**

Treasures Of F&Ration

The Culture House was built in 1909, and still serves a purpose-built gal-

ery in Iceland. Towering above the surrounding town at the time, it was a popular spot to take in the natural views which have inspired local artists for centuries. This exhibit brings together a selection of paintings from the National Gallery, all inspired by Iceland and created from the 19th century onwards.

- **Runs until May 31st**
- ** Runs until May 31st**

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### Einar Jónsson Museum

permanent exhibition

In 1909 Einar Jónsson—described on the museum’s website as “Iceland’s first sculptor”—offered all of his works as a gift to the Icelandic nation on the condition that a museum be built to house them. The resulting edifice, constructed by a group of artists some of the marvels of the celestial bod-

- **Runs until January 23rd**
- ** Runs until March 27th**

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### Gardarinni Kopavogur Art Museum

Ad infinitum

Icelandic artists Birn Blandadoddur Östur and Ólur Hannson work in Berlin and New York respectively, but have come together to create this installation where strangers cross paths and maintain contact, it serves a purpose similar to the plaza in warmer climates, the pub in England or the café in France. It is a source of well-being, and a part of everyday life. This exhibition traces the development of public pools in Iceland from the beginning of the 20th century when the focus was on learning and physical education. It illustrates how the outdoor, geothermal pool became a key element, then brings us to the present day, present when a pleasurable, spa-like experience is often the goal. Architects and designers of various disciplines have taken a part in shaping this story, in collaboration with the public, the cities and the municipalities which operate them today.

- **Ons kaprans 29th**
- **Runs until March 27th**

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- **Ons kaprans 29th**
- **Runs until March 27th**
Comedic Closure: Áramótaskaupið’s Enduring Success

Iceland’s legendary New Year’s Eve satirical chucklefest hits home

Words: Josie Gaitens  Video stills: RÚV

There is arguably nobody in Iceland more relieved that it’s 2022 than director Reynir Lyngdal. It’s early in the new year, and debate around ‘Áramótaskaupið’ (sometimes translated to English as ‘The New Year’s Lampoon’) will probably rumble on for another week or so, especially since, as Reynir says, “this year’s was a little less… cozy than last year.” But bruised egos will heal, some new scandal will arise, and both Iceland and Reynir will eventually get to move on.

A national treasure

For the uninitiated, which basically means anyone who doesn’t live in Iceland, Áramótaskaupið, or simply ‘Skaupið’, will mean very little. It’s an annual satirical sketch show, broadcast every New Year’s Eve since 1966, that pokes fun at the 12 months prior and the main political, cultural and newsworthy figures that have featured in them. The big opening and closing musical numbers and cameos from famous Icelanders are eagerly expected. But Skaupið is far more than the sum of these parts. It’s a national institution, and it has the figures to prove it. The show has some of the highest ratings in the world, the record being set in 2002 when an unbelievable 95% of the population tuned in. For the hour that Áramótaskaupið is shown on TV, Reykjavik, which for the entirety of New Year’s Eve is under a constant barrage of firework explosions, goes quiet, like WWII’s famed Christmas ceasefire. Whole families curl up to watch together—people of different generations and cultural reference points who would never otherwise laugh over the same things.

“Whole families curl up to watch together—people of different generations and cultural reference points who would never otherwise laugh over the same things.”

The band Flott were overjoyed to close the show

Please check to ensure that no comedians are left trapped inside your TV

Television

“Whole families curl up to watch together—people of different generations and cultural reference points who would never otherwise laugh over the same things.”

“The temperature of the year”

Making Áramótaskaupið is a huge responsibility but Reynir doesn’t have to shoulder it alone. He works with a team of writers who dissect the year and piece together a show. “There’s always a little bias towards this end of the year, because you’re closer to it,” Reynir says of this process. “With events from January and February it’s easier to see what is still relevant and therefore important. But later in the year it all gets very close.” It’s a well-worn cliché to compare each Skaup to the previous year’s edition, but even Reynir readily admits the difference between the 2020 and 2021 shows. “The main task, when we get in the room together, is to take the temperature of the year. Last year was about togetherness and pulling together. This year…” He breaks off and laughs, a little wearily. “I would call it cabin fever,” he finally says, wryly.

TikTok vs. TV

The fascinating thing about Áramótaskaupið, however, is its enduring success in the age of TikTok. Reynir puts this down to the ever-evolving cast of writers, actors and directors involved in producing the show: “I’ve been doing this for three years, and each year we try and bring different people in. You might expect to see an actor playing a particular politician, but perhaps that politician hasn’t done anything noteworthy that year. Or maybe we bring in a different actor altogether, just to make things a little bit different.”

You might wonder if looking over a year’s worth of news is a rather bleak experience, especially considering the content of the past 24 months. When I ask Reynir what he thinks is in store for the next 12 months, he talks about the need to hold the rich and powerful to account, his concerns around climate disaster and the desire for the world to be better for his kids—but his parting words are positive. “Because of the show, having to view everything all together, it feels different,” he says. “Personally, I feel hopeful.”

Please check to ensure that no comedians are left trapped inside your TV
Guiding Others Through Tarot

If you’ve ever wondered what happens during a reading, here’s your chance to find out

Words: Reetta Niiniluoto
Photos: Natalia Grociak and Justina Skorupskait
(Instagram: @shottyjobe)

Strolling through the shops of Reykjavík, you might have noticed that Tarot cards are sold in many places. The cards can be used as a way to tell fortunes, as they are believed to yield mystical powers and esoteric wisdom that is revealed to those who have mastered the art of Tarot. I paid a visit to one of these people, Natalia Grociak, who has become an expert on the topic. What started as a fun hobby has evolved into a part of her daily life, through which she’s able to help others.

Modern day fortune teller

Interested in hearing what the cards have to say to me, I set up a date for a reading with Natalia. Upon arrival at her apartment, I can’t help but notice that this place is home to a spiritual soul. Warm tones of the decor together with all the plants and art pieces welcome you into a serene yet mystical scene. This is exactly what you would expect from a venue where fortune tellings take place—apart from the lack of crystal balls, of course.

Natalia guides me to the living room and offers me a seat near the coffee table. She puts on calming, meditative music and lets me pick incense to further set the mood for the reading. As the dark, flowery smell suffuses the room, Natalia lights candles and gathers everything needed to the table: a bowl of crystals and several different card decks.

“Each Tarot deck is split into two parts: Major and Minor Arcana Cards. The Major Arcana are the pillars of Tarot, representing the archetypal figures and themes that have the biggest influence on our lives. The Minor Arcana cards in turn work as a tool for the reader to explain the issues of the Major Arcana cards in detail. It enables the reader to see the person’s situation in depth,” Natalia explains.

Natalia arrays all the decks on the table and reaches out to the bowl of crystals. She selects crystals from her collection and places one on top of each card pile. When I ask the reason behind this practice, she tells me that the crystals are said to keep the deck’s energy in place throughout the process.

Now we’re all set for the reading that will tell me everything I need to know about the upcoming year. “Okay, let’s figure out what the main energies are for your inner self, work and love life in 2022,” Natalia says and starts shuffling the Major Arcana deck. I get to draw three cards from it, which will work as the base for the reading.

Reading the cards like an open book

Apparently the Chariot represents my inner self, Justice is work I will do and, last but definitely not least, Death describes my love life in 2022. “Don’t be disturbed by the last card; death actually represents transformation,” Natalia calms me down. “Let’s see how the other decks explain these cards that you picked,” she continues.

Natalia shuffles the decks with accustomed hands and picks up any that are dropped during the shuffling process. She fills the coffee table with these cards and explains what each of them mean by themselves and how their denotation changes when they become a part of the reading as a whole. Unlike the other Tarot readings I’ve received from my friends, there’s no Googling involved in this one. Natalia knows everything by heart. It’s astonishingly easy for her to explain the details and move on to describing the bigger picture of the reading. She remarks on every little thing, such as the fact that I drew a lot of cards featuring abundance and self-mastery—which I obviously welcome with open arms.

Using her talents to help others

“I’ve always been quite spiritual and interested in everything mystical,” Natalia says. “As I started to learn the art of Tarot, I felt like this was something I needed to share with others.”

She began reading the cards for customers when she worked at Bodega. That’s when she realised she can help others with her talent. “People have told me that my readings have clarified certain situations they’ve been in, or that they’ve gotten an answer to a question they had in mind,” Natalia remarks. “I truly believe that doing Tarot can nudge you into the right direction in life.”

However, not everyone is open to Tarot. Natalia has encountered her share of skeptics. “Nobody has to believe in anything they don’t want to, and I understand that Tarot is not for everyone. However, it would be great if these people could recognize that there’s a lot of us who find these readings helpful and guiding.”

Maybe the whole point of Tarot is not to get airtight revelations of one’s past, present and future, but to be a tool to help people reflect on their lives. My future might not look exactly like the reading I got, but one thing is for sure: Natalia’s reading gave me confidence and hope for 2022. If you’re interested in getting a reading, you can contact Natalia through her Instagram account @moon_aster.
An Intimate Journey with Axel Flóvent

He walks us through ‘You Stay By The Sea’

Words: Valur Grettisson/Axel Flóvent
Photo: Provided by artist

Info

Axel Flóvent’s newest album, ‘You Stay By The Sea’, has been attracting a lot of international attention—and for a good reason. It’s a beautiful journey through his inner life, from overthinking stuff (we have all done that) to friendship that slowly fades away. Axel’s intimate approach has caught the eyes of the Reykjavík Grapevine as well, and we asked the artist to explain, track by track, where he’s coming from. Here’s what he had to say.

Tonight

The first thought I had when writing this was that I wanted to write a song that would set the scene and create the mood going into the record. I initially wrote the song as an ambient intro. A few years later, the piece evolved into a song on its own. “Tonight” is about the path to stability.

Driving Hours

This is about getting in one’s own way because of overthinking, analyzing one’s wrongs, and letting fear get in the way of following one’s own needs.

Tourist

This song is about trying to reach the unreachable, to hold on to something when you know you should let go.

December Traffic

It’s about a friendship that faded away; the doubts, the wonders, and all the places the mind goes after a relationship disappears from one’s life.

Blood

This track is about not confronting negative energy, so it just lingers inside. And the longer it stays, the worse it gets, and it feels like it’s swimming inside the blood and slowly becoming a part of yourself until a change happens.

Fall Asleep

The song is a journey through an anxious mind and finding comfort in the discomfort. Even though you know it feels alright, you’re still worried, and the worries keep coming, filling the space.

Still Awake

This song is the high after the low. It’s about the motivation that picks me up after a few dark days. It’s an answer to “Fall Asleep.” It’s essentially about how everything is great now and wishing everyday was like this until the low returns and I can’t fall asleep again.

Indefinite

It’s important to keep listening and learning, no matter how defined one’s opinion is. Seeing the light that’s on the other side and fighting the limited mind to get further.

How Can I

When I was living alone in Brighton, I was very isolated. I felt distant from everything I cared about and made music to find clarity and fulfillment in the absence of everything I loved. “How Can I” is about self-care and what happens without it.

Haunted

It’s about the fear of the unknown being heavier than the reality and recognizing that the things I taught myself to avoid are, most of the time, the things I needed the most in my life.

Fireworks

Is about an end to something meaningful—both the sadness of its finality and the relief to be able to move on from it to something new without the lingering doubts.

You Stay by the Sea

The title track is, appropriately, the story for my album. The song summarizes what I’m going through, looking at different kinds of anxieties I’ve carried with me and finding my way back home. The album, ‘You Stay by the Sea’, is this peaceful state of mind that keeps me safe from it all.

Guess what? You can grab your copy of this album on shop.grapevine.is
A selection from Every Happy Hour in 101 Reykjavík

Get the complete Happy Hour listings!

Download our free app Appy Hour in the Apple and Android stores

Cheap Food

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

1,000 ISK And Under

AMERICAN BAR
Every day from 16:00 to 19:00.
Burr 850 ISK,
Wine 900 ISK.

BASTARD BREW
Every day from 16:00 to 19:00.
Burr 800 ISK,
Wine 800 ISK.

BIO PARADOX
Every day from 17:00 to 19:00.
Burr 800 ISK,
Wine 850 ISK.

BREWDOG
Wed - Sun.
14:00 to 17:00.
Burr 890 ISK,
Wine 990 ISK.

COOKOY’S NEST
Every day from 15:00 to 18:00.
Burr 1000 ISK.
Wine 1000 ISK.
Includes an appetiser.

DILLOR
Every day from 14:00 to 19:00.
Burr 600 ISK,
Wine 850 ISK.

F JÅLLKÖMAN
Every day from 15:00 to 17:00.
Burr 700 ISK,
Wine 990 ISK.

FORRETTABARNIN
Mon - Sun.
15:00 to 18:00.
Burr 800 ISK,
Wine 850 ISK.

GAUKJÁLNNIN
Every day from 16:00 to 20:00.
Burr 800 ISK.
Wine 800 ISK.

HOTEL HOLT BAR
Wed to Sat.
15:00 onwards.
Burr 900 ISK,
Wine 1200 ISK.

JÖRGENSEN KITCHEN BAR
Weekdays.
16:00 onwards.
Weekends.
12:00 to 16:00.
Burr 750 ISK,
Wine 900 ISK.

JUNGLE COCKTAIL BAR
Daily except Tue.
16:00 to 18:00.
Burr 800 ISK,
Wine 1000 ISK.

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

KEK HOSTEL
Every day from 15:00 to 19:00.
Burr 750 ISK,
Wine 750 ISK.

LAUNDERMÅT
Every day from 20:00 to 22:00.
Burr 650 ISK,
Wine 1000 ISK.

LOT
Every day from 16:00 to 20:00.
Burr 750 ISK,
Wine 900 ISK.

LUNA FLORENS
Every day from 15:00 to 18:00.
Burr 1000 ISK.
Wine 1000 ISK.
Includes your choice of free appetiser.

MIAMI
Tue.
15:00 to 00:00.
Wed to Sat.
15:00 to 19:00.
Burr 750 ISK,
Wine 990 ISK.

PETERSEN SVITIN
Every day from 16:00 to 20:00.
Burr 800 ISK,
Wine 1000 ISK.
Cocktails 1500 ISK.

PRIKK
Every day from 16:00 to 21:00.
Burr 700 ISK,
Wine 1000 ISK.

PUBLIC HOUSE
Every day from 15:00 to 18:00.
Then 23:00 to 01:00.
Burr 890 ISK,
Wine 890 ISK.

SÆTA SVÍNI
Every day from 15:00 to 18:00.
Burr 850 ISK.
Wine 800 ISK.

SKÓLÍS CRAFT
Every day from 12:00 to 19:00.
Burr 800 ISK.
(Your top layer,)
Wine 800 ISK.

SÓLÓ
Every day from 15:00 to 18:00.
Burr 850 ISK.
Wine 800 ISK.

SPÁNSKI BARINN
Every day from 15:00 to 20:00.
Burr 750 ISK,
Wine 800 ISK.

STUDENT-KJALLARIN
SÁINUKVARITA.
UNIVERSITY OF
ICELAND

You don’t need
To be a student
To get into this
gem of a
basement, tucked
beneath the
big glass
building at
Háskóla Island.
And the reward
for finding
it is one of the
cheapest
bar drinking
experiences in
town, with beer
starting at 850
ISK, and wine at
800 ISK during
happy hour. Flash
your student ID from
any university
anywhere in the
world, and
the price of beer
will tumble even
further.

1,500 ISK And Under

HAMBURGER-BEBI TÍMASAR
All day Tuesday.
Burr, frøkk 750 ISK.
Wine 990 ISK.

SOLÉN
Monday - Friday.
11:00 - 14:30.
Caesar salad -
1,490 ISK.

LEMON
Every day.
16:00 - 21:00.
211 Juice +
sandwich
1,995 ISK.

SÁLTÍK
Every day.
12:00 - 14:30.
Curry - 1,390 ISK.

SÆTA SVÍNI
Vegan option.

SUSHI SOCIAL
Every day.
15:00 - 18:00.
Burr & fries -
1,390 ISK.

VEFUR
Every day.
12:00 to 19:35.
Burr 800 ISK,
Wine 745 ISK.

VEFUR
Every day.
15:00 to 20:00.
Burr 750 ISK,
Wine 800 ISK.

SPÁNSKI BARINN
Every day.
From 14:00 to 20:00.
Burr 750 ISK,
Wine 750 ISK.

STUDENT-KJALLARIN
Every day.
From 15:00 to 18:00.
Burr 800 ISK,
Wine 800 ISK.

SUSHI SOCIAL
Every day.
From 17:00 to 18:00.
Burr 845 ISK,
Wine 745 ISK.

TAPAS BARINN
Every day.
From 17:00 to 18:00.
Burr 800 ISK,
Wine 745 ISK.

VEFUR
Every day.
From 12:00 to 19:35.
Burr 800 ISK.
Wine 745 ISK.

FITSTOFAN
Every day.
From 15:00 to 20:00.
Burr 750 ISK,
Wine 800 ISK.

1,000 ISK And Under

DOMINOS
All day Tuesday.
Medium sized
pizza with three
toppings - 1,000
ISK.

HARDCORE CAFE
Every day.
15:00 - 18:00.

Nacho’s, wings &
onion rings -
990 ISK.

ANTKÁLNNIN
SUNDAY -
MONDAY.
15:00 - 19:00.
Soup of the day -
990 ISK.

FISH & CHIPS
All day.
15:00 - 18:00.
With chips &
sala - 1,300 ISK.

SOLÉN
Monday - Friday.
11:00 - 14:30.
Caesar salad -
1,490 ISK.

LEMON
Every day.
16:00 - 21:00.
211 Juice +
sandwich
1,995 ISK.

SÁLTÍK
Every day.
12:00 - 14:30.
Curry - 1,390 ISK.

SÆTA SVÍNI
Vegan option.

SUSHI SOCIAL
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15:00 - 18:00.
Burr & fries -
1,390 ISK.

VEFUR
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12:00 to 19:35.
Burr 800 ISK.
Wine 745 ISK.

VEFUR
Every day.
15:00 to 20:00.
Burr 750 ISK,
Wine 800 ISK.

SPÁNSKI BARINN
Every day.
From 14:00 to 20:00.
Burr 750 ISK,
Wine 750 ISK.

STUDENT-KJALLARIN
Every day.
From 15:00 to 18:00.
Burr 800 ISK,
Wine 800 ISK.

SUSHI SOCIAL
Every day.
From 17:00 to 18:00.
Burr 845 ISK,
Wine 745 ISK.

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Burr 800 ISK.
Wine 745 ISK.

FITSTOFAN
Every day.
From 15:00 to 20:00.
Burr 750 ISK,
Wine 800 ISK.

IF YOU’RE LOOKING FOR THE REAL REYKJAVIK

HEAD FOR THE HEART OF THE CITY & STAY LIKE A LOCAL!

From urban chic to simple & snug, each hotel offers something a little different.

center hotels
CENTERHOTELS.COM
The Geldingadallur eruption provided unique experiences for hikers and tourists, but it also piqued the creativity of photographers who ventured out to capture the blazing but momentous event. Luckily for those who didn’t make it out to the eruption in person—and those who did, but want a better way to remember the experience than their dodgy iPhone pics—a handful of amazing photography books have been published with Geldingadallur as the star.

Our so-called fire photographers range from the little-known snap-happy household names and distinguished geologists. Here are the books we’re loving from them right now.

**Book Your Table**
**Tapasbarinn**
Vesturgata 3B | Tel: 551 2344 | tapas.is

**Happy Hour**
15-18

**Beer** 790 KR.
**Cocktails** 1490 KR.

**Icelandic Gourmet Feast**
Starts with a shot of the infamous Icelandic spirit Brennivín
Followed by 7 delicious tapas
• Smoked puffin with blueberry “brennivín” sauce
• Icelandic Arctic Char with pepppers-salsa
• Lobster tails baked in garlic
• Pan-fried line caught blue ling with lobster sauce
• Icelandic lamb with beer-butterscotch sauce
• Minke Whale with cranberry & malt sauce
And for dessert
• White chocolate “Skyr” mousse with passion coulis

8.990 KR.

**Icelandic Gourmet Feast**

**Books about Volcanos in Iceland**

**Valur Grettisson**
*Earth: A Photographic Journey of Iceland*

**Art Bicnick**
*Gazette: Iceland’s Lost Volcanoes*

**Books**

**Words:** Valur Grettisson
**Photo:** Art Bicnick

**Books about Volcanos in Iceland**

British photographer Max Milligan is perhaps not a household name in Iceland—but he’s a regular visitor to Iceland, photographing everything from landscapes to the world’s first female president, Vigdis Finnbogadóttir. He published his book, ‘Birth of a Volcano’, last year after making the difficult hike to the eruption with 11 kilos (24 lbs) of equipment on his back every time. Max also made it into Icelandic news when he captured the eruption under the northern lights—a very rare shot, considering the months over which the volcano erupted. Over the past two decades, Max has photographed Etna, Vesuvius and Stromboli in Italy as well as Bromo in Indonesia, making him one of the most experienced volcano photographers on this list.

Belgian photographer Jeroen Van Nieuwenhove is perhaps the least known name on this list, but he also offers an intriguing insight into the volcano in his book, ‘New Earth: A Photographic Journey of the Geldingadallur Eruption’. He shot the volcano from a more intimate perspective over the course of his 44 hikes spanning the life of the eruption. The book is Jeroen’s attempt to share his own experiences with the volcano with the reader, with text written in the style of a personal diary from his many visits. Check this one out for a more personal approach to a massive natural event.

**Guess what? You can grab your copy of these books on shop.grapevine.is**
The Reykjavík Grapevine
Issue 01—2022

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

Edda Hulda Ólafardóttir

Words: Reetta Huhta
Photo: Art Bicnick

Fancies is a Grapevine series where we highlight an individual with supreme style. Our latest subject is Edda Hulda Ólafardóttir (25), a law student at the University of Iceland and second-hand fashion lover obsessed with jackets and coats.

Wearing:
• Faux fur coat: Extraloppan
• Co-ord set: Red Cross
• Shoes: Kalfa shoes
• Earrings: Spúútnik
• Ring: Gyllti Kötturinn

Describe your style in five words:
My style can be many things and it changes all the time, but if I had to summarise it in five words I would say it’s colourful, extra, funky, chic and fun. But as I said, my style is many things and it varies from time to time and also according to my feelings.

Favourite stores in Reykjavík:
The majority of my clothes are bought second-hand, so definitely all the thrift shops around town, like the Red Cross, Spúútnik, Extraloppan and Lóla Florens to name a few. I also love Hildur Yeoman’s clothes, she’s an Icelandic designer and has a boutique in Laugavegur.

Favourite piece:
I have to admit I’m obsessed with jackets. My favourite one is probably a violet faux fur coat that I thrifted from Extraloppan. I have a crazy amount of jackets and coats and I was always joking that when I buy my 100th jacket, I will have to throw a party. So when that happened, I celebrated the achievement with my friends. I had lined my coats in the living room, and all my friends picked one to wear for the night. It was such a fun night.

Something I would never wear:
That’s a hard question to answer, because I might not wear one thing by itself, but when it’s paired with something else it might look good. Also, my style is constantly changing, so something that I wouldn’t find wearable right now might become the thing I’m obsessed with next week. But if I had to mention one thing I’m pretty sure I will never put on, it would be Crocks.

Lusting after:
Faux fur hat for the winter! I really need it, but I haven’t found one yet.

Happy Hour 15-17 every day

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

FJALLKONAN WELCOMES YOU!

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 char, chickpea blini, horseradish sauce, roe, crispy lentils, yuzu-elderflower dressing

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

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

SKYR ETON MESS CHEESECAKE
White chocolate “Skyr” mousse, meringue, raspberries, raspberry sauce
Few projects have been awaited with such bated breath as the opening of The Reykjavík Edition—and the wait has been worthwhile. A combined effort by the Ian Schrager Company and Marriott International, (yes the same Marriott with luxury chains such as the Ritz Carlton in its varied portfolio), Reykjavík’s Edition is the latest outpost of the bold chain that prides itself on bringing together high-quality design and unique dining experiences rooted in the local, but with a global flair.

Iceland is a unique travel destination by all accounts. This land—remote until recently—has quickly risen to the top of every list, while continuing to be expensive as heck. The steep prices don't always translate to luxury and, in a country with a pronounced vacuum in this particular segment, Edition seizes the opportunity and delivers some genuine “aha” moments.

Twinkly winter’s night
Delayed intermittently due to various factors, the hotel quietly opened its doors in ‘preview mode’ in November last year. The construction itself has been a matter of much local debate and discussion, and curiosity has been high.

While you can walk to the Edition from Harpa, I recommend the harbourside walk instead. Crossing over from Hafnartorg, the harbour flanks you on the left, making for an enjoyable stroll to the main lobby. The entire building complex oozes newness; I swear I imagined I could smell the shuo sogi ban cladding. Designed by local firm T.ark in partnership with Ian Schrager Company design and the esteemed NY practice Roman and Williams, the design team delivers on its promise of sophistication that embraces you from the start. The atrium’s LED lit awning makes for a twinkly winter’s night welcome, only outshone by the warm reception by the bellhop.

Lobby Bar
Open 12pm to 11pm
As at other Edition properties, it is best to kick things off with a drink at the Lobby Bar. A staple of the chain, an extended lobby beyond the reception is home to a retro modern bar. It does feel a bit awkward placed between two main entrances, but hey, it’s called the Lobby Bar for a reason. On my many visits, I have enjoyed well executed cocktails, although the mocktails are equally pleasing. The bartenders will fix you exactly the drink you have in mind and the regularly replenished bowl of house-made chips warrant a drink … and another and another.

Tölt
Open 6pm to 10pm
Named after the distinctive gait of the Icelandic horse, Tölt is a speak-easy-inspired, password access only, walnut bubble of plush bar, serving curated spirits and unhurried discreet service. The pandemic has meant that openings have been disrupted but I can see its intimate ambience being quite the draw. The Edition when at full service will also have a rooftop bar, a disco and spa replete with hammams. For now, the Lobby Bar and Tölt are available for guests staying at the hotel and walk-ins.

Tides Cafe
Open 6am to 5pm
For early birds, Tides Cafe offers in-house baked goods and house drinks. The kanil snuður and vínar–brauð are moreish and super-local, but leaving without a cardamom snuður would be inexcusable.

Wine & Dine in the Lap of Luxury
Exploring all things fine and refined at Iceland’s first five-star hotel
Words: Shruthi Basappa  Photos: Art Bicnick
Food
Laugavegi 28
537 99 00
sumac@sumac.is
sumac.is

Roman and Williams bring their signature tactile richness, juxtaposing a striking timber coffered ceiling with fluted concrete columns, holding aloft the restaurant in a golden glow of warmth. The restaurant has the most Instagram-friendly lighting, and is a dream to look at no matter where one is seated.
Great variety

While breakfast is wonderful, dinner is truly memorable. You are warmly greeted and escorted, and the maitre—most likely Alex—is likely to make small talk; a welcome trait for service in Iceland. If you're a regular, he'll remember you. AIG Martini, is a must—Gunnar’s own recipe by way of Bombay is a potent, stiff drink that isn’t fooling around. The non-alcoholic drinks are grown up as well, eschewing sugary sweet syrups in lieu of fresh, natural flavours.

The wine list straddles old and new worlds with a smattering of natural wines, (be warned of the steep pricing). Choices by the glass may be limited, but what they do have are often hard to find in Iceland such as Sammarzis Estate Merlot & Mourvèdra from Greece. I was a little disappointed to find no dessert wines offered by the glass, which can make dinning out as a couple or on your own a tad less exciting, especially when a bottle of Argentinian Vinyes Ocults from Tomás Stähringer is on offer. But as I have come to learn, there is nothing a polite request won’t fix. Venonika, the sommelier, is especially good at making such requests happen.

Mind the grilled chicken

The lamb tartare with whimsically small fläskök is a great start, if you haven’t already had too much of the complimentary milk bread. Celebratory Icelandic produce is centre stage. There is cod; Dover sole currently makes an appearance; a superb whole lamb shoulder cooked so tenderly that it fell apart with a sigh; and a very Christmassy-looking stuffed grilled trout with garlic butter, its expert cooking proving the kitchen’s skills with the Josper grill. Beef choices are from the US but their origins are worryingly unclear, a detail I hope the restaurant will redress; knowing the providence of produce does make for a more enjoyable dining experience.

Regardless, may I draw your attention to the grilled chicken. Meant to be shared by two, but really it serves four, this dish best encapsulates the spirit of Tides. A familiar dish takes on an edge by being served deboned, whole, with a luscious sauce poured tableside. Were it not for the elegant settings, it’s a dish I would tear into barehanded. The grilled to-share dishes are all served with a side of vegetables. I am particularly fond of the nutty kabocha squash served alongside them, with the seeds also roasted and ground, adding a certain je ne sais quoi to the sesame-strewed sauce.

What they do, they do well

As with the rest of the menu, desserts are a refined take on homey classics. Like the carrot cake, which takes on a rich fruit cake appearance, or the chocolate ice cream with black pepper and olive oil. Does some of the fare at Tides scream dated? Sure. It may not be a bold, mould-breaking menu, but what they do they do so very well. What is groundbreaking about The Reykjavík Edition, however, is the steering service—from the bellhops to the maitre’d to the waiters to the bartenders, and everyone you encounter from check-in to breakfast service the day after. Not once does it falter. Sure the early days of its opening made for delightful social studies for the observant. The awkwardness of guests unaccustomed to coat checks, and the sometimes stiff reactions to small talk, (which I find absolutely refreshing), have now given way to awe responses—“It’s like you are not in Iceland!” It is disappointedly telling if one thinks of the providence of produce does make for a more enjoyable dining experience.

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Iceland was, until recently, essentially rural. Rapid urbanisation after 1900 changed the country forever and despite Iceland being revered for its beautiful landscape, 94% of the population live in towns and cities. Icelanders are, in effect, tamed.

How do Icelanders see themselves now? As the stoic farmer, resourceful and determined? Or the bright, fast-walking urbanite, animatedly holding court in Kaffibarinn? These images reject one another, and politically too, the lines between countryside and capital are stark.

To the north
Skagaströnd sits on the western shore of the Skagi headland. In the early December weather, the drive here is anything but tame. The roads are icy and snow snakes across them in treacherous corkscresses. We arrive after nightfall and Skagaströnd twinkles welcomingly as we descend into the town.

We’re here to film, and to see what Skagaströnd has to offer us, visitors to a farm somewhere, am instantly charmed. My editor, the city boy, condemns Skagaströnd as a ghost town. We are probably both right.

We’re staying at Salthús Guesthouse. Once a building for salting cod, it now hosts tourists and visiting artists alike. The rooms are warm and smartly decorated and the shared kitchen looks over the harbour below. It’s also minutes from the pool, our first port of call. You can tell a lot about a community from its pool.

Food for thought
Harbour Restaurant is beautifully decorated. There is one other table, a large family. No tourists. The food is well-cooked, if not exciting. As a visitor you always hope to see local produce featured on the menu—varieties of fresh fish or cheeses from nearby farms. But there is instead the usual lamb, burgers and pizza. At the end of the day, tourism here is limited, both from foreigners and Icelanders. When locals go out, they just want a decent, normal meal.

The pub, Hólanes, is an unexpected building, a log cabin in a landscape replete of trees. A few people are drinking in disparate duos, and a TV is blasting covers of pop songs. We commandeer the pool table, the barman offers us control of the music and suddenly it’s a real Friday night. I’ve never played pool and so I am, unsurprisingly, terrible. People offer me tips and eventually we’ve made friends with half the bar. When closing time comes we invite the two left to join us for a night-cap.

Creative thinking
The young men are filmmakers, and, what’s more, they’re here as part of an incredible arts programme, NES residency. In 2008, while the country was falling apart due to the financial crash, the council here responded to the closure of the fish processing plant in a creative way. They converted the building into a large arts space, and invited creators from all over the world to come to Skagaströnd. In a village with a population of 470, more than 100 artists may visit in a year, to paint, sing, film, photograph, dance, sculpt and breathe more life into the town.

It’s fitting that it’s here, not the city, that we are faced with this juxtaposition: new and old, frivolous artist and mundane worker, fisherman and poet. But Skagaströnd rejects this tiresome debate. A couple of centuries ago, Icelandic farmers entertained themselves during haymaking with self-composed poetry, attempting to outdo each other with the complexity of their alliteration. Art and labour were intrinsically intertwined.

The sun rises late: it’s close to the solstice. From the little kitchen window I watch the town appear in the gloaming, street by street. Finally the streetlights go out and the mountain above the village glows orange and pink in the winter light. It is astonishingly beautiful. The harbour below is busy as always, with fishermen jostling in bright yellow waterproofs. On the pier are two young filmmakers preparing to shoot.

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HORROR-SCOPES

2022 Edition
The only article you need to read

Words: Andie Sophie Fontaine & Josie Saitens

In this edition of Horror-Scopes, our mystic mind readers are tapping into the anthropomorphised positions of stars to tell you what 2022 has in store for you. This is 100% scientifically accurate. Look it up if you don’t believe us.

Aries
Don’t know what to tell you Ar-ies, since, no matter what we say, you’re not going to listen if you happen to disagree with it, so let’s just assume we said this’ll be the best year of your life and keep that confirmation bias chugging happily along.

Cancer
For the love of all things holy, throw out those “underpants”.

Leo
You started 2020 by announcing it was your, “Year to shine,” and 2021 by saying, “So long Covid!” For 2022, we’d like you to stop making predictions. Leave that to us, please.

Virgo
You begin January 2022 as you do every new year: naked in the bathroom of your parents’ house, carefully removing every single one of your body hairs with tweezers. Only when this task is complete can you start the new year as god intended: smooth and hairless, like a happy baby newt.

Libra
"It’s New Year’s! Honestly I hadn’t noticed, hah. What’s this? Oh it’s just the hottest, most popular bullet journal that I’ve already filled with meticulous plans for the coming 12 months. Colour coded, of course. No, you can’t touch it."

Scorpio
Time to start howling at the moon, I guess.

Sagittarius
After watching ‘Don’t Look Up’ over the holidays, you are unsure what energy is best to take into 2023: the burning fury at living in a technologically stupefied and inherently unjust world, or the burning desire to make out with nerd Jennifer Lawrence. We’re here to tell you: definitely both.

Capricorn
The start of the new year belongs to you, dear Capricorn, so make sure you start it right. Dust your anime girl figurines. Wash your dakimakura (seriously). Re-organise your manga collection in alphabetical order. This is your year to get organised.

Aquarius
Everyone wants a hot goth gf. But has anyone asked the hot goth gf what she wants? Make your wishes and desires known this year. Even to those who should know better. You’ll be glad you did.

Pisces
You know that one family member who leaves passive-aggressive comments on your Facebook posts? Who will share poorly-sourced anti-mask articles and tag you in them? Who cannot seem to stfu about who the U.S. president actually is? Good news: this is the year you piss them off so bad they block you for good.

Gemini
For 2022, you will finally get into a series at the same time everyone else is. So long, late-to-the-party syndrome: hello hype train!

COUNTRY SHOT

by Art Bicnick

Metal Island being Metal

WELL, YOU ASKED

Let There Be Enough Light To See By
Words: Josie Anne Saitens

What is your favourite Icelandic word?
I did a quick poll of the office, and the general consensus is that the most beautiful is the Icelandic word for midwinter, “ljósabátur,” which literally means “mother of light.” Less commonly used but also lovely in sentiment is “reflóósi,” which translates to “enough light to see by.”

How much do you miss the sight of the volcano, 1 – 10. Because for me it’s a 12.
I’m with you there, buddy. I miss her so much, it actually feels as if the volcano and I have endured a drawn out and heart-rending divorce that resulted in her making off with the kids and the Porsche, leaving me rattling around the home alone, playing Phoebe Bridgers on repeat. I just want you back, babe.

Do you like fireworks for celebrating the new year?
There is nothing Icelanders love more than fireworks. Only the Search and Rescue teams are allowed to sell them, so it’s also part of a big fundraising effort. You’ll see crowds of men huddled around these temporary stores the week before New Year’s Eve, delightedly comparing rockets and firecrackers like kids in a sweet shop. And I say, let them. Let’s fill the night with a thousand stars as a grand and futile gesture of light in the darkest days of the year. A glorious in midsle finger to the heavens to protest the bleakness, the perpetual night, the aching cold, and the fact you didn’t receive the lopapeysa you wanted for Christmas. Amen.
“Naturally the perfect day of a volcanologist includes a natural disaster.”
Elísabet Pálmaidóttir, specialist in natural hazards at the Icelandic Met Office.

“OK, we’re together in the studio. And the takes are just gonna be the takes. And no bullshit.”
Magnús Jóhann, composer, musician and no-messing producer.

“Don’t be disturbed by the last card. Death actually represents transformation.”
Natalia Brook, tarot reader.

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