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The REYKJAVÍK



GRAPEVINE

THE SEVENTH ANNUAL

REYKJAVÍK

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VINE

BEST ALBUM:  
GDRN - HVAD EF

MUSIC

AWARDS

2019

Also in this issue:

**Broke 'n' Angry**

Revitalised labour movement is a force to be reckoned with

**Road Tolls**

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GDRN

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Magnús Andersen

**MAKE UP BY:**  
Anna Vilhjálmsdóttir

**SET BY:**  
Hallveig Kristín Eiríksdóttir

**ABOUT THE PICTURE:**  
Our music awards shoot took place over the Christmas break at The Space Reykjavík, a co-working unit in Grandi. Everyone was in good spirits, coming out of their Christmas bubble, and this soft holiday feeling permeates the photos.



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**24: All Music Everything**



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# First

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# 2019

Prins Póló getting the royal treatment

## A Diverse Year Of Music

**EDITORIAL** Another new year means a fresh edition of The Reykjavík Grapevine's Music Awards. We start off with a bang, celebrating our best musicians of the year, according to a panel of Icelandic music experts.

Spoiler: **Ólafur Arnalds** was voted the artist of the year, and rightly so. He is one of Iceland's biggest international stars (third biggest if you look at his staggering numbers on Spotify, where more than two million listeners tune in to his music every month—more than those who listened to **Björk** and **Sigur Rós**. (Not that we care about petty stuff like that.) Ólafur also showed the world this year that he is not only a fantastic musician, his concerts are an ambitious visual experience that you will never forget.

Our cover star, **GDRN** (an acronym of Guðrún) had a big impact on the Icelandic music scene with her debut album, 'Hvað Ef' ('What if?') sweeping the nation with her charms and talents. She is leading

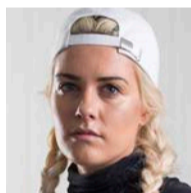
the charge a young, fresh musicians that also includes **bagdad brothers**, who we've named the Best Live Act this year. In our pop, R'n'B and hip-hop dominated music environment, they're showing that indie still has a chance.

The music year of 2018 was incredibly diverse. We had strong albums in all genres, from metal to rock to hip-hop and electro. Even the classical music scene in Iceland is making serious waves, with three Icelanders making the New York Times's list of 25 Best Classical Music Tracks of 2018. And Björk is up for a Grammy, yet again. So all in all, 2018 was a fantastic year for Icelandic music.

You can find the complete list in our **music award feature starting on page 19**. You can also see what caught our music writers' attention on **page 34**. Look out for info on the awards party at Húrra on January 11th. Finally: we want to hear from you, too. Have your say in our Readers Poll at [gpv.is/musicvote18](http://gpv.is/musicvote18) **VG**



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



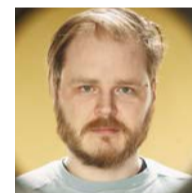
**Hannah Jane Cohen** is based out of Iceland by way of New York. An alumni of **Columbia University**, Hannah has lived on five continents and speaks three languages fluently, which is very impressive. Her visionary work is known for expanding the definitions of emotion, introspection, and above all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



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



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



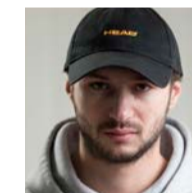
**Sveinbjörn Pálsson** is Grapevine's Art Director. When he isn't poring over fonts and obscure house music in the better coffee houses of Reykjavík, he can be found advising cats and helping old ladies carry their shopping. He's single, ladies.



**Kolbeinn Arnaldur Dalrymple** is Grapevine's business reporter, contributing to daily news and print issues alike. He is also the chairman of the Equal Rights Youth Association, and lives in beautiful downtown Hafnarfjörður.



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



**Timothée Lambrecq** is a French freelance photographer and filmmaker who can be found exploring Iceland's nature, small towns and 101 music scene, or on the dancefloor at Berghain in Berlin. He's made music videos for sóley, JFDR and Samaris, likes shibas and techno, and is an avid burger aficionado.



**Lóa Hlin Hjalmtýsdóttir** is a national treasure. One of Iceland's leading illustrators, when she's not drawing she's the frontwoman of Icelandic electro-pop supergroup FM Belfast. Her comic strip Lóabratórium appears every issue on page eight, and is also available as a daily dose on her Twitter.

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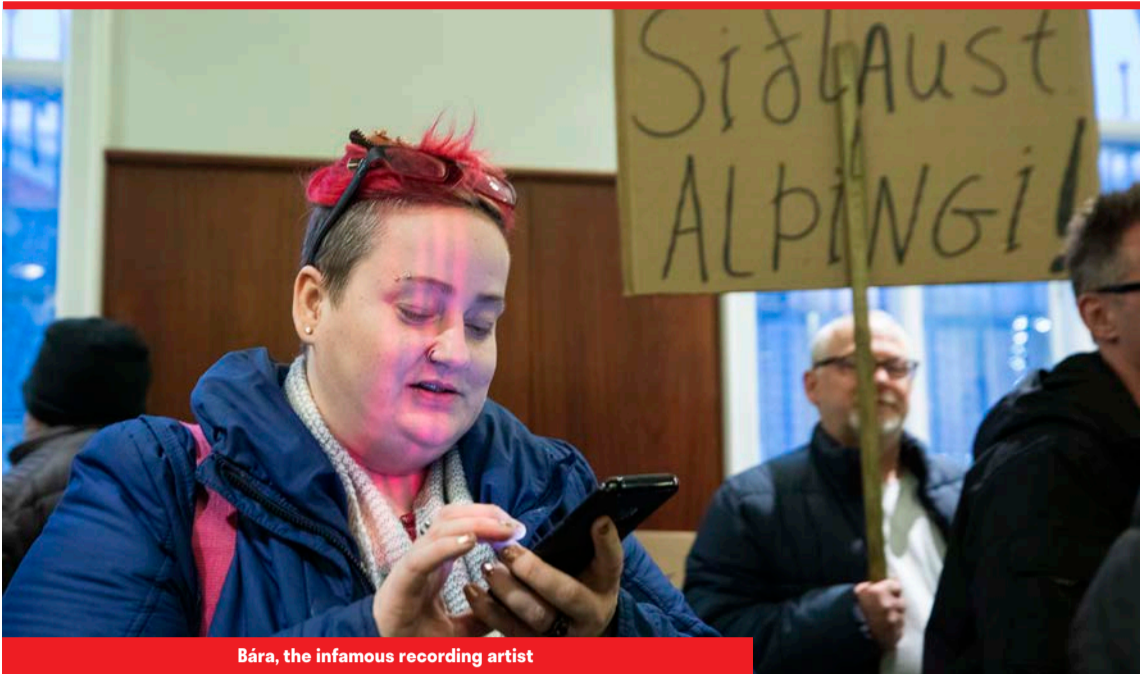


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Bárna, the infamous recording artist

# What Are Icelanders Talking About?

The latest and greatest in social media outrage

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

**NEWS** In a story that has made international headlines, **three died in a fatal accident** in South Iceland in the last week of December. Seven passengers were in a Toyota Land Cruiser, which fell from the bridge over the Núpsá river, the cause of which has yet not been determined at the time of writing. Most tragic of all, this was reportedly a family trip: two brothers with their wives and children were visiting Iceland from the UK. Both of the women and a child less than a year old died, with the two men and two young children left critically injured. The incident has raised concerns about the numerous one-lane bridges around Iceland, many of which are old and do not meet current safety requirements.

The **Klausturgate trial** at Reykjavik District Court has not gone well for the four Centre Party MPs trying to cast aspersions on Bárna Halldórsdóttir, the woman who recorded them speaking abusively about their female colleagues last November. They have contended that Bárna could not have acted alone, demanding security footage from the bar Klaustur, where they had their conversation, and have moved to summon witnesses as tangential as the minister for the National Cathedral. The court has pretty much dismissed all of their requests. Maybe they should have just cut their losses after apologising—as it is, the parliamentarians

are digging an ever-deepening hole, and no one is taking the shovel away from them.

It seems Reykjavik Mayor **Dagur B. Eggertsson** isn't out of the woods yet in the so-called **bunker case**, which drew attention last October when it came to light that the city had gone well over-budget

for the renovation of a restaurant at Nauthólsvík. At the time, councilpersons for the majority said the city regularly goes over-budget on projects. An internal review of the matter, brought to light in the third week of December, however, came to the conclusion that the reason why this project went over budget was mainly due to a lack of supervision, violating numerous city guidelines and possibly the law, implicating both Dagur and the former head of the city's properties division, Hrólfur Jónsson. This revelation sparked renewed calls for Dagur's resignation, both within the council minority, and amongst regular Icelanders. Dagur has been adamant that he will not resign, so who knows. ❄️



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# Walrus, Once Plentiful In Iceland, Were Wiped Out By Settlers

The seldom-seen sea mammal disappeared with the Vikings

**NEWS**

New research has brought to light two amazing facts about pre-settlement Iceland: there was once a special “breed” of Icelandic walrus which was abundant across West Iceland, and the dawn of earnest settlement of the island heralded the end of the creature. Fréttablaðið reported that the research was a joint effort of the University of Iceland, the University of

Copenhagen and the Icelandic Museum of Natural History, where the genetic material of some 300 walrus bones found in Iceland was examined. This genetic material contained particular mutations that are not found anywhere else in the world, indicating that this walrus population was particular to Iceland. By their estimates, the walrus, which inhabited the Icelandic

coastline pretty much exclusively in the West, may have been here from as far back as 6,000 years BCE. In a story that brings to mind such creatures as the great auk and the dodo, humankind would end up spelling the downfall of the creature. When the first settlers began to arrive in Iceland in the 9th century, the walrus were hunted enthusiastically. So enthusiastically, in fact, that the Vikings almost single-handedly wiped out the Icelandic walrus stock. Today, walrus do on occasion find their way to Icelandic shores. In fact, there are some walrus populations in Greenland and Svalbard which bear some genetic similarities with the old Icelandic stock. The Icelandic settlers might not have cut down all of the country’s trees, as is popularly contended, but they are quite definitively the reason why there’s no such thing as an Icelandic walrus today.

Words: **Andie Fontaine**  
Photo: **Gary Bembridge**

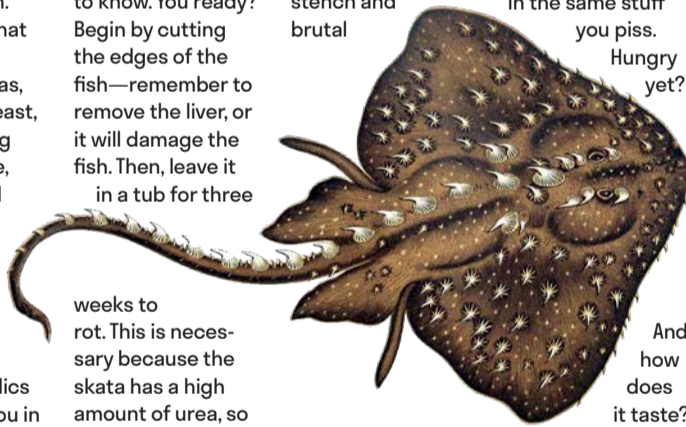
**FOOD OF ICELAND**

## Skata

Have you ever eaten something and got the feeling that the food is literally trying to kill you? No? Well, then you haven’t tried the traditional fermented Icelandic dish ‘skata’, or ‘skate’ in English. Skata is an old Icelandic Christmas tradition that is part of the celebration on the mass of Saint Þorlákur on December 23rd. As with most rotten things, we inherited skata from the self-hating Catholic church. They believed that you should fast before Christmas, or, at the very least, not eat anything good. Therefore, they developed the custom to only eat damaged fish on the day of Saint Þorlákur. You can always trust the Catholics to remember you in the nicest way. But how do you prepare skata? We’re

not sure you want to know. You ready? Begin by cutting the edges of the fish—remember to remove the liver, or it will damage the fish. Then, leave it in a tub for three weeks to rot. This is necessary because the skata has a high amount of urea, so while the fish rots, the urea changes into ammonia, which gives the

fish its delicious stench and brutal taste—which can only be described as a full frontal assault. In fewer



words: It marinates in the same stuff you piss. Hungry yet? And how does it taste? It’s hard to explain, exactly. But the short version is that if it’s well prepared, it literally takes your breath away, as the stink of the cooking is notorious, and is probably the closest that the Icelandic nation gets to chemical warfare. After you’ve been to a Skötuparty, it’s recommended that you burn your clothes, scrub yourself in the shower, fall onto the floor, and cry a little bit—if not for yourself, at least do it for Saint Þorlákur. VG

**ASKA**

## Comedy Writer

Q: What Can Indriði Tell Us About The Icelandic Character?



Words: **Andie Fontaine**  
Photo: **Ari Magg**

Jón Gnarr is known to many of our readers as the fun-loving former mayor of Reykjavík, but his local claim to fame is based in large part on some of the many comedic characters he has created. One unlikely success is his character Indriði, a perpetually shouting and outraged man who issues an endless litany of petty complaints. This character resonated strongly with Icelanders, leading us to wonder just what it is about him that speaks to the national character, so we asked the creator himself. “Indriði was not based on any one person that I remember, but rather a type that I created for the Tvíhöfði serial sketch programme Smásálin, a call-in radio show. Indriði didn’t get much attention when he first appeared, and for some reason he never appeared in the VHS copies we published. It wasn’t until he appeared on DVD that the character became a success. I had actually completely forgotten about him and his popularity surprised me greatly. “Indriði is naturally a human archetype of Icelandic laziness and eccentricity. We are a society that’s still at the first stage of civilisation. Indriði is a kind of petty farmer who realises he’s in the city.” Complaining about small things is somewhat of a national pastime. Indriði, who will complain loudly about such things as leaky faucets and noisy radiators at a corporate board meeting, is then a hyperbolic depiction of this facet of the Icelandic character.



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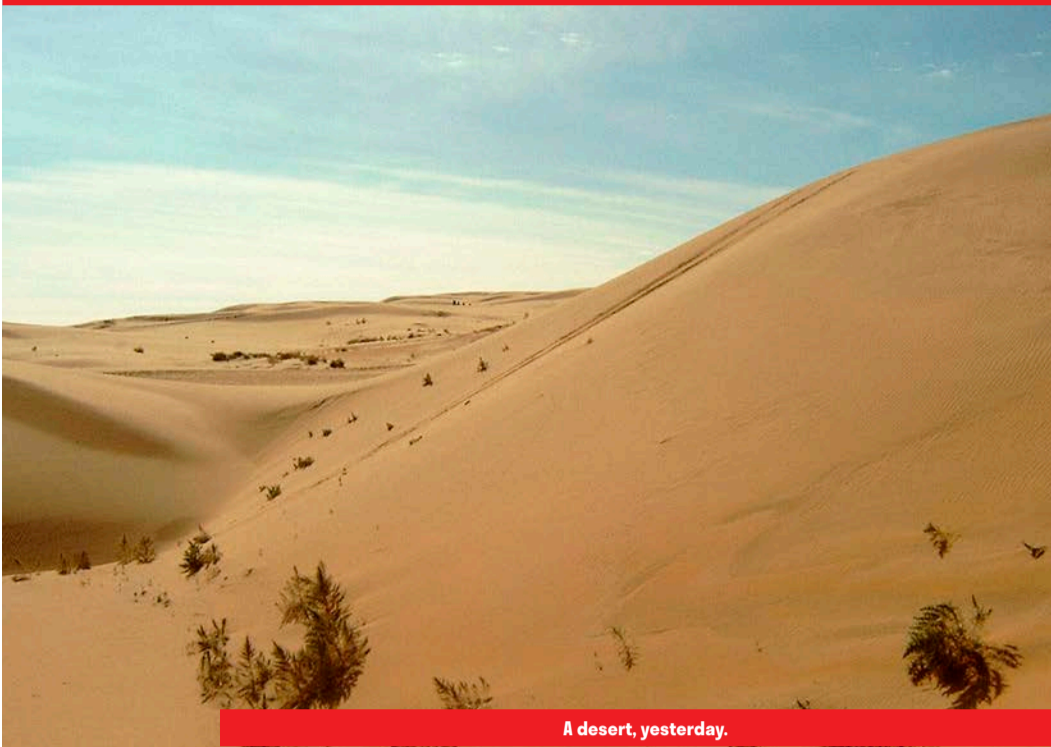


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A desert, yesterday.

**WHAT HAVE WE WON?**

Words: Hannah Jane Cohen

Photo: Wikipedia

# The Hardest Race In The World

Putting the entire human race to shame

None of us here at the Grapevine can run 1 km without thinking we will die. We're a collection of drinkers, smokers, couch potatoes and DJs—not the most athletic bunch around. So, when

we heard that Elísabet Margeirsdóttir won the women's division of the 400 km Ultra Gobi Marathon in October 2018—simultaneously becoming the first woman to do so in under 100 hours—

we all fell to our knees to bow to our new Goddess.

**All hail Elísabet**

Running a marathon is cool, an ultramarathon impressive, but running the a is pretty much HOLY SHIT level action. The race is a non-stop, self-navigated, and self-supported ultramarathon held in the southern Gobi Desert in Western China. This means that runners have no trail to follow and instead rely on archaic objects like compasses, all the while holding all the food and supplies they will need throughout the race.

Elísabet completed the race in 96 hours and 54 minutes, dealing with temperatures ranging from 30° during the day to -10° at night. Apparently, she only rested for four hours during the entire race—and, according to her, this was only to avoid having the crazy hallucinations people often get during long races. Seriously, you thought the Icelandic men's football team was badass? They get to sleep in beds and wear clean socks. Sit down, boys.

**Ice cold**

At one point in the race, Elísabet had to pass through a river in the night, which caused her shoes to freeze. Yet, the absolute legend persisted. "If you believe in yourself and trust what you're doing, that does a lot. Also, the anticipation and excitement to finish keeps you going," she said of the experience.

Elísabet, seriously, you should be a national hero. We'll crowdfund the statue. 🍷

**WORD OF THE ISSUE**

**Skinhelgi**

Are you religious and convinced that it makes you a better person than the rest of us? Well, in Iceland that would be called, skinhelgi. 'Skin' means light and 'helgi' means holy. But the word basically means 'hypocrisy' and is used often in that context, although we also have the word 'hræsni' over that behaviour. Skinhelgi has also been suggested as a translation for the fairly new term 'virtue signalling,' although others prefer the word 'dyggðarskreyting,' which literally means 'decorating yourself with virtues.' Virtue signalling was a big part of last year's rhetoric in Iceland, as well as other countries, so that's why it's the word of the issue. **VG**

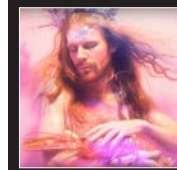


**LÓABORATORIUM**



**THE GRAPEVINE PLAYLIST**

The must-hear tracks of the issue



**Hermigervill - II**  
Well, whaddya know. You wait four years for the second Hermigervill record—with several teasing glimpses via wonderful, bouncy singles like 'Solitaire'—and he pulls a Beyoncé (or a Björk) and snap-releases it right before Christmas. Is it everything we hoped for? Yes, basically. It's a smart, playful, immaculately produced good-vibes mini-opus. Check it out on Spotify. **JR**

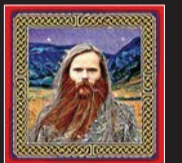
With three songs that span over 40 minutes, their effort serves up an enveloping world of cinematic and yet understated melancholia. Think dungeon synth that forgoes saccharinity. Good mood music for walking alone in the moonlight. **HJC**



**PSYCHOPLASMICS - 107 RVK**  
Prismatic yet weirdly comfortable beats made for dancing at 4:30 AM—what else could you expect from the collaboration of Lord Pu\$\$whip and Alfreð Drexler? A sequel to their 2014 hit '101 Reykjavík,' '107 Reykjavík' is the kindest thing they could play when you accidentally take acid on a night out in Berlin. **HJC**



**Sillus - Dapfly**  
Maybe Hermigervill's release strategy was influenced by his little sister sillus, who did the very same thing a day earlier and dropped a shiny new EP with no fanfare whatsoever. 'Dapfly' is a textured and interesting four track EP, with a simmering title track reminiscent of James Blake. Promising in the extreme. **JR**



**Teitur Magnússon - Kollgátan**  
Teitur Magnússon's 2018 album 'Orna' is a wonderful collection of skewed indie-pop, with a nostalgic, feel good, halcyon haze permeating the whole thing. The video for "Kollgátan" takes this up a level with a video of old summer holiday film footage of river crossings, ski-jumps, and what looks like a giraffe... in Iceland? Or maybe the family went abroad. Anyway, this is a great track. **JR**



**ZAKAZ - Kvalir**  
According to ZAKAZ, the black metal band's newest album, 'Kvalir,' is about emotional and physical coldness.

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## FOOTBALL



# Smitey Smitemas And A Smitey New Smite

At the halfway point of 2018-19 season,  
we check in on our Vikings-at-large

Words:  
John Rogers &  
Greig Robertsson

Illustration:  
Lóa Hlín  
Hjálmtýsdóttir

The Christmas period is a crazy time in football. With matches coming thick and fast—particularly in the English Premier League, where every team plays four matches between December 21st and January 3rd—this period can be decisive in how the league will take shape. At such urgent moments, the strength of Iceland's indefatigable

warriors has a momentous impact on the fate of their footballing clubs and paymasters; empires can rise and fall with a horn'd header or the kick of a spiked boot. From Moscow to Cardiff, here's what went down during Smitemas 2K18.

### Arnór and Hörður inspire Madrid smiting

Real Madrid 0-3 CSKA Moscow, said the vidiprinter. We rubbed our eyes. Real Madrid 0-3 CSKA Moscow, it read again. Of course, it was a duo of courageous Icelandic snow leopards who powered Moscow to this historic against-the-odds smiting at Estadio Santiago Bernabéu. Arnór Sigurðsson provided the firepower up front, scoring his side's third goal; Hörður Björgvin Magnússon shut out the Galacticos at the other end, leaving CSKA with an aggregate victory of 4-0 over the European Champions. On the home front, Iceland is also rocking the Russian top division—Moscow sit third in the Russian Premier League table, waiting for the opportune moment to pounce on leaders Zenit St. Petersburg—as they run screaming from the Viking-strengthened Moscow horde.

### Grétar Steinsson named Toffees' Senior Cub Pillager

Former Iceland and Bolton Wanderers smiter Grétar Steinsson left his role as Fleetwood Sporting Director this December to become Everton's Senior Club Pillager (Chief European Scout). Rumour has it that Grétar became so incensed with Joey Barton, the Fishermen's manager, that he took it upon himself to leave the Lancashire club for fear of tearing cigar-assaulting bad boy Barton limb from limb. The move means Grétar now links up with Iceland's talisman, Gylfi "Golden Boots" Sigurðsson at Goodison Park—and perhaps he'll look to recruit some further Viking reinforcements to the stuttering Everton squad.

### Aron heals Warnock's soul

For decades, Neil Warnock has occupied the liminal space between the Premier League and the Championship. Despite brief company from the likes of Dwight Gayle, Graham Dorrans and the whole noughties West Brom squad, his habitat grew to embitter him, manifesting in an irrational (and hilarious) hatred of Carlos Tevez and West Ham. However, this season, even when his side were languishing in the relegation zone, he has been serene, humorous and well-mannered. Why, you ask? Because Aron "The Annihilator" Gunnarsson was always in the ranks. After "The Annihilator's" return from injury, the Bluebirds have made the Cardiff City Stadium a

fortress; the difference could secure their status in the top flight. The magic is in the beard.

### Gylfi smites bird-brained pundits

Gylfi Sigurðsson has been lambasted in certain corners of the #fakenewsmedia since his £50 million move from Swansea to Everton. As recently as September, phlegmatic Sky Sports pundit Jamie Carragher was claiming that the "Viking Virtuoso" wasn't contributing enough to his side. Gylfi has—of course—proven him wrong, notching eight goals and assisting a further three in the league. That tally puts him ahead of media darlings like

Sadio Mané, Leroy Sané and Alexandre Lacazette in the goalscoring charts. "The Iceman" also ended his recent penalty hex against Burnley, scoring the Toffees' third in a 5-1 route on Boxing Day, after having missed spot kicks against Fulham and Watford earlier in the season. Instead of criticising the best player outside of the top six, maybe Carragher should stick to long-range gobbing.

### Burnley flounder without The Berg

Burnley's unlikely status as "best of the rest" of the 2017-18 Premier League season seems even more incredible at this moment. Sean Dyche's side have struggled from the start, and they occupy one of the three Premier League relegation spots at the halfway point this year. Why? One could point to the summer signing of washed-up perpetual conceiver Joe Hart, whose ineptitude was compounded by a suddenly frail back line, and the injury of star man Jóhann Berg Guðmundsson. Despite a banging World Cup hangover, "The Berginator" has contributed directly to six of the Clarets' 17 goals this season and will be integral to his side's fight for survival. One thing is for sure: Burnley will need every inch of Jóhann's fleet-footed skill to survive the relegation dogfight. ☘

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



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## Urban Planning 101

The city was without a strong, coherent plan for the second half of the last century, therefore it should not be too surprising that its current development plan is seen as radical by some. Relatively minor efforts to make the city more pedestrian friendly have been met with resistance. In 2011 the city began closing parts of Laugavegur to cars. The downtown merchants' association claimed the loss of less than 20 parking spaces would devastate their businesses. According to RÚV, In autumn 2018, the city council unanimously approved a proposal to close the street year-round with much less commotion. Anyone that visits the street will see it has plenty of foot traffic, as does much of the 101 district.

Björn also pointed out that “this toll proposal only applies to traffic going out of Reykjavík, whereas we should be trying to get people out of their cars within Reykjavík—including the western part of the city, Hlíðar, Miðbær and Vesturbær, where we have a dense, walkable city which does not need all this car traffic. Everything is easily reachable by foot, bike, or public transport in this area”.

Reykjavík has done little to discourage driving. Little parking has been eliminated. Surface lots are disappearing downtown, but underground garages often replace them. Björn believes the city should go further.

“Public transit (Borgarlína), pedestrian and biking infrastructure, and the densification of urban space are useful but more needs to be done. We need less parking, more pedestrian spaces, more streets reserved for only pedestrians. In Iceland people somehow think these measures are radical, but all they need to do is look around. Every city is doing it. All we have to do, for a much more liveable city, is to want the change, and execute that change. Simple as that”.

## Bigger Impact

Björn emphasized the wider and more obscure benefits of less driving. There are the obvious environmental solutions, and not so obvious ones, too. Using other forms of transport leads to less consumption of useless things and food waste. Between 20 and 50 pedestrians are killed every year, a staggering number given the city's size. Fewer drivers and more walkable streets would save many lives. Icelanders are the unhealthiest of the Nordics, which can in part be attributed to our car-enabled sedentary lifestyle.

Iceland has a reputation for environmentalism. This is understandable given clean electricity, sprawling majestic landscapes, and good PR. But it is unwarranted in many ways. Icelanders drive so much that there

are regularly health warnings for those with breathing issues to stay indoors. Björn emphasizes that individual need to take the initiative. “People stuck in traffic are very keen on complaining that the traffic needs to be fixed. Well, they are the traffic. It won't be fixed unless you

stop being the problem,” says Björn. “It's exactly like someone in a crowded room is smoking, and then he or she would complain about the smoke. Well... the solution is pretty obvious.”

The war rages on. 🍷

# Road Tolls Are Coming

The next battle in Iceland's war on the private car

Words:  
**Kolbeinn Arnaldur  
Dalrymple**

Photos:  
**Art Bicnick  
& Timothée  
Lambrecq**

Road tolls and radical urban planning are among this year's challenges for the city of Reykjavík.

Reykjavík and the surrounding municipalities are a sprawling post-war region. Though Iceland was a poor, agrarian society well into the 20th century, the flood of money from the

Bauhaus University, half of the city's built land is paved for cars, and Icelanders are second only to Cyprus in car ownership and use. After the shocking election of Jón Gnarr in 2010, the city developed a modern and comprehensive plan that focuses on increasing density and diversifying transport options. Compared to cities around the world, these plans are modest. But they have sparked loud controversy.

Business groups feared that pedestrianized streets and minimally reduced parking availability would hurt sales. It has been characterized as a war on the car by the hyperbolic. The latest battle in the war erupted as the government presented a new transportation plan at the end of the fall parliamentary term. The plan included funding for a popular new bus rapid transit system for the capital region called Borgarlínan, and the decidedly unpopular introduction of road tolls around the country.

## Taxing Tolls

Iceland's roads have been underfunded since the financial crisis of 2008. The main purpose of the proposed tolls is increase state revenue for maintenance and expansions. As the car fleet transitions to electric vehicles, road tolls may replace fuel and carbon taxes. Björn noted that the government's plan “doesn't really tackle the bigger issue, which is the problem of Iceland having too many private cars. And note, elec-

tric vehicles are also cars, and they need very expensive road and infrastructure. Furthermore, if an electric car will hit you, a pedestrian, you are just as dead as if it were a carbon fuelled vehicle.” The state is effectively subsidizing electric vehicles, but the overabundance of used former rental vehicles has saturated the market, making car ownership easier and much cheaper.

Björn believes “Icelandic car owners have been pampered for decades compared to other countries and cities”. The toll provision sparked immediate outrage. Road tolls are rare in Iceland. The most well-known toll, for use of the Hvalfjörður Tunnel, was revoked in the fall once the project was paid off.

It is important to put these proposed new tolls in wider context. Fuel taxes and tolls are highly regressive forms of taxation that put a heavier burden on lower income people. The tax burden has been shifting from the rich to the poor since 2013. The conservative dominated governments of the past five years eliminated a wealth tax, luxury VAT, lowered fishing fees on a favoured industry, and raised taxes on food. After some push-back from the general population, the ruling coalition postponed debate on the road tolls later in 2019.

**“Icelandic car owners have been pampered for decades compared to other countries and cities”.**



Björn Teitsson

Second World War, the Marshall Plan, and the Cold War US base brought expansive suburban environs and, to navigate them, cars. Aside from a small and walkable pre-war downtown core, the city grew with the car in mind, bypassing dense urbanism of the industrial revolution.

According to Björn Teitsson, an M.Sc. student of urban studies at the



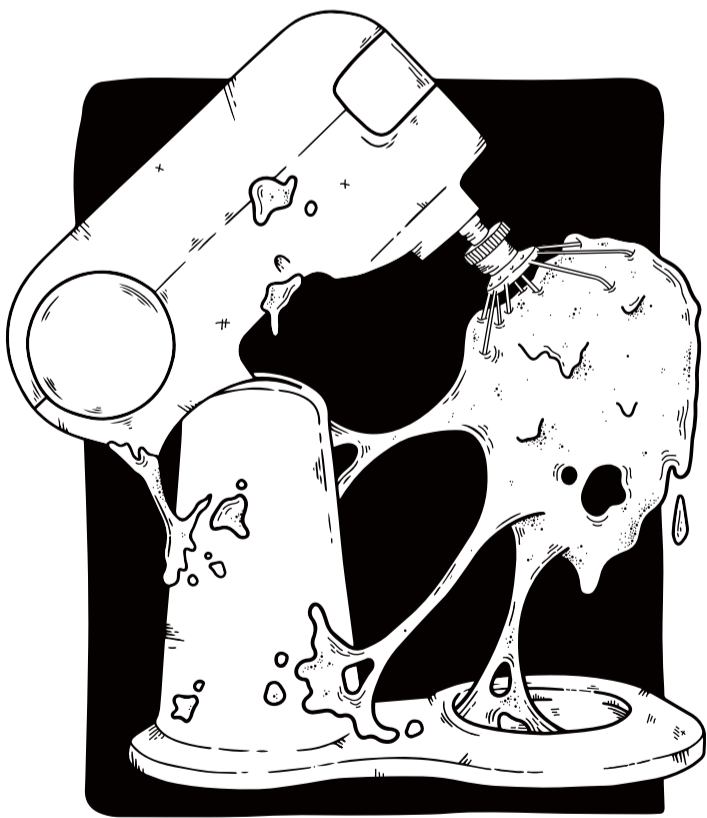
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Our own dashing Minister of Finance, Bjarni Benediktsson.

# Two Enter, One Leaves: Iceland's Labour Struggle

It's the unions versus the Ministry of Finance. Who will win?

Words:  
**Andie Fontaine**

Photos:  
**Art Bicnick/ASÍ**

Iceland's largest labour unions have been gearing up for an intense struggle for workers' rights when collective bargaining negotiations begin in early 2019, with labour leaders working to reach a consensus on their demands.

At the same time, Minister of Finance Bjarni Benediktsson has been issuing veiled threats towards these unions in public interviews.

If the union leaders seem angry, it might have something to do with not just the Minister's threats, but also what appears to be an imbalance of priorities in the government as a whole. As such, it appears all but certain that 2019 is

going to be a vibrant year for Iceland's ongoing labour struggle.

To understand how we got to this point, it is important to understand how labour negotiations in Iceland work.

## The "worker's paradise"

Iceland has a highly unionised workforce; about 80% of all workers are in a labour union, but the collective bargain-

ing agreement for any given trade applies to all employers and workers in that trade whether they are unionised or not. Further, replacing striking workers—also known as scabbing—is illegal. Agreements are negotiated every one

to be illegal to replace striking workers, but Parliament can order striking workers back to work if they believe it is within "the public good", as they did to striking airplane mechanics in 2010. Previous union leaders were often perceived



Ragnar Þór, Sólveig Anna and Drífa Snædal

three years, give or take, involving not just union leaders and management, but often times also a government arbiter (although they usually only step in when negotiations between labour and management are untenable). The importance of this last point will come up later.

While this might make Iceland seem like a worker's paradise, the reality can be very different. For example, it might

as too cozy with management, leading to insignificant gains for workers, and prompting a major uprising of more radical-minded leaders this year. Even then, unions have difficulty keeping up with their own casework when it comes to worker exploitation.

All these things have brought us to where we are now: Iceland's workers want their share of the wealth they produce. But the government in general,

and the Ministry of Finance in particular, have been adamant in their opposition to the major demands.

## The cost of living

Kveikur, an investigative news programme on Icelandic public broadcasting, recently met with Sólveig Anna Jónsdóttir, the chair of the labour union Efling; Ragnar Þór Ingólfsson, the chair of the labour union VR; and Drífa Snædal, the president of the Confederation of Icelandic Labour Unions.

All three were on the same page when it came to one of their major demands: raising the minimum wage by about 40%, to 425,000 ISK per month before taxes. They justify the demand in citing the skyrocketing cost of housing in Iceland, especially in Reykjavík, where the current minimum wage of 300,000 ISK does not even cover the average rent in the capital area.

## "No room" for wage increases

That demand will be hard fought. In an interview Bjarni gave to the magazine *Stundin* last July, he stated in no uncertain terms that "It is obvious, and has been obvious for a long time now, that room for wage increases is little to none." However, just before Parliament went on Christmas break, MPs generously awarded themselves a 20% payout to parliamentary parties after having already doubled that payout in 2018. Further, they also allowed themselves to hire 17 new assistants over the next three years, at a cost of 250 million ISK per year.

In an interview Bjarni gave to *Morgunblaðið* around this time, he stated that proposed tax cuts to Iceland's lowest paid workers may have to be reconsidered if labour negotiations "get out of hand", effectively threatening labour leaders with taking money away from workers in one area if they demand what he considers too much money in another.

## Take it to the state

Undeterred, Efling, VR and the Akranes Labour Union issued a joint statement saying they would be joining forces in the upcoming collective bargaining negotiations. Furthermore, they have said that they will preemptively call upon the government arbiter to step in, indicating that they not only anticipate a hard fight ahead—they are ready for it.

The move is not unprecedented, but it is highly uncommon. Contrary to popular belief, labour unions gener-

ally seek to avoid going on strike; the public perception of strikes almost always falls negatively on unions, no matter what their demands actually are. As such, calling upon the government arbiter ahead of time means more than just the unions being ready to take action; it also means they are hopeful that strikes can be avoided.

**"Whether the government will choose to avoid a crisis or force the unions' hand remains to be seen."**

All that said, given the clear and unmoving positions both sides have taken, 2019's labour struggle may indeed be marked by a strike, perhaps even more than one. Collectively, the unions taking the hardest stance have a huge chunk of the workforce behind them. Whether the government will choose to avoid a crisis or force the unions' hand remains to be seen. ❖



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Jewells Chambers, being characteristically brave and adventurous.

# Being Black In Iceland

Brooklyn-born creative powerhouse goes viral

Words:  
**Andie Fontaine**

Photo:  
**Jewells Chambers**

Jewells Chambers is originally from Brooklyn, moved to Iceland in 2016, and has been very busy since then. She manages the website From Foreign To Familiar and runs the All Things Iceland podcast, and a YouTube video she published with friend Tabitha Laker last September, "Living in Iceland as a Black Person - Our Personal Experiences," has really been getting

attention. Much of what they said resonated with people, both in Iceland and abroad, and it turns out there's a lot that led up to the video's creation.

## Not a monolith

To be clear, Black people in Iceland, as anywhere else, are not a monolithic entity. They can hail from many differ-

ent countries, classes and cultural backgrounds. At the same time, Jewells discovered that there are some commonalities of experience.

"Everyone's experience is so different, but there are things a lot of people who reached out to me said they relate to," Jewells tells us. "Like when you see another person of colour in Iceland, you get so excited because you know that there aren't very many of you. Then there's the questions from white Icelanders about your hair, which I think is really fascinating, although I think that gears more towards the female experience. And then there's run-ins with comments that people will make."

While Jewells says she has encountered ignorance in Iceland, as opposed to racism, not everyone has been that lucky. "When you experience this, you go through this thing where you're trying to fit in in a new country, so you try and brush it off and think of the positive things you're grateful for. Still, sometimes people will deliberately say things to try and hit you where they believe it will hurt the most."

## Dealing with it

"When people have asked me how I'm getting along in Iceland, I try and bring in something about my experience as a person of colour, because that's a big part of my identity" Jewells says. "When I'm walking down the street, I want to be considered a regular person like everyone else, but the stares are real, and sometimes they're much more prolonged than I think is OK. They might stare a little bit longer because they're curious and they don't realise what they're doing, and it feels strange because you're usually not getting a smile."

Jewells says she prefers to deal with the ignorance she has encountered on a case by case basis. Sometimes this means trying to diffuse the situation with a joke, or confronting the ignorance directly. Either way, an internal struggle can often emerge.

"That's the hardest part, because sometimes people who are victims of ignorance or racism assume it's their fault, because you're the one who's different," she says. "You're part of the minority. So sometimes just my existence feels like I'm doing something wrong because people are so unaware of what it's like to just exist as this person."

## Sharing the experience

The inspiration behind the YouTube video arose from Jewells wanting to read about the Black experience in Iceland, but finding the available material utterly lacking.

**"In their mind, they are always aware that they're the other person, because you're surrounded by people who don't look anything like you."**

While her friend Tabitha has been doing her own videos, she encouraged Jewells to do a collaborative work, and so they set about doing a video which would cover "the main things that could be particular points that Icelandic people have no idea affect people of colour here." And this is just the

tip of the iceberg—she plans on covering the Black male experience, and the refugee experience, too.

The reactions have been overwhelmingly positive, due in part to the general racist awfulness going on in the US, which the rest of the world has been painfully aware of.

"I think that the US in particular is going through some really ridiculous stuff right now," Jewells tells us. "Especially if you're Other—whether you're Mexican, or in the LGBT community, or Black—there are so many people whose existence is being threatened and their rights are being impugned upon, and Icelanders are seeing so much of this that they were more receptive of the video, so it actually ended up being a good time to put it out there."

## Be aware

In terms of what white Icelanders should be most aware of when it comes to their interactions with people of colour, Jewells advises being sensitive and putting yourself in other people's shoes.

"I'd say the thing that immediately comes to mind is the staring part," she says. "I think if you're going to look at somebody, if you at least give them a smile, it immediately deactivates that sense of fight or flight. Be aware of yourself or how you might come across to the person you're looking at who does look Other. Because in their mind, they are always aware that they're the other person, because you're surrounded by people who don't look anything like you. Be sensitive to the fact that when we talk about being a person of colour, being Black, this is meaningful for us because there are so few of us in places like this. This has more to do with building a community and feeling like you can share experiences with other people." ☘

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# THE SEVENTH ANNUAL

## ARTIST OF THE YEAR: ÓLAFUR ARNALDS

A breakthrough Icelandic artist of recent years, composer and performer Ólafur Arnalds needs little introduction. From his BAFTA-winning soundtrack work to his prolific collaborative projects, lively social media presences, and a seemingly endless run of sold-out concerts all around the world, Ólafur has become synonymous with Icelandic music in a way that few ever manage. Already on a remarkable trajectory, 2018 felt like a watershed year. He released the confident, mesmerising, accomplished LP 're:member,' which felt like a creative watershed and the culmination of a lot of graft and experimentation. "He's had a pretty long and successful career," said the panel, "but he really came into his own this year with a great record and a slew of sold out shows in some of the world's best concert houses. He continuously collaborates with other Icelandic artists, both in recording and live performance, and connects the local scene to the world through his connections abroad. This one is well deserved."

**Honourable Mentions: Dream Wife, Bjarki**

## ALBUM OF THE YEAR: GDRN - HVAÐ EF

As the tidal wave of Iceland rap peaked and broke in 2018, a new, more sensual R'n'B-pop sound started to emerge in its place. No-one captured the moment better than GDRN, whose soft-edged pop sound was crystallised on her excellent debut album 'Hvað Ef' ('What If?'). With a subdued, intimate, late-night sound, it was an instant homeland hit, taking GDRN to the forefront of the local music scene. She performed on the big stage of the Reykjavik Art Museum at Airwaves, and was the name of everyone's lips throughout the year. "Hvað Ef' is a collection of beautifully emotional songs whose lyrics are at once introspective, luscious, subdued and optimistic," said the panel. "She has a haunting voice, and the whole thing is a very cool take on pop music, made in collaboration with producer duo Ra:tio. The album successfully fuses together an electronic hip hop and R'n'B sound with elements of jazz, soul and disco resting comfortably behind GDRN's firm and soulful voice. 'Hvað Ef' is a polished two-years-in-the-making debut album and a strong indicator of good things to come from this promising artist."

**Honourable Mentions: GYDA - Evolution, AUDUR - Afsakanir**

## TRACK OF THE YEAR: PRINS PÓLÓ - LÍF ERTU AÐ GRÍNAST

From Reykjavik to Vík to Berufjörður to Akureyri, there was one song that seemed to be playing on the radio in shops, cars, homes—and whistled on the lips of Icelanders—more than any other. With a trademark simple hook, a catchy chorus and an appealing, celebratory atmosphere, Prins Póló once again made the art of writing a perfect pop song look easy on 'Líf ertu að grínast.' "The title translates as 'Life, are you kidding me?'—which seemed to be the theme of 2018," said the panel. "Svavar's song is jolly and downright tropical, which might sound strange coming from an Icelandic pop musician. But—as the joking-not-joking title and ostensibly whimsical lyrics suggest—it should not be taken lightly. That's the beauty of this song... it's an easy, radio-friendly listen with an underlying existential question about life—if you want it to be."

**Honourable Mentions: Junius Meyvant - High Alert, GYDA - Moonchild**

## MUSIC VIDEO OF THE YEAR: AYIA - SLOW

2018 was a big year for aYia, who have featured once before in the Grapevine Music Awards when they won the "One to Watch" award in 2016. And watch them we did, from their cryptic internet presence, to their moody and sometimes sublime live shows, to the release of their excellent self-titled debut LP. However, nothing triangulated the appeal of aYia's aesthetic better than in the video for 'Slow,' directed by Alexandre Souétre. A cinematic production, it skips through various architectural tableaux, interior environments and nature scenes, with an air that alternates between alienation and intimacy. "It's borderline surreal with the rapid cuts between shots of the band members and other people in various locations," said the panel. "There are desolate places in Iceland, mixed with urban scenarios and a sci-fi interior. The atypical shots in Iceland—with faded grass and bare concrete—are an unusual and welcome variation on

how people depict the landscape. The video's brilliance lies in leaving plenty of questions for the viewer to ponder."

**Honourable Mentions: MAMMÚT - Kinder Version, GDRN - Lætur Mig**

## LIVE ARTIST OF THE YEAR: BAGDAD BROTHERS

This charming indie-pop outfit arrived with an enthusiasm and gusto that made them impossible to ignore. Their songs alternate between jangly, nostalgic slow-dance numbers to indie singalongs, delivered with an inclusive feeling of infectious excitement that turned the front rows of every concert into a smiling, joyful dance party. They're also a key component of 'post-dreifing'—a new experimental arts collective with a vibrant, buzzing energy. "Bagdad brothers played an impressive amount of live shows this year, in most of downtown Reykjavik's venues, big and small," said the panel. "They pride themselves on delivering a helluva show for their loyal fanbase and new listeners, who they welcome with open arms. If you've been to one of their shows you'll know they like to make jokes and have fun; at the same time, they're a key part of a new wave of young creatives [the 'post-dreifing' scene] whose chief concern is artistic integrity. These musicians attract people of all ages with their skill, dedication, commitment and inclusive, experimental nature—as well as their adorable positivity and 'summer-all-year-round' attitude."

**Honourable mentions: MAMMÚT, Emmsjú Gauti**

## SHOULD HAVE HEARD THIS YEAR: TSS - MOODS

It's easier than ever to get music online, so the chances of missing a self-released or indie label gem seems higher than ever. So it was with TSS, who sneaked out 'Moods' to a stony critical silence... not because it wasn't a great album, but just because nobody really knew it had arrived. The solo moniker of Jón Gabríel Lorange—one half of now-inactive duo Nóló—he has released three albums and two EPs in just two years. "Jón's transition from the well-respected Nóló to the solo moniker TSS was smooth," noted the panel. "So smooth that it perhaps went a tad bit unnoticed. Behind TSS lies almost a decade of practice with drum machines, synthesizer, organs, guitar and a mellow singing voice, reminiscent of the intensity of John Lennon and the crooning of Buddy Holly. 'Moods' is a delightful half-hour collection of dreamy pop songs with rock, funk and synth-pop elements, floating somewhere between psychedelic rock and minimal synth pop. It could be the soundtrack for an existential bus ride or a relaxing Sunday brunch. It's Jón's most cunningly realised album yet, and a terrific entry-point to his unordinary yet pleasant world."

**Honourable Mentions: Örvar Smáráson - Light Is Liquid, Bjarki - Óli Gumm**

## ONE TO WATCH NEXT YEAR: GRÓA

GRÓA are a fresh young three-piece that first emerged after placing well in the Músiktilrunair contest in 2017. Since then, they've made waves as part of the post-dreifing scene, winning fans for their unpretentious approach. "GRÓA's vocalist has a bright and pleasantly comprehensible voice, and uses it to sing about life flashing by with a punky instrumental backing of drums, bass and guitar," said the panel. "Her voice treads experimental territory in the vein of Björk and Heiða from Unun. There are definite '80s and '90s pop influences. She is part of the same new wave of young creatives as the bagdad brothers, whose chief concern is artistic integrity. GRÓA appears to possess an abundant energy and a potential to bring together the sound of yesterday and today in a pleasant mixture. Seeing how this young artist hones her skill and finds her way—with further performances and releases—will prove interesting."

**Honourable Mentions: Kjartan Holm, Volruptus**

## SHOUT OUT: JOINT WINNERS — R6013 & HÁSKAR

The Shout Out award is for organisations that have made huge contributions to the musical life of Iceland without necessarily getting much of the credit they deserve. This year, we give shout outs to two such ventures: the R6013 basement venue, which runs an ambitious free programme

# REYKJAVÍK GRAPEVINE MUSIC AWARDS 2019



of events, with free vegan food and entry on a contribution basis; and HÁSKAR, a one-day "end of the world festival" run by the shadowy organisation behind the band Hatari.

"R6013 and HÁSKAR were both platforms for emerging and young artists in 2018," said the panel, "and a launchpad for many of them. R6013 performs the unselfish service as a non-profit concert space in the basement of the family home of Ægir Sindri, a well respected drummer in the local scene. Its presence is so very welcome in downtown Reykjavik—where rental prices have risen steadily, with the number of concert venues sinking accordingly."

"HÁSKAR ['páskar' = easter and 'háski' = danger in Icelandic] was an unforgettable event in 2018," continue the panel. "A mash-up of interesting and potential breakthrough musicians, DJs, VJs and visual artists collaborated on this large (for Reykjavik) event in IDNÓ. The production values were high, and it was sparky and imaginative in all aspects, from the decor, to the in-crowd performance art, to the enticingly creative and weird programme. Turning IDNÓ into a multi-stage club is also a brilliant idea that they should get credit for. Best of all? It will happen again in 2019."

**Honourable Mentions: FALK, IDNÓ**

## ARTIST OF THE YEAR:

# Ólafur Arnalds

2018 felt like the year when composer, musician and performer Ólafur Arnalds came into his own and stepped out into the limelight. After years of collaborations, soundtrack work, tours, and a noticeable ever-growing popularity, he dropped his best album to date—the thrillingly melodic and minimal 're:member'—which took off vertically, picking up positive attention from Rolling Stone, NPR and KEXP, to name just a few, and selling out shows in some of the world's finest concert halls.

This stellar year was a long time coming. "It's my first actual full length album for five years," says Ólafur. An ever relaxed figure wearing a music note t-shirt, he speaks in an open and relaxed way about his work, and his world. "I've done a lot of stuff and been on a really nice trajectory, but I haven't released something that said 'This is who I am' for a while. And that's why albums are still important in this... whatever world we're living in. That's what did it this year, and made things explode a little bit."

## BETWEEN THE LINES

'Re:member' feels like the culmination of a lot of work. It's sensitively written to be instantly appealing and catchy, whilst maintaining a confident sparseness in the sound. The melodies are never crowded or over-worked, but rather poised and well-judged.

"That's actually the hardest part," smiles Ólafur. "Essentially I'm trying to make pop music... but not actual pop music. There are catchy melodies sometimes, but it's so important to leave that space. If I don't, it's not going to be me any more. To find the space within melodies or concepts that can still be catchy, and grab onto that, is the most challenging part to me—but also the most rewarding."

## JERKING OFF SYNTHESIZERS

When it comes to his musical development over the years since his last solo album, Ólafur speaks respectfully of his collaborators. "You learn something from each collaboration," he says. "Every collaborator brings something to the table. This album is all of that coming together—it's everything I learned in the last few years coming out."

Ólafur's shows have become well known for technical innovation and elaborate staging. He speaks fondly of the collaborators who help it happen. "A lot of the work I've done has been to create a team," says Ólafur. "I've come to realise that music is more than music. If you look at your favourite musicians of the last fifty years, they all have something else about them, that's a little bit more. An obvious example is David Bowie. I can do the music, but I have come to realise that I can't do that part alone. So the art becomes to create the team."

"It's about seeing the good in people, and finding what they can bring to the table," he says. "This goes for everything from my management, to the label, to the technicians on tour, and the sound and lights. I don't design the lights, but it's a huge part of what I'm known for now—this visual experience. So my art is to find these people, and not just sit in my studio and pick my nose whilst jerking off some synthesisers."

## GLOBAL CAVE SONGS

Ólafur is also highly engaged with his audience via social media, opening up his life and process to his listeners, including alternative versions, live streams of the recording process, and moments from tour.

As a result of this openness and willingness to share and engage, a community has formed around his work. "My social media followers are definitely a community," he says. "They talk to each other, become friends, share things, create art together. "As many faults as social media has—and there are many—it's a way to change the idea that the musicians have this godlike image, and show that music is about community, connection and expressing things we cannot express with words. Social media has made that aspect global—it's no longer you sitting playing for your friends in a cave."

## PROVING YOUR WORTH

Such international success has made Ólafur a well known public figure in his homeland—a phenomenon that he's still negotiating. "Iceland can be so weird that way," he laughs. "Not everyone listens to your music, but you become a kind of known figure. I often wonder, 'What is my place here?' I noticed that people now put my name alongside Björk and Sigur Rós when they're writing an article about Iceland, and that makes me feel like I need to prove that I'm worth what they're saying about me. That's partly why I went all in on the recent shows here, in Harpa, and do it properly. It's that little ego saying I need to prove that I'm worth what people are saying."

The shows met with rapturous praise from those in attendance and cemented Ólafur's reputation as a homegrown star. As he embarks on a long tour of the US and Europe in 2019, our richly deserving Artist of the Year can step out into the world knowing he's more than earned his stripes at home in Iceland—and from here on out, the sky's the limit. **JR**



"I haven't released something that said 'This is who I am' for five years... that's what made things explode."

## BEST ALBUM:

# GDRN - 'Hvað ef'

Arriving with some media fanfare right in the middle of 2018, 'Hvað ef' is the debut album of musician, vocalist and rising pop star Guðrún Ýr—better known as GDRN. The record was a long time in the making, coming together over a period of two years. And yet, Guðrún didn't dare imagine the amount of positive attention the album would receive. "This is the first music I've released," she says, "so I was a bit surprised when I got this award, to be honest. I didn't set out to get this into music-making this full on. It's been a very special year."

## BROAD SOUND

'Hvað ef' is a collection of beautifully emotional songs with lyrics that are at once introspective, luscious, subdued and optimistic. "The songs are diverse, but a certain unity can be found between them," says Guðrún. "I simply wanted to work on a project with my friends and beat-makers Bjarki and Teitur—a.k.a. Ratio—who produced a large part of the album with me."

GDRN's work with Ratio was highly experimental and evolved from being a straightforward mix of beats and vocals to an extensive collaboration. "It was their first endeavour in music production and the first time I'd layered my vocals on top of someone else's beats," she says. "I brought in my ideas and we worked on them together."

## BROTHER BELLS

'Hvað ef' includes a number of collaborators, including Auður, with whom Guðrún worked on the title track and 'Án mín.' "We gradually built the two songs up from segments we made from scratch during a number of jam sessions," she says.

On 'Parf þig' she utilised a beat made by her younger brother, compiled from bell sounds on his computer. "I thought it fit the overall sound of the album and was able to give him a well-deserved ego-boost at the same time." 'Lætur mig'—featuring rapper Flóni—has over half a million plays on Spotify at the time of publication.

Guðrún's classical and jazz music studies aided in setting the album's unique tone. However, defining it is hard for Guðrún. "Ratio are big hip hop fans, while my musical background is more conventional, so we managed to mix together various types of music," she explains. "I've played concerts where both young kids and their parents seem familiar with my music. I enjoy seeing my music bridge a gap in this way."

GDRN's slow-paced pop experiment turned out to be more than she imagined, reaching a large, diverse and ever growing audience. Her debut album is a landmark in her creative life, but it's also just the beginning—and it's a testament to what can happen when an emerging artist dares to ask "what if?" **A.J.**

"I've played concerts where both young kids and their parents seem familiar with my music. I enjoy seeing my music bridge a gap in this way."

## SHOUT OUT:

# R6013

Ægir Sindri Bjarnason set up the low-fi concert/gathering venue R6013 in his family's basement on Ingólfsstræti in May 2017, and has held over 60 concerts since then. When there's a line-up sign leaning on the fence outside, everyone is welcome to join for experimental performances, vegan food and fun.

A musician himself—some say the best drummer in Reykjavík—Ægir grew up playing in all sorts of bands, from garage practice session to live concerts. "R6013 is a very intimate concert experience compared to most other places, because it's so small," he explains, smiling kindly.

The venue is one open room and it's usually packed. "I decided to switch around the usual setup and raise a stage for the audience at the back, rather than raising up the performers," he says. "The audience and performers still share the same space. It really does it for me to skip that division."

There's always a pot of vegan food to share, which Ægir says is very important for the gatherings. "A connection is created in a space where people eat together," he says. "Even if you come along and you don't know anyone, you can have a soup and sit in the corner and listen to others chatting. Just by being there and eating together, you're a part of what's happening, even if you're not talking with anyone."

With Reykjavík losing several important music hubs in recent years, R6013 feels more necessary now than ever as a home for young musicians and the experimental scene. Follow R6013 on Facebook to keep up with the schedule and consider making a cash donation when you visit so Ægir can open his doors more often for his special events. **TNI**

## HÁSKAR

HÁSKAR was a one-day alternative music, culture and arts festival—with high production values, and a dark edge in the curation—that took place at ÍDNÓ during easter 2018. The festival's organisers declined to be interviewed about their Shout Out award, and instead offered the following statement from SVIKAMYLLA EHF.

To whom it may concern,

While accepting the Reykjavik Grapevine's award with moderate gratitude, our board of directors wishes to remain anonymous at this time, due to both legal reasons and recent managerial decisions passed at the board's latest biweekly meeting here in Reykjavik, Iceland. It is the sincere hope of our chairman that no offence is taken as we decline the Reykjavik Grapevine's offer for an interview.

To the readers of the Reykjavik Grapevine, we would instead choose to reiterate our message as stated in a previous interview about our doomsday celebration. Háskar was held to recognise and celebrate the onset of doomsday. Doomsday occurred during Háskar, after Háskar and until the last member of the species posts the last photo on the last of the social media before drawing its last breath. Our days are numbered. Whether or not a second doomsday celebration will take place this year will soon be announced by prestigious Icelandic media company Iceland Music News on their website, icelandmusicnews.com.

In light of this, we would like to thank the artists who appeared at Háskar and made the celebration possible. We would especially like to congratulate members of anti-capitalist award winning Icelandic bondage art group HATARI for their ceaseless, but ultimately pointless, work to unveil the scam that is everyday life. May their short careers be remembered until the end, which is nigh.

Sincere regards,  
SVIKAMYLLA EHF.

2019

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BEST SONG:

# Prins Póló - Lífi ertu að grínast

Svavar Pétur Eysteinnsson, aka Prins Póló, sits regally on the bench, his back straight and fingers interlocked over one knee. Clad in a bright blue blazer, his pale, world-weary blues eyes look out from his powdered face beneath a gold cardboard crown.

The occasion for our chat is that 'Lífi ertu að grínast'—an earworm pop song from his 2018 album "Þriðja kryddið"—is the winner of the Grapevine's Song Of The Year award. "The title means 'Life, Are you kidding me?'" says Svavar. "I didn't know until I finished the album that it's a theme album. You start making music when you're young and then you keep making it as you get older. When you're younger you maybe sing about more silly things than when you grow up."

## GATHERED DISAPPOINTMENTS

Svavar wrote the album around the time he was turning forty: a landmark age that had a defining influence on his new collection.

"I wanted to make an album that could express my feelings about being a musician," he smiles. "Because being a musician is about being young and beautiful. It's not as much about being... old and ugly. It only came to me afterwards, but the themes of the songs were about disappointment in life—maybe not mine, but also my friends and family, and people you chat with at a party. All

those stories gathered in my head and became the album's theme."

## MAYBE YOUR CHILDREN WILL HATE YOU

Svavar wrote the music with his friend Axel in 2015. Songs, he says, come easily—except for the lyrics. "You have to make a new story in every song," he says. "The story in song one cannot be the same as the story in song three.... but there can be connection. So that's how the theme arose. On this album, the fun times are over, and you're in the middle of something. Maybe you don't know where you're going, or you're stuck somewhere... maybe you'll be there the rest of your life, or maybe you will die tomorrow. Maybe your children will hate you, and your work is dreadful... but there are all these questions about where life is going. And that's how we arrived at 'Life, are you kidding me?'"

It's here that Prins Póló succeeds: the combination of simple, catchy songs with lyrics that can be intriguing riddles, relatable observations, or both at once. "If it was just making music, I could make five albums a year," says Svavar. "But I want to put real meaning into it, not just some silly stupid words and rhyme that fit together. I want to have a real story to tell. And that's the tricky part." **JR**



"If it was just making music, I could make five albums a year... but I want to put real meaning into it."

2019

## BEST LIVE BAND: bagdad brothers



"I was going to wear this super tight white onesie onstage, but it was kind of problematic."

Although their first show was just over a year ago, bagdad brothers have already been crowned the Grapevine's Best Live Band. We sat down with the band's lead duo, Bjarni Daniél Þorvaldsson and Sigurpáll Viggó Snorrason after their Christmas show at IDNÓ to talk pop songs, party vibes and which pants to perform in.

## IT'S ALL ABOUT THE POP

"The number one thing for us is the songs, the writing and structuring," says Bjarni Daniél. Bagdad brothers' sound stacks dreamy, hazy layers over simple melodies, with catchy and cutesy lyrics. A casual internet listener might find a charming chill in their bedroomy lo-fi quality, but it shouldn't distract from the solid pop at its foundation. "So the songs are number one. But after that comes, 'how can we have fun with these songs on stage, and also get people into that mindset with us?'"

## NOT ABOUT THE PANTS

Asked whether one way they manage that is by looking fun in coordinated outfits, Sigurpáll says: "We try to," although he admits that the all-red-and-white extravaganza of their most recent show at IDNÓ, complete with matching balloons, was a special occasion. "We try to get into character, into our comfort zone on stage and we have to be a little coordinated for that to happen."

Bjarni Daniél tells me that just performing in red t-shirts made him feel "too normal" to get into his groove. "I was going to wear this super tight white onesie [onstage at IDNÓ], but it was kind of problematic," he chuckles, explaining that he was talked out of it. (We'll leave the specifics to the imagination.) "But it's still honest; it's still sincere," he says of their performance,

regardless of the pants. "We're not faking anything that happens on stage. It's all natural. But it's nice to have something to stimulate that."

## FROM PRACTICE TO PARTY

Having just started improvising music together last year, they've covered a lot of ground in a short time. As Bjarni Daniél explains: "When we started out, it was kind of a joke... one of these nights we just had the idea of posting one of these phone recordings to Soundcloud. ("A two-hour-long ambient loop," Sigurpáll interjects). When we thought about the name, we were like, 'Hmmm what about the most generic indie band name we could ever find?' Sigurpáll suggested 'bagdad brothers' and we just said, 'okay!'"

Pants, jokes and names aside, they assure me that it has always been and will always be about the fun. "Back when we were making super lo-fi ambient loops, we were having the exact same fun as we're having now, when we're actually throwing a dance party at IDNÓ," Bjarni Daniél says. "It's funny, but it doesn't feel any different. It's just that more people get to be involved now."

Expect bagdad brothers' upcoming EP and release concert in early February. After conquering Iceland, they're currently gearing up for a 24-show tour of North America, so keep your eyes peeled for tour dates in the US and Canada in May and June. **GDF**

# 2019



**“I wanted to recreate a sort of resemblance of the point of view of a young child looking at the world.”**

## BEST VIDEO: aYia – “Slow”

As a music project that has always had a keen eye for their visual components (or lack thereof, where necessary), the title of Best Video going to aYia might not be a surprise. With their first album out from Bedroom Community and at least one headlining show announced at Berlin’s Kantine am Berghain this May, aYia is a dark star on the rise. Frontwoman Ásta Fanney Sigurðardóttir, and Alexandre Souëtre, the director of “Slow,” shared their behind-the-scenes thoughts on the winning video.

### LOVE AT FIRST LISTEN

Like many, Los Angeles-based director Alexandre admits to being a bit of an Icelandophile. So when he went for drinks with Colm O’Herlihy, the label manager of Bedroom Community, the solution was only natural. “I told him, ‘Look, if you ever have an artist that needs a music video, I would love to direct one for you guys,’” Alexandre begins. “He just pulled out a computer and played a few songs. The first one he played was that aYia song, or a very early stage of it, and I instantly told him, ‘That’s it. I’m doing it. I don’t know what it takes, but I’ll take care of it.’”

### EVE TO EVE

True to its name, “Slow” is a hypnotic track that builds from soft, delicate tones to a deep, pulsing epic in its own sweet time. “I’m not much of a storyteller,” says Alexandre. “Most of the videos I make don’t have a clear

narrative, it’s usually more about a mood or a vibe. So, knowing a little bit of what I had seen in Iceland, I had some ideas already and even some locations in there that I wanted to use specifically.”

In addition to Iceland, the video has shots from around LA. One of the most startling features of the video is not necessarily that juxtaposition, but the opposite: it makes LA feel almost as moody and atmospheric as the Icelandic countryside. “The main concept behind the video isn’t really something that translates visually,” he explains, “nor was it the goal, really. But I wanted to recreate a sort of resemblance of the point of view of a young child looking at the world.”

### PROCESS OF BECOMING

“These shots go whoosh, whoosh, whoosh,” Ásta echoes. “All kinds of scenes that question your barrier of connecting things. Most things that are connectable in movies are clear, or at least they have a couple of clear narratives. But it seems like this is not what Alexandre is working with. The tiny changes that pile together raise so many questions.”

More than simply a video, Ásta sees “Slow” as a metaphor for aYia right now. “I feel like we are in the beginning of a process of becoming. Although we’ve been playing for three years, we’ve just released an album and we just now have two videos. So we’re turning into. We’re becoming. In that sense, this video is like glimpses of the future that is possible.” **GDF**

**“In the process I decided that my next album would be a concept album about a cowboy on acid.”**

### YOU SHOULD HAVE HEARD:

## “Moods” by TSS

“I started using this name during the time I lived in Kópavogur when I was younger,” says Jón Gabriel Lorange by way of explaining his moniker—The Suburban Spaceman, or TSS. “I would regularly ‘space out’ to my music... so I found it quite spot on.”

Under the TSS banner, Jón—also known as one-half of experimental synth pop duo Nóló, who were active between 2009-2014—released ‘Moods’ in mid-2018, a delightful 30-minute collection of dreamy pop songs with psychedelic rock, funk and synth-pop elements. The songs usually revolve around some sort of indeterminism; a specific mood that strikes, a thought that comes out into the open, or lyrics that feel ‘just right’.

“The songs—although recorded over a period of time with various inspirations—have an overarching feeling which ties them together,” says Jón. “My sound is a bit of a muddle of what I like. Their titles are often spur-of-the-moment ideas.”

### NEW MUSIC ALL THE TIME

‘Moods’ won the “You Should Have Heard This” award recognising a release that somewhat flew under the radar, which Jón feels fits TSS quite well. “I can’t be bothered to think about marketing my music most of the time. I’m not one of those musicians that knows exactly when it’s album time,” he says. “I just want to make new music, all the time!”

The thing that sparked ‘Moods’ was a synthesizer that Jón purchased in Belgium (where he currently resides), and which is heard in every song. “Throughout my career, I’ve always tried to play around with the instruments that are easily available to me,” he explains. “So, getting this analogue synthesizer was a game changer as I’ve mainly used digital synthesizers before.”

### COWBOY SYNTH OPERA

During the making of the bittersweet “Only Say My Prayers In Hard Times,” Jón became addicted to slide guitar, which fuelled a vision in his mind of a cowboy riding a horse into the sunset.

“In the process, I decided that my next album would be a concept album about a cowboy on acid,” he says. “Psychedelic rock in the wild west brought to you by The Suburban Spaceman. I’m transitioning away from the synthesizer for now, making this a guitar-heavy album. On the one after that I might welcome a synthesizer back into the mix... along with an opera singer perhaps. Who knows?” **AJF**

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## ONE TO WATCH: GRÓA

It's a moment of pure DIY punk bliss: three girls want to form a band but have no musical background. One, Hrafnhildur Einarsdóttir, uses YouTube tutorials to teach herself how to play drums. Another, Friða Björg Pétursdóttir, learns bass from online how-to guides. The last, Karólína Einarsdóttir, has never sung in front of anyone before. They write a song and play at the 2017 Músíktílaunir contest as their first show. After a raucous performance, not only do they make it to the finals, but they become the dark horse and fan favourite of the event—the talk of the punk town.

So began GRÓA, our 'One To Watch' this year, who, after bursting onto the scene only two years ago, have proven that despite being only 16 and 17 years old, they can stand with the best of them. Watch out.

## PUNK THERAPY

This year has been a big year for the trio. In April, they dropped their self-titled debut album, which consisted of the first seven songs that the three had ever written. Their earworm melodies are infused with riot grrl attitude, and the LP showed a maturity far beyond that of newbie songwriters. This innate knack for punk hits quickly grew them a fanbase in Reykjavík.

Over the next months, they followed up the album with a stacked performance schedule as well as a highly anticipated Airwaves appearance, which one Grapevine reviewer described as "electroshock therapy."

## GRÓA 2.0

But the girls look at their last two years as mere preparation for where they are now. Now experienced musicians, songwriters and performers, Hrafnhildur, Friða, and Karólína see themselves entering phase two of GRÓA.

"This last half year we have been making a lot of new songs and they are very different from our first album," Karólína says. "We're going in a different direction and it's more the way we want to make music. We're very excited." Hrafnhildur nods. "We've found a little more energy. It's a little more post-punk."

GRÓA is currently recording a second album and making a music video while still performing regularly around the city. "We feel so good winning this award. It's given us such a boost," Friða says, smiling. "And it fits, right now, because we are about to make new stuff in such a different way. The next year is going to be very exciting." **HJC**

# Meet The Panel

## JOHN ROGERS, THE REYKJAVÍK GRAPEVINE

The advisory panel was chaired by John Rogers, Managing Editor of the Grapevine, and the person chiefly responsible for the magazine's culture content. John has worked all over the music industry, with a focus on Icelandic music, before settling in journalism, including stints running a label, working as a manager and publicist, and organising concerts, including a stage at Iceland Airwaves. He's also a resident DJ at Kaffibarinn.

## ANNA ÁSTHILDUR, ICELAND AIRWAVES

Starting out in music at the Iceland Music export agency as the right-hand-woman of Sigtryggur Baldursson, Anna's knowledge of Icelandic music is broad and balanced across the genres. However, as a Berlin resident, Anna has a particular personal interest and specialism in electronica. Currently a part of the Iceland Airwaves team, Anna works at the cutting edge of what's new in Icelandic music.

## ANNA GYÐA SIGURGÍSLADÓTTIR, RÚV+

A culture journalist at Rás 1 radio, Anna Gyða also programmes Lestin, the station's daily cultural show at Rás 1, which focuses on the different waves and vibes that shape Iceland's culture and people. With a keen eye on contemporary trends, new artists and emerging scenes, and an open-minded musical curiosity, we were happy to add Anna Gyða's perspective to this year's panel.

## KEVIN COLE, KEXP

A living radio legend, US DJ Kevin Cole is one of the voices (and faces) of Seattle alternative radio station KEXP. Kevin has cultivated a deep connection to the Icelandic music scene spanning a decade, and keeps completely up to date during the expansive listening process behind the curation of KEXP's Iceland Airwaves off venue each year. Also a steadfast champion of Icelandic music in the US, we're honoured to have him on the panel.

## ALEXANDER JEAN DE FONTENAY, DJ, JOURNALIST & MORE

A face-around-town and diligent culture enthusiast, Alexander is the music journalist behind Grapevine's 'Electric Dreams' music column, and also plays a big part in curating and organising the Grapevine Grassroots concert series each year. He's also a student of the arts, a DJ with several different guises, and a keen observer of new developments in Icelandic music, with his ear ever to the ground.

## STEINAR FJELDSTED, EDITOR, ALBUMM.IS

As the editor of the exhaustive—even completist—stream of news and release info that is the Icelandic-language albumm.is website, Steinar Fjeldsted listens to material from across the spectrum of Icelandic music. From big hits to hidden gems, Steinar's knowledge of what's up in Iceland's music scene is second to none, and he gave some excellent tips for this year's music awards.



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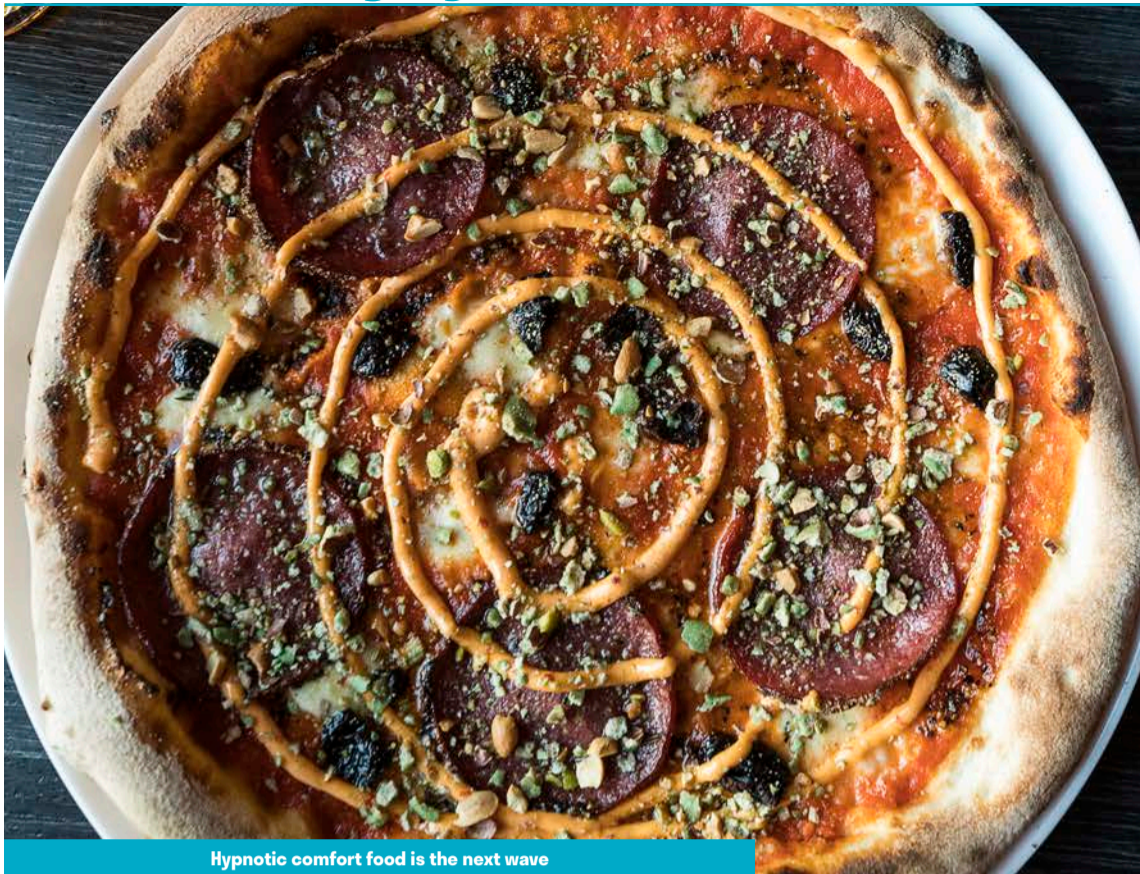
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Hypnotic comfort food is the next wave

## Mhmmm...Carbs

Keep your diet to yourself, Becky

Words: Hannah Jane Cohen Photo: Art Bicnick

While we're all about the seven course tasting menu at Dill, sometimes you just want to stuff carbohydrates in your mouth till you pass out. Enter comfort food, something that everyone loves, even if they pretend all they eat is kale and sunshine. So appease your hangover, get over your ex, and ruin your diet at these Reykjavík comfort food classics.



### Prikið

Bankastræti 12

Prikið serves up a whammy in the category of simple, warm, and calorically questionable foods. Sit down and pick between the red and blue pill, or rather, brunch or a burger. If pancakes get you all giggly, Prikið

has all the breakfast hall of famers. Pancakes, sausage, eggs, you name it. That said, the French Connection is a true gem. It's bacon, ham, cheese, pancakes and syrup in-between two slices of french toast. Yes, that's a real meal. For lunch—the Snoop Dogg is a true crowd pleaser, as it's basically a combination of everything good: pepper cheese, bacon, bernaïse and sweet potato fries. They also have milkshakes. Lord, help us.



### Icelandic Street Food

Lækjargata 8

For soup to really fit the bill of comfort food, it has to be substantial—not any of that dinky ginger asparagus nonsense. Reykjavík's newest low-key dive, Icelandic Street Food,

offers three dishes: lamb soup, shellfish soup, and a stew called fisherman's favourite. All three can be ordered in bread bowls and have the perfect protein to broth ratio for them to be not only fulfilling, but toasty and relaxing. They also have free desserts and coffee to munch on after (or before) your meal. Directly next to the restaurant is local hot-spot Secret Cellar, which allows you to BYOS (bring your own soup), so you can enjoy some comedy while you slurp. There's also free refills. We repeat: FREE REFILLS!



### Veganæs

Tryggvagata 22

The recently opened Veganæs—in the Gaukurinn music venue—bills itself as a vegan comfort food restaurant. While that's true, a more accurate description would be that it's a comfort food restaurant that just happens to be vegan. The vegan fish dish—called fish-ish—tastes just like properly fantastic fish, and throw it on a burger and you've got the epitome of what a messy, yummy, finger-licking fish burger should

be. The Burnt sandwich—basically a jalapeno grilled 'cheese'—will give you probably the most squirm-worthy cheese-gasm ever. Make sure to grab a booth. You'll need time to digest in your post-eating glow.



### Eldsmiðjan

Laugavegur 81 & Bragagata 28

You can't talk about comfort food without mentioning the king of the genre: The bold. The beautiful. The pizza. While Reykjavík has a tonne of options, from the gourmet pies of Hverfisgata 12 to good ole' Dominos delivery, Eldsmiðjan is without a doubt your go-to for a simple greasy slice that's not too complicated nor too simple. Their basic cheese slices are juicy and filling, but throw some pepperoni on there and you've got an afternoon worthy of your future heart-attack. While they've got a casual, cosy ambiance in their dining rooms, if you prefer to gorge yourself while watching 'Sex In The City,' they have a separate entrance for take-away orders.



### Ramen Momo

Tryggvagata 16

This charming hole-in-the-wall Tibetan and Japanese fusion spot is the best place to warm your soul with carbohydrates in the form of long strings—everybody say (r)Amen! The restaurant's portions are hearty, with more noodles than you can munch on and delicious poached eggs and seaweed to match. It's the perfect mix of a culinary experience and a comfortable, substantial meal. It's also the best choice of comfort food for those people who hate cheese, or as we call them, Satanists. 🍷



### BEST OF REYKJAVÍK

## Best People-Watching Spot

### Hlemmur Mathöll

Laugavegur 107

Reykjavík's premier food hall, located in the old Hlemmur bus station, is the perfect spot to grab a bite to eat and watch the world go by. The various food stands have a lively and bustling seating area where people park up for lunches, dinners, dates and drinks. "It has a fast-moving pop-in-pop-out nature," said the panel. "There are hotels close by, so there are tourists, but Icelanders go there too, and it's also a bus interchange. And it's still not completely gentrified. You can get a drink and see an absolutely diverse mixture of people passing by."

### Runners-up:

#### Lækjartorg

Lækjartorg

This city-centre square is busy by day, and crazy by night. "If you want to see the real Iceland, come from 5am-6am any Saturday to see a stumbling guy trying to chat up girls whilst hailing a cab back to Kópavogur and inhaling a lobster roll. It's a vortex of Icelandic life any time of the day or night."

#### Kolaportið

Tryggvagata 19

Iceland's largest flea market is the perfect place to pick up a bargain—or just to watch the world go by. "You'll see old fishermen selling their catch, Icelanders, students, celebrities, locals and tourists all shopping there," said the panel. "You get a cross-section of Iceland that you don't find anywhere else."



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January 4th—January 31st

# In Your Pocket

Reykjavík Map

Places We Like

Best Of Reykjavík

## Perfect Day

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

Photo: Art Bicnick



“Around dinnertime President Trump shits himself in the literal sense while being broadcast on live TV.”

DJ Katla, a rare sight outdoors

### DJ Katla

Katla Ásgeirsdóttir is an idealist, DJ, time optimist, and general manager of Hf. Kristjánsson. You can spot her big cloud of curly hair through the windows of bars and restaurants across Reykjavík, where'll you'll find her spinning a wide variety of records and generally making people's ears happy and starting the party. Follow her on Instagram, Soundcloud and elsewhere as @djkatla.

### First thing in the morning

I wake up at seven to get my son ready for school, remember I have the day off and promptly go back to sleep (in little spoon mode).

### Around midday

Around midday big spoon wakes me up with coffee and cunnilingus. We play Bubble Bobble until our eyes get all weird, then nap to restore our eyesight.

### Around lunchtime

We wake up again around lunchtime, put on sweatpants, and eat a shawarma sandwich in bed while watching Sherlock Holmes.

### In the afternoon

In the afternoon we pick Flóki up from school on a three seat tandem bike and go swimming. It's sunny and warm outside. Lou Reed's "Perfect Day" is playing in the steam-bath.

### Around dinnertime

Around dinnertime President Trump shits himself in the literal sense while being broadcast on live TV. What a time to be alive. We pick up some tikka masala at our local Indian restaurant and drink to this wonderful metaphor finally materialising.

### In the heat of the night

Kaffibarinn, in high quality company! We have a guilty pleasures DJ battle. All the people I love and adore are there drinking their wine, dancing and having ginger beer. After closing we ride our tandem bikes ('cause on a perfect day everybody rides tandem) to the nearest ferris wheel for a ride in the midnight sun. ☺

## Vital Info



### Useful Numbers

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

### Post Offices

The downtown post office is at Pósthússtræti 3-5, open Mon-Fri 09:00-18:00.

### Pharmacies

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

### Opening Hours - Bars & Clubs

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

### Opening Hours - Shops & Banks

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

### Swimming Pools

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

### Public Toilets

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

### Public Transport

Most buses run every 20-30 min  
Fare: 460 ISK adults, 220 ISK children.  
Buses run from 07-24:00, and 10-04:30 on weekends. More info at: [www.bus.is](http://www.bus.is).

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## Venue Finder

### Venues

The numbers on the right (i.e. E4) tell you position on the map on the next page

Austur	Austurstræti 7	D3	lónó	Vonarstræti 3	E3
American Bar	Austurstræti 8	D3	Kex Hostel	Skúlagata 28	E7
Andrými	Bergþórugata 20	G6	Kaffibarinn	Bergstaðastræti 1	E4
B5	Bankastræti 5	E4	Kaffi Vinyl	Hverfisgatur 76	E6
Bar Ananas	Klappastígur 28	E5	Kiki Queer Bar	Laugavegur 22	E5
Bió Paradís	Hverfisgata 54	E5	Loft	Bankastræti 7	E4
Bjarni Fel	Austurstræti 20	E4	Mengi	Oðinsgata 2	F5
Bravó	Laugavegur 22	E5	Nordic House	Sturluggata 5	H2
Boston	Laugavegur 28b	E5	Paloma	Naustin	D3
Dillon	Laugavegur 30	E5	Prikjö	Bankastræti 12	E4
Dubliner	Naustin 1-3	D3	R6013	Ingólfstræti 20	E4
English Pub	Austurstræti 12	D3	Reykjavík Roasters	Karástigur 1	F5
Gaukurinn	Tryggvagata 22	D3	Stofan Café	Vesturgata 3	D3
Hard Rock Café	Lækjargata 2a	D3	Ölsmíðjan	Lækjargata 10	E3
Hressó	Austurstræti 20	D3	Tivolí bar	Hafnarstræti 4	D3
Húrra	Naustin	D3	Tjarnarbrío	Tjarnargata 12	E3
ART67	Laugavegur 67	F7	ASÍ Art Gallery	Freyjugata 41	G6
ASÍ Art Gallery	Freyjugata 41	G6	Aurora Reykjavík	Grandagarður 2	B1
Asgrímur Jónsson	Museum	Bergstaðastr. 74	G4	July 8-Sep 1, Mon-Fri	
Berg Contemporary	Klappastígur 16	E5	Berg Contemporary	Hverfisgata 15	E5
The Culture House	Hverfisgata 15	E5	The Culture House	Austurstræti 1	E5
The Einar Jónsson	Museum	Eiriksgata	G5	Open Tue-Sun 10-17	
Ekkisens	Bergstaðast. 25b	F4	Galleri List	Skipholt 50A	H10
Galleri List	Skipholt 50A	H10	Hafnarborg	Strandgata 34, 220	D3
Hafnarborg	Strandgata 34, 220	D3	Hitt Húsið	Pósthússtræti 3-5	D4
Hitt Húsið	Pósthússtræti 3-5	D4	Hverfisgalleri	Hverfisgata 4	D4
i8 Gallery	Tryggvagata 16	D3	i8 Gallery	Tu-Fri 11-18, Sat 13-17	

### Museums & Galleries

The Penis Museum	Laugavegur 116	F8	Ásmundarsafn	Sigtún	Open daily 10-17	
Kirsuþrátt	Vesturgata 4	D3	Reykjavík City Library	Tryggvagata 15	D3	
Kling & Bang	Grandagarður 20	A4	Árbæjarsafn	Kistuhyllur 4	Open daily 9-18	
Listastofan	Hringbraut 119	F3	The Settlement	Exhibition	Aðalstræti 16	D3
Living Art Museum	Grandagarður 20	A4	Reykjavík Museum of Photography	Tryggvagata 15	D3	
Mokka Kaffi	Skólavörðustíg. 3A	E5	Saga Museum	Grandagarður 2	B2	
Museum Of Design and Applied Art	Garðatorg 1	D3	Sigurjón Ólafsson	Museum	Laugarnestangi 70	Open Tu-Sun 14-17
The National Gallery of Iceland	Frikkirkjuvegur 7	F3	SÍM	Hafnarstræti 16	D3	
The National Museum	Sudurgata 41	G2	Tveir Hrafnar	Baldursgata 12	G4	
The Nordic House	Sturluggata 5	H2	Wind & Weather	Window Gallery	Hverfisgata 37	E5
Hafnarhús	Tryggvagata 17	D3				
Kjarvalsstaðir	Fiókagata 24	H8				

**A**



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# The Map

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

## Dining

### 1. Snaps

Pórsgrata 1

Snaps is a beloved casual-chic bistro with a forget-you're-in-Reykjavík vibe thanks to its lush greenery and warm lighting. On a grey day, nothing beats sitting by the greenhouse walls with their excellent moules frites. Did we mention they make a stellar creme brûlée as well? A true keeper.

### 2. Block Burger

Skólavörðustígur 8

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

### 3. Ísbúðin Valdís

Grandagarður 21

Valdis is perhaps Reykjavík's most beloved ice cream parlour. All their ice cream is made in-house every morning. If you like liquorice, try their Turkish Pepper flavour: it looks like liquid cement, but it's one of their most popular offerings. Valdis doesn't have much seating, so get your ice cream to go and enjoy it in a parked car – Icelandic style.

### 4. Hannesarholt

Grundarstígur 10

Hannesarholt was officially opened to the public in 2013, and it serves as a reminder of what Iceland used to be. The beautiful building hosts exhibits, concerts, and a fabulous vegan-friendly menu that uses local produce. Don't miss the salmon either—it's cooked to perfection.

### 5. Brauð & Co.

Frakkastígur 16

Brauð & Co. burst onto the bakery scene in 101 Reykjavík. Regulars swear by their "snuður"—cinnamon bread rolls smothered with a sugary glaze. They take it a step further and stuff the classics with blueberries and whatnot, eliciting inappropriate satisfied moans. Get there early to snatch a warm one.

### 6. Dill

Hverfisgata 12

If you're a gourmand looking for a memorable meal when in Reykjavík,

Dill has to top your list. Dill showcases the best of Iceland with seasonal menus, paying homage to the island's bounty, executed with all the tweezer precision of modern cuisine. Don't even think twice about splurging for the seven-course menu—it's the only way to do it.

### 7. Hverfisgata 12

Hverfisgata 12

The "Nameless Pizza Place" at Hverfisgata 12 has been pushing that doughy envelope with topping combinations that'll leave you scratching your head at first and rubbing your belly later. Try the beetroot pizza or the soya mushroom, sausage and pickled chilli number, and make a night of it with some excellent cocktails from the bar.

### 8. Ramen Momo

Tryggvagata 16

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

### 9. The Fish Company

Vesturgata 2a

Fiskfélagið has been steadfastly dishing out some of the best seafood in Iceland. Don't try too hard to make sense of the ingredient/country mashup—just focus on the food. Our former food editor described it as "fish so buttery, it must be on laxatives." Yum.

### 10. Ali Baba

Veltusund 3b

This spot has often been awarded Grapevine's "Best Late Night Bite." Needless to say, it's the perfect place to satisfy pregnancy cravings, splitting hangovers and midnight binges. We recommend the lamb kofte wrap: it's to die for.

## Drinking

### 11. Dillon Whiskey Bar

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 whiskeys and hosts some of Iceland's best hard rock bands on the weekends.

### 12. Kiki Queer Bar

Laugavegur 22

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

### 13. Stofan

Vesturgata 3

When the name of the place literally translates to "the living room," it's pretty much expected to be a very cosy place to kick back with some late-afternoon, early-evening drinks. All their beers and wines on happy hour from 4pm until 8pm, and it's a lovely central location with a dim basement and an airy first floor.

### 14. Kaffibarinn

Bergstaðastræti 1

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

### 15. Gaukurinn

Tryggvagata 22

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

### 16. Mikkeller & Friends

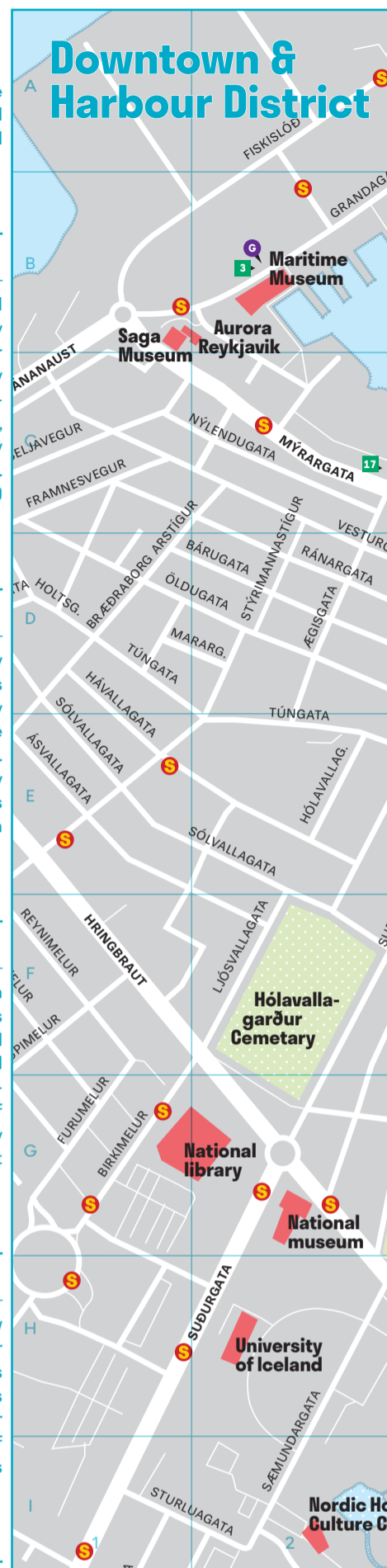
Hverfisgata 12

Another great spot for beer-tasting, this place has a unique and constantly rotating selection of beers from Mikkeller and other carefully picked craft breweries, knowledgeable bartenders, antique-chic décor, and it's located upstairs from Hverfisgata 12, so you get good weekend DJs, fancy bar snacks and pizzas.

### 17. Slippbarinn

Mýrargata 2

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



### 18. The Pedersen Suite

Ingólfsstræti 7A

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

## Shopping

### 19. Kolaportið

Tryggvagata 19

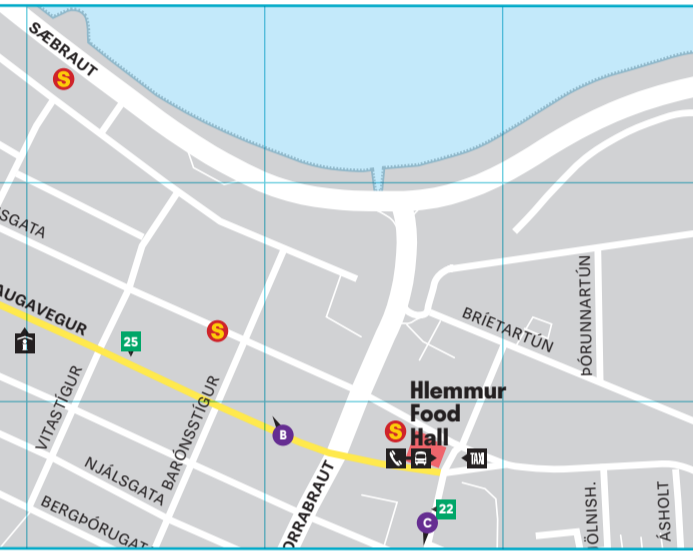
Kolaportið is a huge indoor flea market that takes place on weekends. It's filled with stalls selling bric-a-brac, secondhand clothes,

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**New In Town**



**CNTMP**  
Laugavegur 12b

A sudden appearance at the end of 2018, this sleek and minimal streetwear boutique occupies an enviable spot on the main Laugavegur strip. An acronym for "contemporary," the shop's name describes its concept—the store will sell limited amounts of garments by local and overseas streetwear brands. At the time of writing, there's clothing from Reykjavik Roses and PLEASURE, with new stock promised soon. Also on sale are related artefacts like Emmsjé Gauti vinyl and the xDeathrow photo book. **JR**

unusual foods, antique postcards, lóþapeysur, and the occasional religious booth filled with literature and pamphlets.

**20. Omnom Chocolate**

Hólmaslóð 4

You can see the whole process by which Omnom's chocolate bars are made here, from when they receive the cocoa beans to when they wrap them in their beautiful packing. Then you can buy some for the trip home.

**21. Mál og Menning**

Laugavegur 18

Mál og Menning has three levels with great curated displays of the

latest titles, and for visitors there's an area dedicated to selling recent and classic Icelandic literature in English. The café is a haunt of local writers, and it hosts occasional book launches and readings, too.

**22. Lucky Records**

Rauðarárstígur 10

Lucky Records is probably the biggest record shop in Iceland, with shelves upon shelves of new and used vinyl and CDs on offer. They have a small stage where local and visiting bands sometimes perform, and expert staff that can always help you find what you're looking for.

**23. Farmers And Friends**

Hólmaslóð 2 & Laugavegur 37

If you want to pick up an Icelandic sweater, peruse the Farmers Market outlet. Their wares combine Nordic style with a fresh aesthetic, providing you with a modern take on traditional pieces.

**24. Tulipop**

Skólavörðustígur 43

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

**25. Fjällräven**

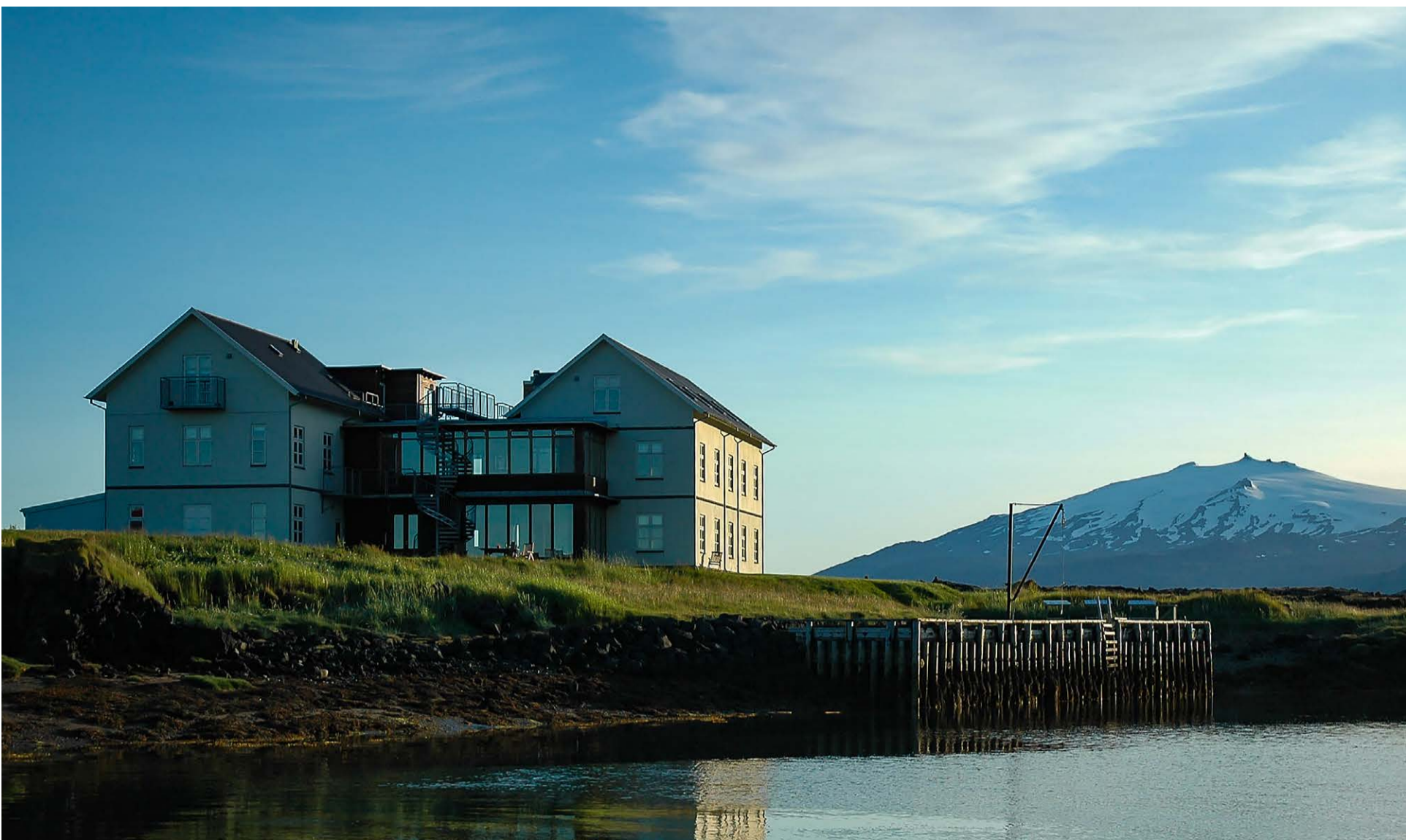
Laugavegur 67

Swedish outdoor brand Fjällräven's classic rucksack is so durable that they've been known to become family heirlooms, passed down to kids by parents who, presumably, grew up and got briefcases and fancy handbags instead. You'll see their duds adorning the backs of many Reykjavik-ites today.

**26. Rauðhetta & Úlfurinn**

Skólavörðustígur 8

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



# WELCOME TO ANOTHER WORLD

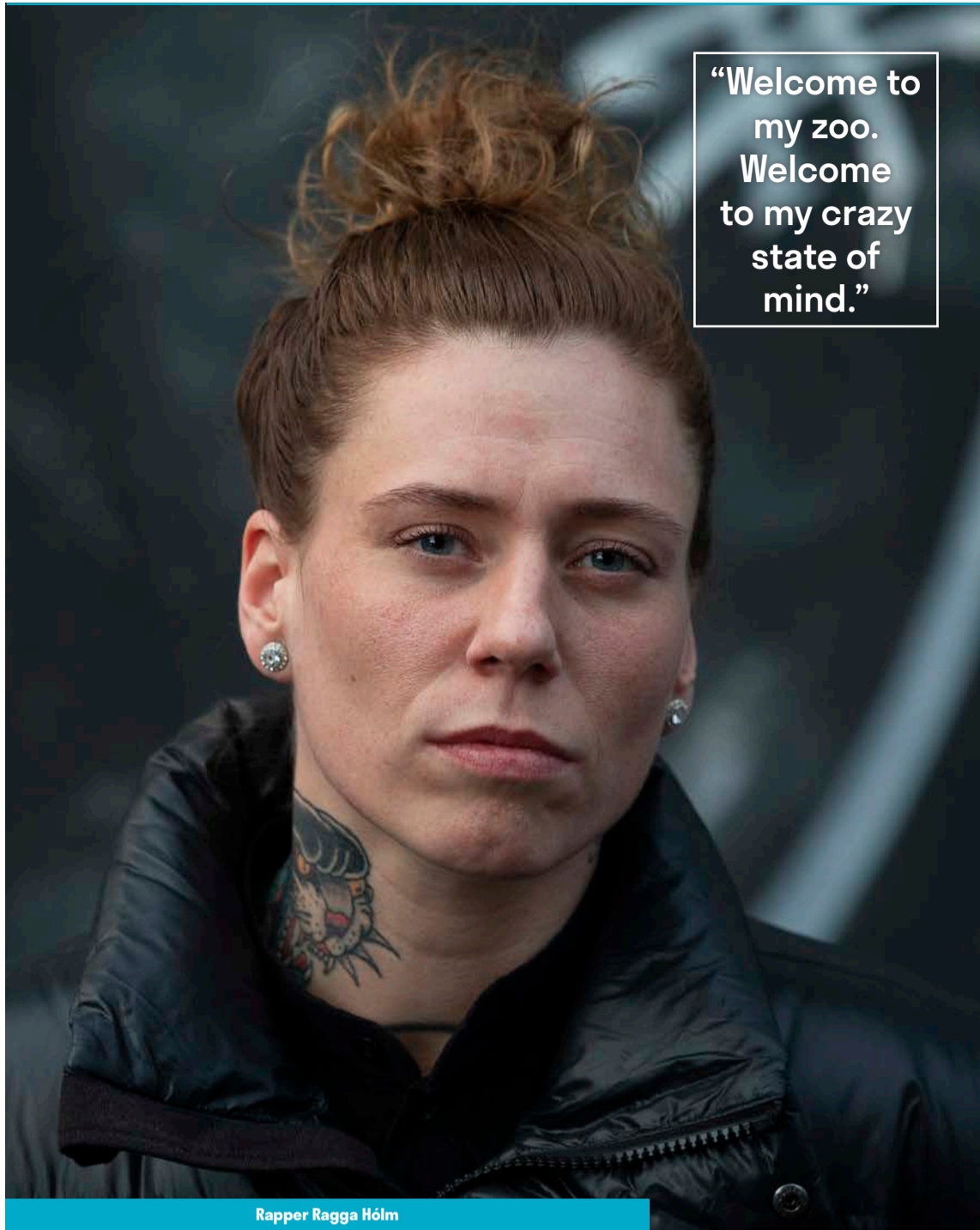
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Rapper Ragga Hólm

TRACK BY TRACK

# 'BIPOLAR' By Ragga Holm

Love songs, cockiness and everything in-between

Words: Hannah Jane Cohen  
Photo: Art Bicnick

Ragga Holm might be best known from *Reykjavíkurdætur*, but her newly-released 'BIPOLAR' shows she can easily stand on her own two feet. The album, inspired by Ragga's experiences with bipolar disorder, is a melange of pop, hip-hop and electro. We sat down to hear about it, track by track.

### Komdu með mér

This song took me almost a year, but it's a love story about a person I lost when I was in a bad place. The cherry on the top, though, was getting Svala on the song. She's something else.

### Dýragarðurinn

Welcome to my zoo. Welcome to my crazy state of mind. 'Dýragarðurinn' is a cocky song. I'm really going for it, which I think is hard for girls to do, to be cocky. I even drop the word bukkake, which is kind of the worst word ever.

### Sísi

'Sísi' is an Icelandic song by Grýlur. When I started writing music, I was really shy to sing about women. I thought it was, maybe, too gay? But

this song isn't necessarily about a girl I'm into, it's just a girl. Sísi is really secure with herself. She's just the girl everyone wants to be. Doing this song was amazing because Ragga Grísla gave me permission.

### Tíminn

'Tíminn' is about teasing. The song says, "Don't give me hopes that I can't grab." I only write love songs when I'm very depressed, but I never make them sad. There's always hope. At the end, people are left questioning themselves and what really happened

### Teggana með

This song is about my ex-girlfriend. We literally name-drop her, but I was still with her when it was written, so it's not a diss or anything. 'Teggana með' means I take her with me everywhere I go, like she's my trophy. So it's like, even if you're crazy or fucked up, I still take you with me.

### Sjáðu mig nú

'Sjáðu mig nú' means look at me now. It's very private and about a breakup that wasn't fair. I'm saying that I'm

relieved it happened. I can put my feet on the ground and know that life isn't always dancing on roses. It's a song about the end of an era.

### Hvað finnst þér um það?

I don't know how I ended up rapping about having sex with a guy because that only happened once but I'm talking about it like it's dirty when it wasn't actually like that. I put so much spice on the story that it is nothing like reality. Kilo then comes in rapping about how he's the best. We were just in that manic state of mind.

### Þorparinn

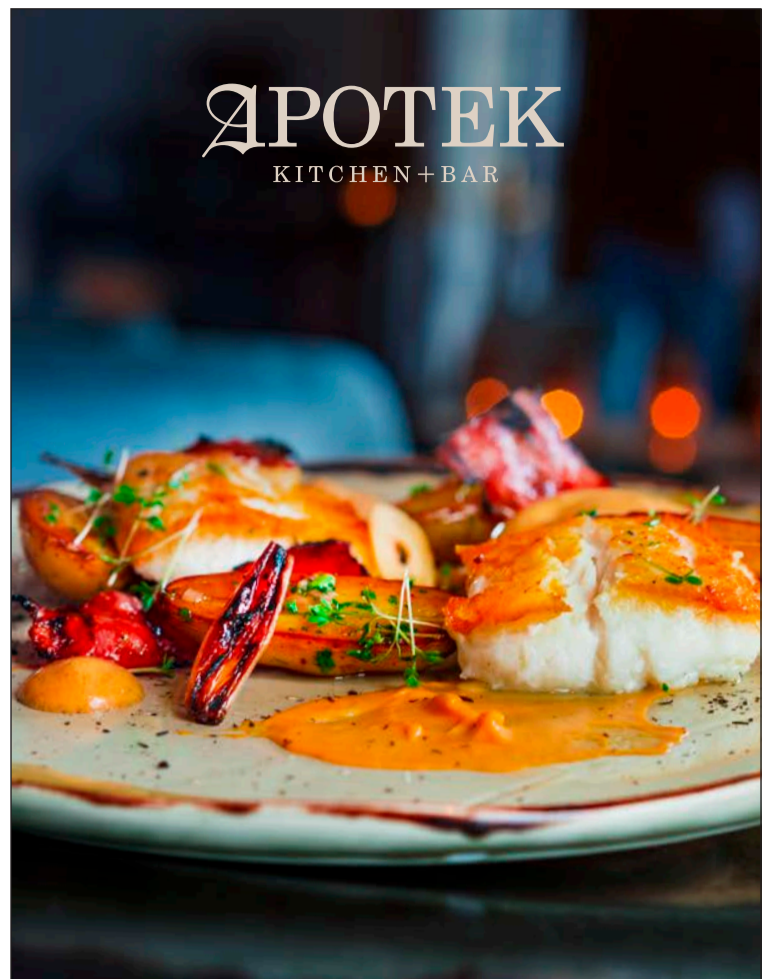
'Þorparinn' is a cover of a famous Icelandic song. It's about an outlaw that returns to his hometown but always feels like he's not supposed to be there. I connect with that. Sometimes I feel like I don't belong. I think, I'm not supposed to be here.

### RAGGAH RAGGAH

I was shy about putting this on the album because it's not my style. Writing this, I was so high up that I'm just talking down, saying I'm a female DMX, that I'm so cool. At the end, though, I thought, fuck it, just put it on the record.

### Af stað

When I play this live, I always say, "This is about two girls having sex," and everyone starts yelling. It's about two people who see each other in a club. There's a teasing vibe, where I say, "I know you're playing me, but I like it." At the end, though, you know it's probably going to go nowhere—but you still like it. ♡



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# Music



Jon Hopkins & Óli Arnalds surrounded by traditional Icelandic TP decorations

## Hip, Hip, Húrra

A metaphorical fist-pump NYE with Jon Hopkins and Kiasmos

Words: Grayson Del Faro Photos: Réza Kalfane

### John Hopkins & Kiasmos

NYE show at Húrra - Review

British electronic superstar Jon Hopkins teamed up with Iceland's most prominent DJ duo Kiasmos to throw a sold-out party at Húrra on New Year's Eve. Jon Hopkins has been rising to fame amongst the electro-intelligentsia from his beginnings as a keyboardist for Imogen Heap, to a Grammy nomination for his 2018 album 'Singularity,' and his work with Brian Eno, Bonobo, and many others along the way. Kiasmos, comprising Icelandic composer Ólafur Arnalds and Faroese producer Janus Rasmussen, have become one of Iceland's most popular music exports in recent years, selling out their soft-edged techno shows all over the world.

### Hot and cold

With credits like these, it's no wonder that the event sold out more than a month in advance, even in a country where no one is capable of planning past their next meal. Tickets were so sought after that many desperate posts were made in the event page on Facebook pleading for passes. One ticket was even posted for sale for 10,000 ISK on the day of the event (original ticket price was 3,500 ISK).

This may have been one of the hottest events of the year, but the theme was all about the cold. Húrra's dance floor was redecorated entirely with white, hanging streamers and blue lights in glass cases filled with reflective material across the ceiling. This created the icy, wintry feeling that has been missing from this unusually warm winter, or, in the band's own words: "Elsa from Frozen's ecstasy dream!"

[gpv.is/music](http://gpv.is/music)  
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### Fast and slow

Jon Hopkins was up first. Most of his tracks start slow and build up with great nuance and artistry, but this being a DJ set instead of a concert (and New Year's Eve, no less), there wasn't much time for nuance. He came out hard with beats bumpin' and fists pumpin' (metaphorically), and the audience was ready. The people scattered around the venue were magnetized toward the front, as more and more flooded into the venue. Unlike a typical weekend at Húrra, the crowd that night were there to dance first and drink second, so there was no time wasted.

By the time Kiasmos took the stage, Húrra was truly at its absolute best. Everything from the look to the sound to the audience was in perfect harmony. Kiasmos oscillated from pounding beats to their more ethereal moments, with the crowd following along, alternately frenzied and blissed out.

### Out and in

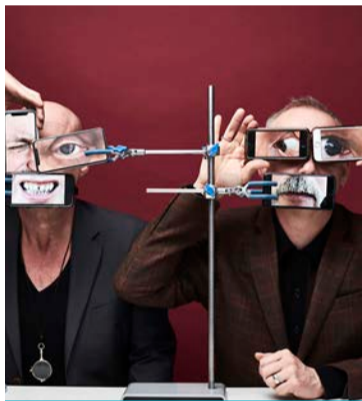
By the end, nearly every single person was on the dance floor, leaving the bar section of the venue eerily empty. After Húrra received a lot of criticism during Airwaves for overcrowding, which seriously detracted from some of the performances, they might have slightly overcorrected the attendance here. Or, maybe, many ticket holders just overdid it and missed out. Whatever the case, less is more. It made for a respectful crowd of music lovers, dancing with all the space they need in lieu of drunken festival zombies shoving each other.

That is exactly the kind of har-binger we need for Reykjavik this year. For those who were left outside in the actual cold, begging to get in: don't fret. Kiasmos announced on New Year's Day that the event will become a series. 2019 might just be your year after all. ♡



Pervs

**MUSIC NEWS** Hatari announced at the end of 2018 that the band would call it quits, having failed to bring down capitalism. A final concert was also announced for December 28th. However, they are also slated to play at January's Eurosonic festival—a top music industry networking event, and a hive of capitalism as such, according to the ostensible world view of Hatari. At the time of writing, what the future holds for the award-winning band is unclear, but it seems very likely there are further plot twists to come. In related news, Eurosonic is Iceland-rich this year, with **Kælan Mikla**, **Briet**, **Hildur**, **Hugar**, **RVKDR** and **Une Misère** also featured on the lineup. **JR**



Nerds

**Sónar Reykjavík** has announced the second wave of artists for 2019. The biggest name is 90s all-purpose dance music duo **Orbital**, alongside **Little Dragon** and **Kero Kero Bonito**. Resident Advisor will host the basement car park stage, bringing techno artists **Avalon Emerson**, **Benjamin Damage** and **upsammy**, alongside their Icelandic contemporaries such as **EXOS** and **Árni**. Icelandic artists also joining the bill include **FM Belfast**, **Auður**, **dj. flugvél og geimskip**, **Prins Póló**, **Halldor Eldjarn**, **Hekla** and **Hildur**. Tickets are on sale now. **JR**



Rock Jocks

**Ascension MMXIX**, which unexpectedly rose from the ashes of Studio Emissary's late Oration festival, finally released their long-awaited lineup in early December. As promised, the Ascension festival will feature a more diverse soundscape than that of the purely black metal Oration. International titans **Keep Dude**, **MGLA**, and **Tribulation** will take the stage with, surprisingly, **Sólstafir**, as well as local black metal stalwarts **Svartiðauði**, **Zhrine**, **Misþyrming**, and many more. The festival will be held from June 13th to 15th at Hlégarður in Mosfellsbær. **HJC**

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- 12/1 "DÚM": DYNFARI, ÚLFÚÐ, MORPHOLITH
- 17/1 MORII + SUPPORT
- 18/1 THE RETRO MUTANTS + SUPPORT
- 19/1 "HELGARHALD": CELESTINE, QUEST, OTTOMAN, ARI ÁRELÍUS, VOLCANOVA
- 24/1 DRAG-SÚGUR: DRAG LAB  
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- 25/1 KÆLAN MIKLA (ALBUM RELEASE)  
ALSO: SOME EMBER (US)
- 27/1 SINGER/SONGWRITER NIGHT

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## Our Picks



### ★ Dark Music Days 2019

Jan. 31st - 17:30, 19:30, 22:00 - Harpa - Free-4,500 ISK

In the dark and spooky Icelandic winter, music becomes a rare beacon of light. For this reason, every January, the Dark Music Days festival has taken place to present the best of experimental contemporary music. This year's iteration in Harpa is no different, and the lineup on January 31st promises a doozy of a dark day.

At 17:30, catch the colourful electro-acoustic cello music of Zoë Martlew. Next, don't miss the Iceland Symphony Orchestra at 19:30—conducted by Grapevine cover star Daníel Bjarnason—with an exploratory concert featuring everything from Púriður Jónsdóttir's 'Flutter' to Anna Meredith's 'HandsFree.' The day ends at 22:00 with the percussion-based Danish ensemble Neko3, who serve up avant-garde music performed in complete darkness. **HJC**



### ★ The Wonder Years (USA)

Jan. 31st - 20:00 - Húrra - 2,000 ISK

Make no mistake: This is the American pop-punk band, not the TV show. Come for some fun-loving moshing. **HJC**



### ★ AAIIEENN 'Spaces' Release Concert

Jan. 4th - 21:00 - Gaukurinn - 1,500 ISK

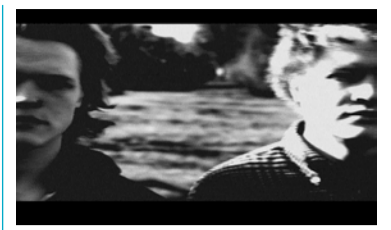
Ethereal, electro-ish 90's house on a slightly balearic trip morphs into colourful worlds through the eclectic beats of AAIIEENN. Their first album, 'Spaces' was released by FALK in September. AAIIEENN will be joined by xGADDAVÍRx, AMFJ, and Trouble. **HJC**



### ★ 'Heavy Trip' Screening

Jan. 9th - 20:00 - Bió Paradís

Heavy metal, grave robbing, and Viking battles—aka 'Little Miss Sunshine' with Amon Amarth. **HJC**



### ★ Andy Svarthol + rauður // The Vidarson's Takeover

Jan. 4th - 21:00 - Mengi - 2,000 ISK

Just when you thought Reykjavík's music scene had been completely taken over by hip-hop and ethereal electronica, post-psychedelic soft-rockers, Andy Svarthol have finally returned to the stage. Think a mix of The Zombies with late 90s Britpop bands. **HJC**

## January 4th—January 31st

# Concerts & Nightlife

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

### Friday January 4th

★ **Andy Svarthol + rauður // The Vidarson's Takeover**  
21:00 Mengi  
**Pink Iceland Queer Friday:**  
**Rebecca Hidalgo**  
19:00 Pink Iceland  
**DJ Dora**  
21:00 Sæta Svinið  
★ **AAIIEENN 'Spaces' Release Concert**  
21:00 Gaukurinn  
**Welcome Party: DJ Geasetone**  
21:00 Stúdentakjallarinn  
**After Work Garage House Party:**  
**DJ Tommi White**  
17:05 Orangeespressobar  
**DJ Marbendill & Hexía**  
23:00 Húrra

### Saturday January 5th

**Babies**  
23:00 Bryggjan Brugghús  
**Norn / Moronic / HC Laxness / Gamli**  
21:00 Gaukurinn  
**Valdimar**  
21:00 Húrra  
**DJ Óli Dóri**  
23:00 Húrra

### Sunday January 6th

**Rotary Music Award Concert 2019**  
17:00 Harpa  
**Sunday Jazz**  
20:00 Bryggjan Brugghús  
**The Golden Age Of Swing:**  
**The Reykjavik Big Band**  
20:00 Harpa

### Monday January 7th

**MonJazz**  
21:00 Húrra  
**Iiona Meija & Dzintra Erliha**  
20:00 Nordic House

### Tuesday January 8th

**Karaoke Party!**  
21:00 Gaukurinn

### Wednesday January 9th

**Don Lockwood Band**  
21:00 Slippbarinn

**Party Karaoke With Þórunn Antonía**  
21:00 Sæta Svinið  
**Josephine Foster & Friends**  
21:00 Mengi

### Thursday January 10th

**Iceland Symphony Orchestra:**  
**Viennese Favourites**  
19:30 Harpa  
**Laying Eggs: Raust//kliður//rómur**  
20:00 Nordic H0use

### Friday January 11th

**Iceland Symphony Orchestra:**  
**Viennese Favourites**  
19:30 Harpa  
**DJ Dora**  
21:00 Sæta Svinið  
**DJ Vala's B4ck2sch00l Party**  
21:00 Stúdentakjallarinn  
**After Work Garage House Party:**  
**DJ Tommi White**  
17:05 Orangeespressobar  
**Surprise DJ**  
23:00 Húrra



Many have misunderstood Dynfari

### Saturday January 12th

"DÚM": **Dynfari / Úlfúð & Morpholith**  
21:00 Gaukurinn  
**Iceland Symphony Orchestra:**  
**Viennese Favourites**  
16:00, 19:30 Harpa  
**DJ KGB**  
23:00 Húrra

### Sunday January 13th

**Classical Sundays: Stirni Ensemble**  
16:00 Harpa  
**Sunday Jazz**  
20:00 Bryggjan Brugghús

### Monday January 14th

**MonJazz**  
21:00 Húrra

### Tuesday January 15th

**Karaoke Party!**  
21:00 Gaukurinn  
**DJ Rex Pistols**  
23:00 Húrra



DJ Ívar Pétur is a bit of a badboy

### Wednesday January 16th

**Don Lockwood Band**  
21:00 Bryggjan Brugghús  
**Party Karaoke With Þórunn Antonía**  
21:00 Sæta Svinið

### Thursday January 17th

**Geir Ólafs & Band**  
21:00 Petersen svítan  
**Iceland Symphony Orchestra:**  
**Young Soloists**  
19:30 Harpa

### Friday January 18th

**Alanis Morissette Tribute Concert**  
22:00 Græni Hatturinn  
**Django Days**  
20:30 IðNÓ  
**Pink Iceland Queer Friday:**  
**Aldís Fjóra**  
19:00 Pink Iceland  
**Prins Póló**  
22:30 Bryggjan Brugghús  
**DJ Dora**  
21:00 Sæta Svinið  
**After Work Garage House Party:**  
**DJ Tommi White**  
17:05 Orangeespressobar  
**DJ Ívar Pétur**  
23:00 Húrra

### Saturday January 19th

"**Helgarhald**": **Celestine / Quest / Ottoman / Ari Árelíus & Volcanova**  
21:00 Gaukurinn  
**Django Days**  
15:00 IðNÓ  
**Rap in Kópavogur: Raske Penge / Iris Gold & Lilla Namó**  
19:00 Salurinn  
**DJ Óli Dóri**  
23:00 Húrra

### Open Rehearsal

9:30 Harpa  
**Egill Ólafs & Bjössi Thor**  
21:00 Petersen svítan  
**Iceland Symphony Orchestra:**  
**Bernstein & Villa-Lobos**  
19:30 Harpa

### Friday January 25th

**Hungarian & Austrian Concert**  
20:00 Salurinn  
**DJ Dora**  
21:00 Sæta Svinið  
★ **Kælan Mika & Some Ember: 'Nótt Eftir Nótt' Release Concert**  
21:00 Sæta Svinið  
**After Work Garage House Party:**  
**DJ Tommi White**  
17:05 Orangeespressobar  
**DJ KGB**  
23:00 Húrra

### Saturday January 26th

**Valdimar**  
22:00 Græni Hatturinn  
**DJ Thaison**  
23:00 Húrra

### Sunday January 27th

**Singer/Songwriter Night**  
20:00 Gaukurinn  
**Classical Sundays: Icelandic Strings**  
16:00 Harpa  
**Sunday Jazz**  
20:00 Bryggjan Brugghús

### Monday January 28th

**MonJazz**  
21:00 Húrra

### Tuesday January 29th

**Karaoke Party!**  
21:00 Gaukurinn  
**DJ Siggasiggasigga**  
23:00 Húrra

### Wednesday January 30th

**Don Lockwood Band**  
21:00 Bryggjan Brugghús  
**Party Karaoke With Þórunn Antonía**  
21:00 Sæta Svinið

### Thursday January 31st

★ **Dark Music Days 2019:**  
**Zoë Martlew**  
17:30 Harpa  
★ **Dark Music Days 2019:**  
**Iceland Symphony Orchestra**  
19:30 Harpa  
★ **Dark Music Days 2019: Neko3**  
22:00 Harpa  
★ **The Wonder Years**  
20:00 Húrra  
**Egill Ólafs & Bjössi Thor**  
21:00 Petersen svítan

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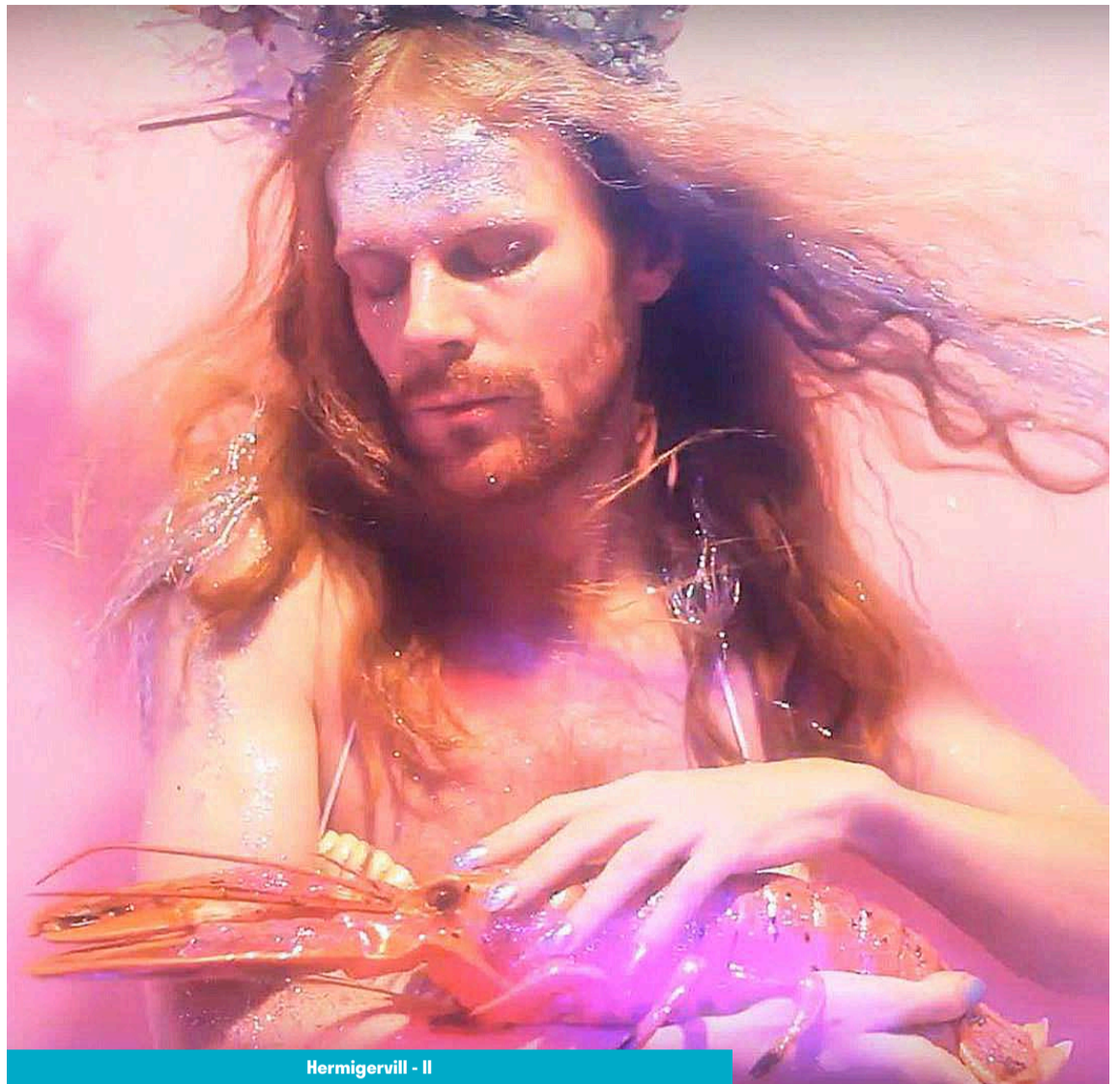
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## Music



Hermigervill - II

## Our Albums Of The Year

The Icelandic music you should have heard in 2018

Words: Grapevine Music Dpt.



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Deliberating over the Grapevine's Music Awards is a difficult process—for every winner that we hand a medal to, there are countless others who were also jockeying for position and did great things well deserving of your attention. With that in mind, we asked our music team for their own personal picks from this excellent year in Icelandic music.

### John Rogers

I love it when something that I've written about crosses over into my personal record collection and there were several albums this year that did exactly that. The most-played of the bunch was the excellent **'Light Is Liquid'** by múm founding member **Örvar Smárason**. It's a finely hewn, down-tempo pop album with a bright, fresh feel; the nicely crafted songs contain earworm melodies, but also a lot of space that lets them breathe. Robotic voices nestle alongside contributions from rising vocalist **sillus** and established stars **sóley** and **JFDR**, and the record charts a lyrically introspective course through everything from love—or the lack thereof—to self-worth, and dealing with the craziness of the **Trump**-era global consciousness. It snuck out this summer when Örvar was busily touring **'Team Dreams'**, and deserves much more attention. I was also blown away by a couple of singles by **Solveig Matthildur**, whose gloomy electronic pop seems to go from strength to strength. Her single **'Affliction/Absolution'** (only available on Bandcamp) is that spine-tingling kind

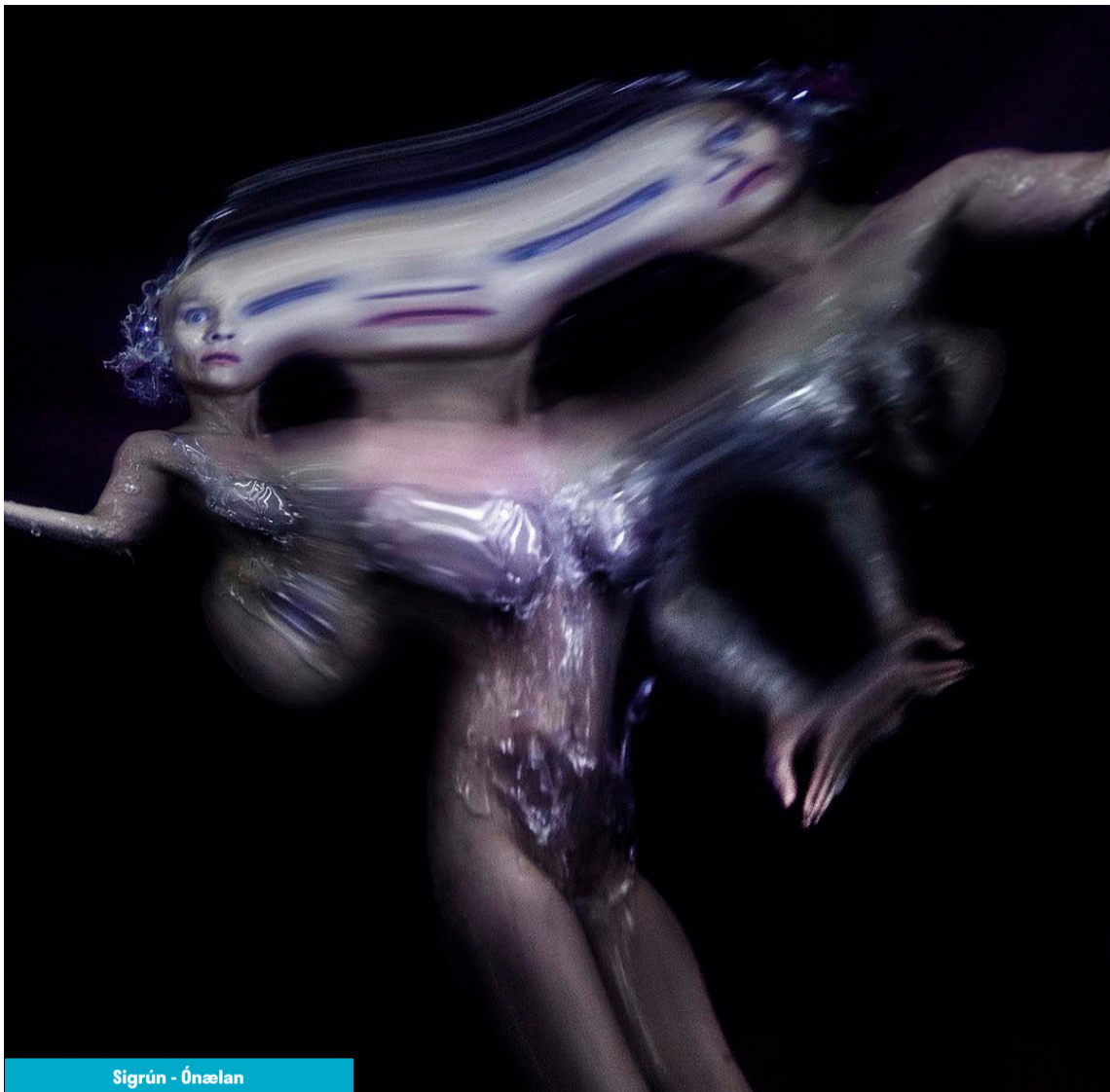


of stunning; her first English-language track 'Dystopian Boy' opens the lyrics up to the English-speaking audience. I was also smitten with **GYDA's 'Evolution'**, which vibrates with a rare, luminous, soulful sensitivity; aYia's debut had enough moments of magic to ensure repeat listens; finally, **Ólafur Arnalds'** gently amazing **'remember'** got a lot of Sunday-morning spins throughout the year.

### Valur Grettisson

There were three albums that pleasantly took me by surprise this year, all of which I've listened to relentlessly since they were released.

They're all very different in style, but all have one thing in common: some unique individual artistic breakout. First on the list is the surprise hip-hop album **'Hasarlífstill'** by **Arnar Úlfur**, better known as half of the hip hop duo Úlfur Úlfur. *Hasarlífstill* is Arnar's first solo album, and it has a raw, real and retro feeling to it—some back-to-basics elements that the Icelandic hip-hop scene really needs. It also exposed a new dimension of Arnar as a musician. I'm looking forward for something more. Another breakout this year was **SiGRÚN** with her amazing debut **'Onælan.'** SiGRÚN gained a lot of experience touring the world with **Björk**, **Sigur Rós**



Sigrún - Ónælan

## NANANANABÚBÚ



HÓRMÓNAR

and **Florence + The Machine** as a part of a brass band. It's safe to say that she learned a lot. Although the *Ónælan* album is unique, you can clearly hear her influences. But it was the strong songwriting that convinced me that this is something promising. It's one of the best albums of 2018. The final album got a bit buried in the Christmas madness—**Hermigervill's** long-awaited *'II.'* This album is everything you can ask for when it comes to solid electro music. He even throws in some old school Roland TB bass sounds to satisfy the 90s electro nerds. The album is playful, melodic and humorous. It's a good step forward for Hermigervill and I hope he'll travel further on this track.

### Hannah Jane Cohen

I was introduced to the work of **Daniel Bjarnason** only whilst writing a feature about him and his opera *'Brothers'* earlier this year. Not a modern opera lover, I was hesitant, at first, but I've since fallen head and soul in love with everything Daniel has done. His newest effort,

*'Collider,'* is a particular favourite. The album is—as you'd expect for the composer—super dramatic. That said, it's also weirdly danceable, especially if you're the type that likes to put on tunes so they can dive headfirst into fantastical daydreams while vacuuming. Daniel's tunes make me feel like I'm the star of some dark ballet. The choral parts on *'The Isle Is Full Of Noises: I. O, I Have Suffered'* are particularly good to emote to. Outside of the classical genre, I got super into the Sisters Of Mercy-esque vibes of **Port**, a group that has unfortunately flown massively under the radar. Their album, *'Night Music,'* which came out in September, was the perfect soundtrack for my reformed goth life. It's rare that a band can authentically capture that old goth vibe, but they did (and I'm pretty sure they even used a drum machine.) Other than that, **Ólafur Arnalds** earned many Spotify plays from me, as did **Dadykewl's** smooth hip-hop and **Great Grief's** recent hardcore/rock debut. Overall, it's been an eclectic year for Icelandic music. But really—here's hoping



Sólveig Matthildur



this year's Eurovision song is better than the shitshow of last year!

### Phil Uwe Widiger

There were only a few Icelandic releases that stuck with me this year. One of them was **Morpholith's** first EP, *'Void Emissions,'* which completely blew me away—a feeling that was only intensified by their insanely powerful live shows. Morpholith's mix of psychedelia and doom riffs is guaranteed to put you into a heavy trance. Another release that thoroughly impressed—and which was closely connected to an intense live experience—was **Hórmónar's** debut album *'Nanananabúbú.'* With compelling lyrics, emotional vocals that pierce right through your heart, and a rough yet well-judged production, this was my Icelandic album of the year. More than once I have cried my eyes out and screamed along with this album, because it is just so damn good. If you ever have the chance to see this band live, do not fucking hesitate—just do it and thank me later. ♡

2.11.2018 — 31.1.2019

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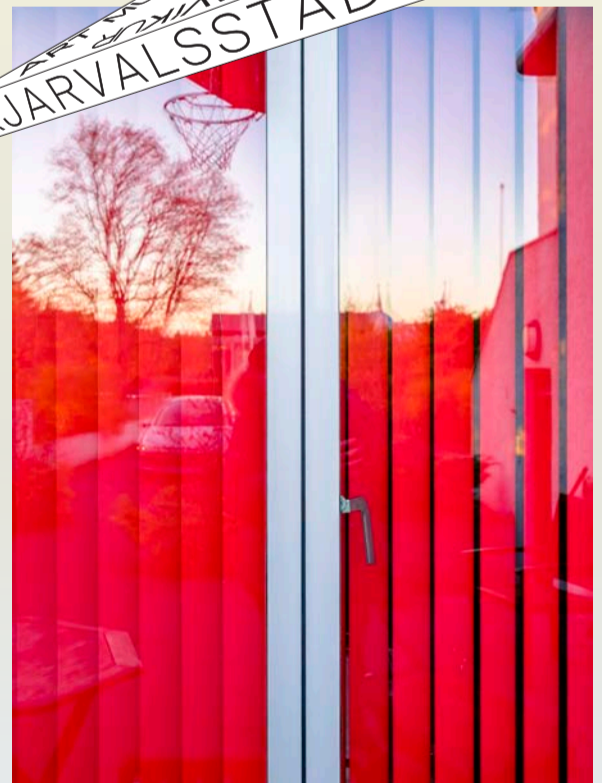
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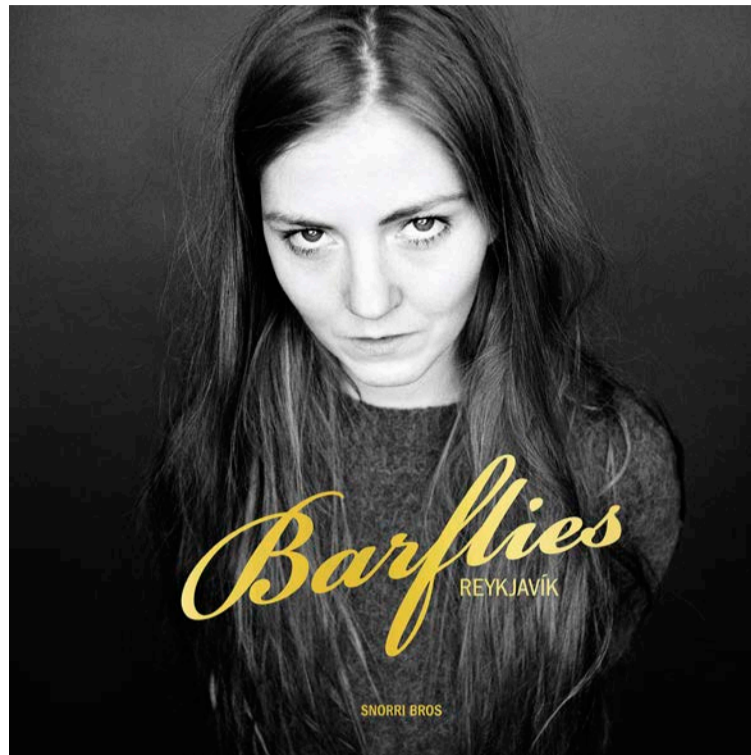
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## Like Flies To The Light

Nightlife institution Kaffibarinn publishes second portrait collection on 25th anniversary

Words: **Phil Uwe Widiger** Photo: **Snorri Bros**

dóttir. "It's about saluting the loyal customers and staff without whom we wouldn't be anything."



### International barflies

Naturally, the Snorri Bros were hired to do the job once more. But this time, there would be 400 portraits, taken with the same camera, the same lens, and the same lighting. Many were shot in Kaffibarinn, but with Icelanders scattering around the world, there were also photoshoots in Berlin, Copenhagen and New York City, which is in itself a testimony for the diverse and expansive crowd that's connected to the bar. 280 portraits made it into the book—both fresh faces, and recognisable figures from the first book.

As with everything in life, challenges had to be faced. "I almost lost the films of the shoot in Berlin," recounts Einar. After having dinner in a restaurant in Berlin, he only realised in the taxi on the way home that he had forgotten his backpack. Luckily, after about half an hour of stressful uncertainty, he managed

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Kaffibarinn is no ordinary bar. It just recently celebrated its 25th anniversary—and in the ever-evolving nightlife environment of Reykjavík, this really means something. And, well, there's a reason for its longevity. The bar has thrown many legendary parties over the years—it made the news recently when the drummer of renowned electro-pop band FM Belfast crowd surfed out of the bar, down the street, and back in



again. Given all this, it's no surprise that Kaffibarinn has been listed by The Guardian as one of the top 20 nightclubs in Northern Europe.

### The original barfly

It's not common for a bar to release a book with portraits of their regulars, staff and other people that form part of its history. But in November 2018, Kaffibarinn released the second edition of just such a book.

When the bar opened in 1993, then owner Friðrik Weissappel wanted to create an ad that would make Kaffibarinn stand out in the 101 downtown district. The bar had already established itself as a social hub within 101, with a who's who clientele of musicians, artists, fashion designers, journalists and other creative types that it's still known

for today.

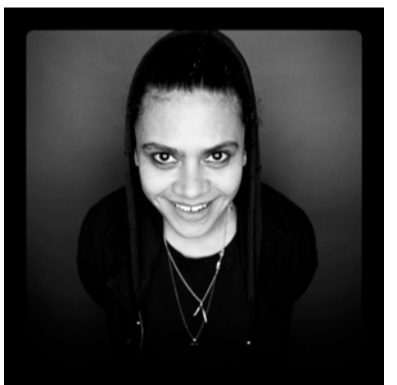
Einar and Eiður Snorri, known collectively as the Snorri Bros, were commissioned for the job, and consequently shot around 15 portraits of regulars and staff with a nostalgic Hasselblad polaroid camera. Happy with the outcome, 60 more portraits were commissioned. The results were shown in an exhibition. "It was 1993, you know," Einar chuckles. "We just called everybody who was in our phone book. Everybody who happened to be home came, the others didn't."

The photos were added to the media databases of local newspapers and were published again and again, accompanying articles about the people who'd had their portraits taken. It was marketing done right.

### Good things take time

But, a portrait book was not released until 2008, when power-House Books discovered the photos and decided to publish them. "Barflies: Reykjavík" went on to become a popular among locals and foreigners alike.

In 2018, and Kaffibarinn celebrated its 25th anniversary, and the idea to do another portrait book came up. "Barflies: Reykjavík II" is not just to publicise the bar," says Kaffibarinn manager Guðný Jóns-



to find the restaurant and his backpack with the film still inside.

### The spirit of Kaffibarinn

Even at 25 years old Kaffibarinn manages to gather a bustling social crowd of 101 faces, regulars and newcomers. With a DJ every night, its popularity is still going strong.

"Friðrik Weissappel brought the spirit of hospitality to the bar when he opened it in 1993," Guðný explains. "Since then, it has had many good managers that have continued with the same spirit of being good to the regulars."

"It's also just a great place, in terms of its energy," Einar says. "It's a very solid spot, like an anchor in Reykjavík's nightlife environment. The energy has always been good."

'Barflies: Reykjavík II' is not only a book with aesthetically beautiful portraits, but also a time-capsule of a moment in Reykjavík's creative scene and nightlife, and an ode to the diverse and loyal crowd that calls Kaffibarinn a second home. After all, they are what kept the place alive all these years. So, cheers to the Barflies of Reykjavík! 🍻

## Our Picks



### Rising Stars Of Photography

#### ★ Photography School Grad Show

Jan. 12th to 20th, Ljósmyndaskóli

Six students of the School of Photography are graduating this month, and their works will

be showcased at an exhibition at Hólmaslóð 6 from January 11th to 20th. This exhibition will feature the works of Ásgeir Pétursson, Helga Laufey Ásgeirsdóttir, Kamil Grygo, Sonja Margrét Ólafsdóttir and Þórsteinn Sigurðsson—some of whom have been featured in Grapevine before, as interview subjects or working photographers. A special edition photography book showcasing their works will be available while the exhibition is open. It all kicks off at 17:00 on January 11th, with the exhibition open every day (except Monday) from 12:00-18:00 thereafter. **AF**



#### ★ Ingunn Vestby

Jan. 9th - Feb. 15th  
Nordic House

Ingunn Vestby photographs plants, plankton, flowers, and leaves in such

fine detail that they take on the appearance of carpets and textiles—a crossover between natural and man-made art. **HJC**



#### ★ White Sun

Until March 3rd - Skafffell

Artist group IYFAC is here to alleviate your winter seasonal blues with synthetic sun and an ac-

companying solar soundtrack. Time—marked by Earth's heliocentric orbit—deconstructs itself. **HJC**



#### ★ Gisli Súrsson

Jan. 7th, 14th, 22nd - 20:00 - Tjarnarbíó

Based on the famous Icelandic saga, this award-winning play follows the

tragic tale of Gisli Súrsson, who—spoiler alert—dies in the end. Before that, though, he does a lot of heroic stuff. **HJC**

## January 4th—January 31st

# Art Listings

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

### Opening

#### WIND AND WEATHER WINDOW GALLERY Versatile Uprising

In this interactive exhibit, a choreography of light and sound creates a diorama of mysterious imagery. Feel free to move your hand in front of a sensor to control the lights.  
• Opens on January 8th, 2018  
• Runs until February 26th, 2019

#### REYKJAVÍK ART MUSEUM - ÁSMUNDARSAFN

##### Ásmundur Sveinsson: Art In Public Space

Ásmundarsafn is named after sculptor Ásmundur Sveinsson. This new permanent exhibition presents the artist in a new light. What dialogue does his works provoke?  
• Opens on January 19th, 2019  
• Runs until December 31st, 2019  
**Sigurður Guðmundsson**  
Sigurður Guðmundsson is one of the most famous Icelandic photographers. Come see his energetic, humorous, and intelligent at this special exhibition.  
• Opens on January 19th, 2019  
• Runs until March 31st, 2019

### Ongoing

#### NATIONAL GALLERY OF ICELAND

##### Treasures Of A Nation

A selection of over 80 works chosen from the national gallery's collection display the evolution of art since the 19th century.  
• Runs until December 31st, 2019  
**Oracles**  
Karl Einarsson Dunganon bequeathed his life's work to Iceland. Here, come see a selection of art-work, poetry, scrapbooks and more.  
• Runs until January 27th, 2019

#### EINAR JÓNSSON MUSEUM

##### Permanent Exhibition

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

#### THE ÁSGRÍMUR JÓNSSON COLLECTION

##### Korriró And Dillidó

Ásgrímur's art explores the fears and dreams of generations, as mysterious Icelandic elves, trolls and monsters finally take shape and materialise as vivid beings.  
• Runs until January 31st, 2019

#### MUSEUM OF DESIGN AND APPLIED ART

##### Behind The Scenes With Einar Þorsteinn

In 2014, architect and mathematician Einar Þorsteinn Ásgeirsson gave all his belongings to the museum. Best described as a renaissance man, the exhibit is full of curiosities.  
• Runs until March 10th, 2019

#### AND ANTIMATTER

AND ANTIMATTER is a creative studio founded by Þórey Björk Halldórsdóttir & Baldur Björnsson. They've set up a live workspace in the museum to explore in-between design and art, objects and experiences.  
• Runs until March 15th, 2019

#### ÁRBÆR OPEN AIR MUSEM

##### Daily Guided Tours

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

#### REYKJAVÍK CITY MUSEUM

##### Settlement Sagas

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

#### REYKJAVÍK ART MUSEUM - ÁSMUNDARSAFN

##### Ásmundur Sveinsson: Art For The People

Ásmundur Sveinsson watched Iceland grow from a poor agrarian society into one of the richest in the world. His sculptures reflect this, presenting a conversation between assimilation and innovation.  
• Runs until January 6th, 2019

#### Invasion IV:

##### Margrét Helga Sesseljudóttir

In the Invasion series, artists examine the career of sculptor Ásmundur Sveinsson. This iteration sees sculptor Margrét Helga Sesseljudóttir in dialogue with Ásmundur.  
• Runs until January 6th, 2019

#### REYKJAVÍK MUSEUM OF PHOTOGRAPHY

##### Family Photos

Three generations, together. The Kassahús Clan presents a melange of photos from the ages, spanning their entire family.  
• Runs until January 13th, 2018

#### The Weight Of Air

In her search for quiet, Ng Hui Hsien photographed everything from hostile snowstorms to the magi-

cal Northern Lights. Come explore your subconscious, as well as that of the Icelandic wilderness, in this expansive journey into the essence of hidden spaces.  
• Runs until February 4th, 2019

#### NATIONAL MUSEUM OF ICELAND

##### Discovering Iceland's Monasteries

Are you fascinated by really old things? God? This exhibit combines both, based on research by archaeologist Steinunn Kristjánsdóttir.  
• Runs until May 26th, 2019

#### Artists' Books

Familiarise yourself with the books of Icelandic artists'. You'll find examples of printmaking dating all the way back to the latter part of the 19th century.  
• Runs until June 2nd, 2019

#### REYKJAVÍK MARITIME MUSEUM

##### Fish & Folk

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

#### Melckmeyt 1659

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

#### NORDIC HOUSE

##### The Children's Book Flood

This exhibition provides a day of creativity for children, including a viking ship to craft on, and a dark cave to dream of galaxies in.  
• Runs until March 31st, 2019

#### I Am Gryla

Who is Gryla? The Nordic House transforms itself into a Wunderkammer, where the elusive creature takes centre stage.  
• Runs until January 13th, 2019

#### REYKJAVÍK ART MUSEUM - HAFNARHÚS

##### Erró: Black & White

Here, historical leaders, Manga characters, and animated figures are put side by side in exclusively black and white works—a first for the artist.  
• Runs until April 21st, 2019

#### D34 Leifur Ýmir Eyjólfsson:

##### Manuscript

Leifur's exhibit is a vernacular of the in-between. Words, texts, and fragments of sentences burn into clay plates on the walls around you.  
• Runs until January 27th, 2019

#### Ingólfur Arnarsson: Ground Level

From his delicate drawings to his dainty works on industrial concrete, come see exclusively new works by Ingólfur Arnarsson.  
• Runs until February 10th, 2019

#### REYKJAVÍK ART MUSEUM - KJARVALSSTAÐIR

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

Kjarval was one of the pioneers of

Icelandic art and is uniquely credited with making modern Icelanders appreciate it more. Come see a special exhibit based on his poetry.  
• Runs until April 28st, 2019

#### Haraldur Jónsson: Spectrum

This mid-career retrospective highlights Haraldur's position in the local art scene—that of a versatile artist that dives deeply into the phenomenon of human existence. What is the relation between man and space, consciousness and environment?  
• Runs until January 27th, 2019

#### LISTASALUR MOSFELLSBÆJAR

##### Barnsaga / Saga af rót (endurlit)

In this solo exhibition by Björg örvar, come see nine new works painted over the last two years. His pieces lie intersect visual art, music and science—truly a fascinating artist.  
• Runs until January 11th, 2018

#### IB

##### Formation

Six emerging Icelandic artists take traditional mediums head-on, exploring the human condition with playfulness and humour.  
• Runs until January 12th, 2019

#### GERÐARSAFN KÓPAVOGUR ART MUSEUM

##### Exclusively Inclusive

Is having a national identity liberating or oppressive? Is patriotism intrinsically a superiority complex? With immigration on the rise in Iceland, this exhibit opens a discussion on these topics, diving head-on into globalisation.  
• Runs until January 6th, 2019

#### SKAFTFELL

##### White Sun

In Iceland, the sun is not a reliable source for telling time. Explore the effects of this disruption in this

multidisciplinary exhibit.

• Runs until March 3rd, 2019

#### LISTAHÚS ÓLFEIGS

##### Öskur

The eruption of Eyjafjallajökull captured in stunning photographs by Friðrik Arnar. Ash, steam, magma, and ice in gorgeous detail.  
• Runs until January 12th, 2019

#### HAFNARBORG

##### Towards Nature

Watercolours, sketches, and paintings from the 60s and 70s placed next to each other. Watch Eiríkur Smith's transition from geometric to natural abstraction in real time.  
• Runs until January 6th, 2019

#### KLING & BANG

##### Desiring Solid Things

In a timely examination of human materialism, three artists create an exhibition featuring a book of love letters written to objects.  
• Runs until January 20th, 2019

#### GALLERÍ GÖNG

##### Helgi Grímsson

Helgi describes his works at painting with threads and words. His pieces combine strong texture with strong colours.  
• Runs until January 23rd, 2019

#### SIGURJÓN ÓLAFSSON MUSEUM

##### Connections

To celebrate the 13th anniversary of the museum, this exhibition presents 13 artists in dialogue with Sigurjón and his art.  
• Runs until October 6th, 2019

## MUSEUM OF DESIGN AND APPLIED ART HÖNNUNARSAFN ÍSLANDS

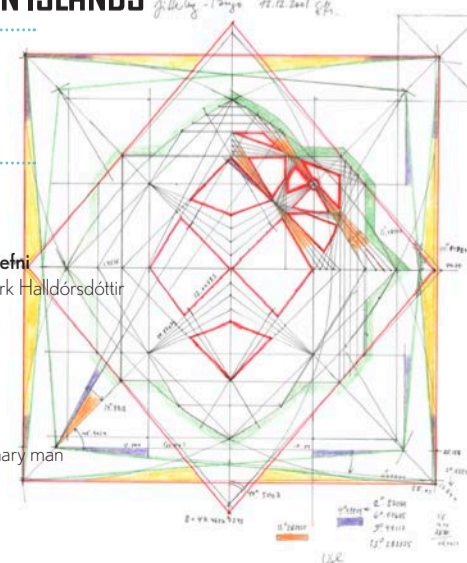
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opens 15th of November

Behind the scenes  
with Einar Þorsteinn  
filing the life of an extraordinary man



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15:00 - 18:00



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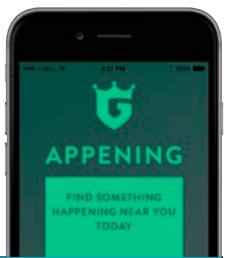


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# Film

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FILM



Halla Pórðardóttir

## Nu-Suspiria

Icelandic Dance Company's Halla Pórðardóttir  
danced into a twilight zone

Words: Tara Njála Ingvarsdóttir   Photos: Art Bicnick

Luca Guadagnino's regeneration of 'Suspiria' is an ode to the 1977 original, holding on to its exploration of dream, ritual and dance. The dance scenes, choreographed by Damien Jalet, are phenomenal and key to the film's haunting visuals. When Damien came to Iceland in 2015 to work with the Icelandic Dance Company, he set up a series of performances, from which the 'Volke' dance work in the film was inspired. Halla Pórðardóttir worked with Jalet and at the time she couldn't have imagined that it would lead to her filming with Tilda Swinton, Dakota Johnson and Mia Goth for two months in a tiny village in the North of Italy.

The film's narrative follows a young woman, played by Dakota Johnson, who moves to Berlin and joins the Markos Dance Company. Jalet brought Halla in to act as one of the dancers in the company, but she also took part in the choreographic research and training process of the lead actresses.

### The Presence of Lived Lives

If you've seen the film you'll have entered its parallel world, but the experience of shooting the film was no less twilight-zone. Halla shares, "Most scenes were filmed up in a abandoned luxury hotel on

the top of a hill. We were driven for one hour each day to the set through fog and tall gloomy trees, by Italian drivers that drove like you would imagine they might from the typical stereotype of an Italian driver."

When they first arrived to the set, Halla saw just the remnants of the life the hotel had before it was abandoned in the sixties. "They were patching up holes in the floorboards, building floor supports, putting new glass in the windows. The energy of the place was very strange and omnipresent and you still could feel the magnificence of the hotel's lived life."

### Guts, Gore and Magic-Dance-Rituals

The conditions of filming were no less surreal than its setting. As Halla explains, "It was mid-winter, incredibly cold, the shooting days were long and for the final dance scene we were naked, basically outside, the walls were covered in hair, and there were guts everywhere."

The last dance took two days to shoot. It took precise timing to nail the final ritual with all the actresses and dancers in sync. Halla shares, "We were thrashing around so much, swinging our heads and I ended up getting ver-

tigo. I couldn't stand for two days afterwards—it was insane."

### Not really a horror film

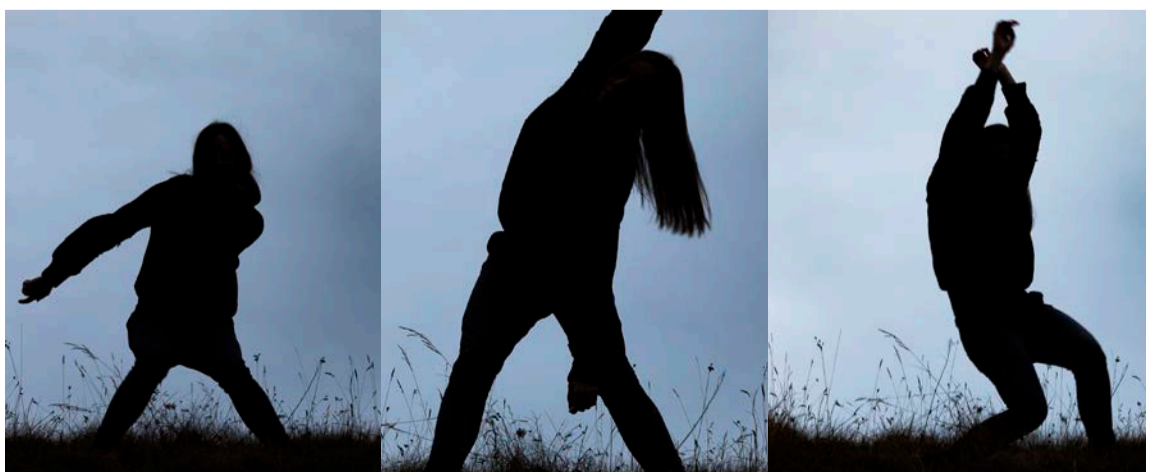
When Halla's friends and family asked her before seeing the film whether or not it was too horrific, she recalls that "After having seen it at the premiere I was saying that it wasn't even really a horror film." When the film finished, Halla shares that, "People were saying to me, 'Halla you have a high tolerance for horror movies—that was really gross.'" Laughing, she continues, "I guess I became a bit desensitized. There was little to no CGI used in the film and most of the body mutilations were done with prosthetics, so I was drinking coffee with my fellow dancers who had jaws and guts sticking out of strange places, so when I watched the movie I didn't think these broken-body scenes were too triggering."

It took two years to edit the film, and since its release Halla shares contemplatively, "the memories have been flooding back to me and now I'm really processing the experience. It was all very surreal."

'Suspiria' might knock the wind out of you, but if you're not too squeamish about guts, broken bones and spooky supernatural rituals, you should see it, if for nothing but the platform it gives to intense and incredibly crafted contemporary dance. 🍷

[gpu.is/film](https://gpu.is/film)

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# Various Events



HAKA Iceland will get you in touch with your inner warrior

## Friday January 4th

**Miss Gloria Hole: Drag Show**  
21:30 Kiki Queer Bar

## Saturday January 5th

**HAKA For Women: Dance Class**  
9:00 DanceCenter Reykjavik  
**Northern Laughs: Comedy Show**  
20:30 The Secret Celler  
**RuPaul's Drag Race All Stars 4**  
**Viewing Party With Gógó Starr**  
20:00 Loft  
**How To Become Icelandic In 60 Minutes**  
19:00 Harpa  
**Seasonal Mood Changes Discussion**  
14:00 Kringlan Culture House

## Sunday January 6th

**Guided Tour In English**  
11:00 National Museum Of Iceland  
**Black Sundays: 'The Thing'**  
20:00 Bió Paradís  
**Sunday Yoga**  
12:00 Loft  
**Gloria Hole: Think You've Got Talent?**  
21:00 Kiki Queer Bar  
**Party Bingo With Sigga Kling**  
21:00 Sæta Svinið  
**Seat Filler: Improvisational Comedy**  
21:00 The Secret Celler

## Monday January 7th

**Stand-Up Comedy (in English!)**  
21:00 Gaukurinn  
**Magic Viking: Music & Comedy**  
21:00 The Secret Celler  
**Dark Side Of The Rainbow: Experimental Cinema**  
19:00 Loft  
★ **Gisli Súrsson**  
20:00 Tjarnarbió

## Tuesday January 8th

**Funniest Four: Comedy Show**  
21:00 The Secret Celler  
**Watercolouring Night**  
20:00 Loft

## Wednesday January 9th

★ **'Heavy Trip' Screening**  
20:00 Bió Paradís  
**Open Mic Stand-Up Comedy**  
21:00 The Secret Celler

## Thursday January 10th

**Icelandic Sagas: The Greatest Hits**  
19:30 Harpa  
**My Voices Have Tourettes**  
21:00 The Secret Celler  
**Prump í Paradís: 'Rocky IV' Screening**  
20:00 Bió Paradís  
**Ingólfur Arnarsson: Artist Talk**  
20:00 Hafnarhús

## Friday January 11th

**Drag-súgur: NEON Drag Show**  
21:00 Gaukurinn  
**Miss Gloria Hole: Drag Show**  
21:30 Kiki Queer Bar

## Saturday January 12th

**Northern Laughs: Comedy Show**  
20:30 The Secret Celler  
**Northern Laughs: Comedy Show**  
20:30 The Secret Celler  
**How To Become Icelandic In 60 Minutes**  
19:00 Harpa  
**HAKA For Women: Dance Class**  
9:00 DanceCenter Reykjavik

## Sunday January 13th

**Black Sundays: 'The Princess Bride'**  
20:00 Bió Paradís  
**Guided Tour In English**  
11:00 National Museum Of Iceland  
**Icelandic Sagas: The Greatest Hits**  
19:30 Harpa  
**Sunday Yoga**  
12:00 Loft  
**Gloria Hole: Think You've Got Talent?**  
21:00 Kiki Queer Bar  
**Party Bingo With Sigga Kling**  
21:00 Sæta Svinið  
**Seat Filler: Improvisational Comedy**  
21:00 The Secret Celler

## Monday January 14th

★ **Gisli Súrsson**  
20:00 Tjarnarbió  
**Stand-Up Comedy (in English!)**  
21:00 Gaukurinn  
**Magic Viking: Music & Comedy**  
21:00 The Secret Celler  
**Kizomba Night Reykjavik**  
20:30 Solon Bistro

## Tuesday January 15th

**Watercolouring Night**  
20:00 Loft  
**Funniest Four: Comedy Show**  
21:00 The Secret Celler  
**Lama Erik Drew Jung: Practicing Tibetan Buddhism In The Modern World**  
20:00 Andrymi

## Wednesday January 16th

**Meet The Author: Auður Ava Ólafsdóttir**  
19:30 Nordic House  
**Open Mic Stand-Up Comedy**  
21:00 The Secret Celler

## Thursday January 17th

**My Voices Have Tourettes**  
21:00 The Secret Celler  
**Icelandic Sagas: The Greatest Hits**  
19:30 Harpa  
**Leifur Ýmir Eyrjólsson: Artist Talk**  
20:00 Hafnarhús

## Friday January 18th

★ **The Room Fanfest**  
17:00 Bió Paradís

## Saturday January 19th

★ **The Room Fanfest**  
18:00 Bió Paradís  
**Northern Laughs: Comedy Show**  
20:30 The Secret Celler  
**How To Become Icelandic In 60 Minutes**  
19:00 Harpa  
**Northern Laughs: Comedy Show**  
20:30 The Secret Celler  
**HAKA For Women: Dance Class**  
9:00 DanceCenter Reykjavik

## Sunday January 20th

**Guided Tour In English**  
11:00 National Museum Of Iceland  
**Sunday Yoga**

12:00 Loft  
**Black Sundays: 'Shivers'**  
20:00 Bió Paradís  
**Gloria Hole: Think You've Got Talent?**  
21:00 Kiki Queer Bar  
**Party Bingo With Sigga Kling**  
21:00 Sæta Svinið  
**Seat Filler: Improvisational Comedy**  
21:00 The Secret Celler  
**Icelandic Sagas: The Greatest Hits**  
19:30 Harpa  
**Bingo!**  
15:00 Grófin Culture House

## Monday January 21st

**Stand-Up Comedy (in English!)**  
21:00 Gaukurinn  
**Magic Viking: Music & Comedy**  
21:00 The Secret Celler

## Tuesday January 22nd

**Watercolouring Night**  
20:00 Loft  
**Funniest Four: Comedy Show**  
21:00 The Secret Celler  
★ **Gisli Súrsson**  
20:00 Tjarnarbió

## Wednesday January 23rd

**Open Mic Stand-Up Comedy**  
21:00 The Secret Celler

## Thursday January 24th

★ **White Out Party! Nerd Nite**  
**Reykjavik #3: Cult, Celebs, Brainwash**  
19:00 Stúdentakjallarinn  
**My Voices Have Tourettes**  
21:00 The Secret Celler  
**Drag-súgur: DRAG LAB**  
21:00 Gaukurinn

## Friday January 25th

**Miss Gloria Hole: Drag Show**  
21:30 Kiki Queer Bar

## Saturday January 26th

**How To Become Icelandic In 60 Minutes**  
19:00 Harpa  
**Northern Laughs: Comedy Show**  
20:30 The Secret Celler  
**HAKA For Women: Dance Class**  
9:00 DanceCenter Reykjavik

## Sunday January 27th

**Guided Tour In English**  
11:00 National Museum Of Iceland  
**Sunday Yoga**  
12:00 Loft  
**Black Sundays: 'Drugstore Cowbody'**  
20:00 Bió Paradís  
**Gloria Hole: Think You've Got Talent?**  
21:00 Kiki Queer Bar  
**Party Bingo With Sigga Kling**  
21:00 Sæta Svinið  
**Icelandic Sagas: The Greatest Hits**  
19:30 Harpa  
**Seat Filler: Improvisational Comedy**  
21:00 The Secret Celler  
**Kjarval: Curator Talk**  
15:00 Kjarvalsstaðir

## Monday January 28th

**Stand-Up Comedy (in English!)**  
21:00 Gaukurinn  
**Magic Viking: Music & Comedy**  
21:00 The Secret Celler

## Tuesday January 29th

**Watercolouring Night**  
20:00 Loft  
**Funniest Four: Comedy Show**  
21:00 The Secret Celler

## Wednesday January 30th

**Open Mic Stand-Up Comedy**  
21:00 The Secret Celler



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He's crazy like a fool

# Dadykewl's Inspirations

Locally sourced and homegrown

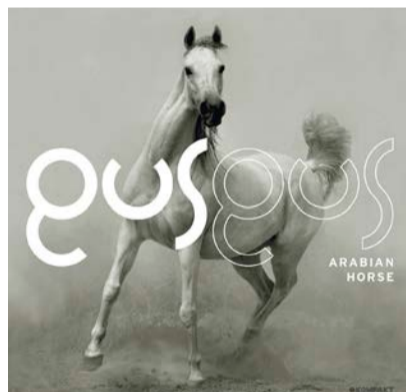
Words: **Hannah Jane Cohen & Dadykewl** Photo: **xDeathrow**

## Artist Playlist

Dadykewl shows us his influences.

Singer and producer Dadykewl's signature is that of positivity and good vibes. Serving up everything from introspective trap to feel-good party bangers, his most recent album, 'Klámstjarna,' was a favourite among Reykjavik hip-hop heads this year. He is also one half of Sama-Sem with BNGRBOY.

!For this version of 'Dadykewl's Top 5,' I am inviting you on a journey that started maybe 16 years ago, when my brain began to recognise melodies," he says. "These are the Icelandic songs that I have been humming with or without consent ever since I first heard them.



Each has something that just busts up your stupid brain and makes you sing and, to be honest, each has probably had some sort of inspiration on my music... probably? Well, here they are: Dadykewl's Top 5 Unconscious

Inspirations, in no particular order.

### GusGus - 'Arabian Horse'

The first time I recognised GusGus as the greatest band of all time was at a festival in Vestmannaeyjar. Seeing them was the best thing that had ever happened to me. Shortly after, I saw Daniel Ágúst at Kaffibarinn and told him that he's dope. Then I ran away in fear, but at least now he knows what I think. I should probably take down my shrine to him after this list is published.

'50%' is a sleeper hit. Everybody, wake up! If you don't know Trausti, he is a music producer and singer from a town in the middle of nowhere. This song makes me think of that but in a beautiful way. It hits the feels. I listened to it once on my way home from downtown in a taxi through a phone speaker. It was a very emotional and expensive trip.

### AUÐUR - 'Preyttur'

The new album "AFSAKANIR" by Auður is one of the best things I've heard. He just has a thing with lyrics—they are crazy relatable. The song 'Preyttur' is, in my opinion, the masterpiece of the album. It connects the live instruments with the



synthetic instruments time and time again on a level that is rarely achievable.



### Shades of Reykjavik - 'Alfheimar'

Shades of Reykjavik is a huge inspiration for this new generation of Icelandic rap. I don't really consider myself a rapper, but Emmi Beats' music production definitely inspired me to make hip-hop inspired music. This particular song is a beautiful piece and was a huge Kickstarter for me as a producer.



### Marteinn! - 'Mouie' & 'Fymat'

Marteinn 'BNGRBOY' Hjartarson is a very talented producer from Grafarvogur. These two songs approached how music is made in DAWs (Digital Audio Workstations) very differently. There is a lot of sound design in them that is truly mind bending and inspiring. But why did I put them together? Well, if you listen to 'Mouie' and 'Fymant' back to back you can hear that they are connected. Sexy. 🍷

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Beer 800 ISK,  
Wine 850 ISK.

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Every day from  
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Every day from  
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Beer 500 ISK,  
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**DUBLINER**  
Every day from  
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Beer 700 ISK.

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

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

**GEIRI SMART**  
Every day from  
16:00 to 18:00.  
Beer 550 ISK,  
Wine 600 ISK,  
Cocktails 1,200  
ISK.

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Mon-Sat from

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**ÍSLENSKI BARINN**  
Every day from  
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Beer 700 ISK,  
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Every day from  
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Beer 495.

**ÍSAFOLD**  
Every day from  
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Wine 900 ISK.

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**KALDI**  
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Wine 750 ISK.

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Wine 650 ISK.

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Wine 1,000 ISK,  
Shots 600 ISK.

**KUMIKO**  
Every day from  
17:00 to 19:00.  
Beer 850 ISK,  
Cocktails 1,700  
ISK.

**LOFT**  
Every day from  
16:00 to 19:00.  
Beer 750 ISK,  
Wine 900 ISK.

**LOFTIÐ**  
Every day from  
18:00 to 21:00.  
Beer 800 ISK,  
Wine 800 ISK,  
Shots 500 ISK,  
Cocktails 1,500  
ISK.

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DRYKKUR**  
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22:00 to 23:00.  
Beer 475 ISK,  
Wine 700 ISK,  
Cocktails 1,100  
ISK

**PABLO DISCOBAR**  
Every day from  
16:00 to 18:00.  
Beer 800 ISK,  
Wine 800 ISK,  
Cocktails 1,500  
ISK.

**PRIKIÐ**  
Weekdays from  
16:00 to 20:00.  
Beer 600 ISK.

**PETERSEN SVÍTAN**  
Every day from  
16:00 to 20:00,  
Beer 700 ISK,  
Wine 890 ISK,  
Cocktails 1,500  
ISK.

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

**SKÚLI CRAFT BAR**  
Every day from  
16:00 to 19:00.

Beer 850 ISK,  
Wine 750 ISK.

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Every day from  
14:00 to 20:00.  
Beer 600 ISK,  
Wine 600 ISK.

**STOFAN CAFÉ**  
Every day from  
17:00 to 20:00.  
Beer 750 ISK,  
Wine 950 ISK.

**SUSHI SOCIAL**  
Every day from  
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Beer 645 ISK,  
Wine 745 ISK,  
Half-priced  
cocktails.

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

**ÚT Í BLÁINN**  
Every day from  
21:00 to 23:00.  
Beer 600 ISK,  
Wine 700 ISK,  
Cocktails 1,500  
ISK.

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

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



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Chicken wings -  
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**Tapas Barinn**  
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17:00 - 18:00  
Half off of

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

**Sushi Social**  
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17:00 - 18:00  
Truffle potatoes  
1,000 ISK  
Avocado fries -  
690 ISK  
Lobster sushi,  
ribs & more -  
890 ISK

**1500 ISK And Under**

**Hamborgara-  
Búlla Tómasa**  
Tuesdays-All day  
Burger, french  
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1,390 ISK

**Gló**  
Every day-All day  
Bowl of the  
month - 1,290 ISK  
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**Shalimar**  
Monday - Friday  
12:00 - 14:30

Curry - 1,290 ISK  
Vegan option

**Sæta svinið**  
Every day 15-18  
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1,190 ISK  
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**Lemon**  
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16:00 - 21:00  
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sandwich  
1,095 ISK  
Vegan option

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Every day 11-14  
Burger & fries -  
1,390 ISK  
Vegan option

**2000 ISK And Under**

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Monday - Friday  
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Course of the  
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**Kristín Svava Tómasdóttir**  
– Stormwarning

This collection of poetry offers a very different view of the Icelandic winter than that of the magical north—a feeling of being confined to your home and forced to keep your own company while waiting out the storm. The speakers of the poems revel in their melancholy and loneliness with acute self-awareness, addressing the humdrum of the everyday and the pettiness of lives lead online. Yet, the tone is light, ironic and funny, as if the speakers can't keep from smirking at their own theatrical miseries. The translation was recently nominated for the PEN America Translation Prize and is presented in a dual language format.

**Bragi Ólafsson – Narrator**

Readers of Bragi's previous two novels in English will already be familiar with some of the misfits that swagger in and out of his novels, as the interconnectivity of all his literary works is one of the joys of reading his prose. Conceited, blissfully oblivious and yet consumed with petty jealousies, his protagonists provide an outlet for all those traits that we loath in others and fear in ourselves. Here, everyday life takes a surreal turn when an embittered writer decides on a whim to stalk a former rival-in-love. The chase offers him the chance to air his numerous grievances but in observing this near-stranger going about his day he is soon forced to take stock of the paucity of his own life.

**Sjón – CoDex 1962**

Each instalment of this magnum-opus-trilogy was written near a decade apart, in between the vast output of poetry and novels that have made Sjón one of the most widely recognised contemporary Icelandic authors. Leading back to his early inspirations in the postmodern complexities of Burroughs and Bulgakov, this is the book where Sjón pulls out all the stops and shows the reader no mercy, producing a work that is as challenging as it is rewarding. Gathered into one volume, these three books present a disorienting cocktail that is equal amounts the wildness and exuberance of a young writer making his name with a clang, mixed in with the quiet authority and confidence of an award winning author with nothing to prove.

**Ófeigur Sigurðsson – Öræfi: The Wasteland**

Öræfi's success is carried on the backs of the complexity and layering of its prose as well as its deliciously selfish narrative structure. In between delighting its readers with humour and absurdity, the writing does its utmost to buck and kick and throw them off track. In fact, letting go of expectations and giving in to the dizzying rhythm of the prose is a key factor for enjoying the book. To avoid frustration and disappointment, readers must allow their concentration to drift along with the prose as it pulls in subtexts from far and wide and forges connections in the manner of the subconscious. ♡

# Best In Translation 2018

Read Icelandic – now in English!

Words: Björn Halldórsson

2018 was a year of travel for Icelandic fiction, with the number of titles published in translation tripling from a mere decade ago. Here are some favourites that we have been passing around the Grapevine offices this year.

**Auður Ava Ólafsdóttir – Hotel Silence**

Winner of the 2018 Nordic Council Literature Prize, 'Hotel Silence' is characterised by the bleak humour it applies to the tragedy of human existence. In the novel, Auður Ava interrogates the more benevolent aspects of traditional masculine values through her protagonist: a solemn middle-aged handyman whose only means of communicating love is by installing kitchens, tiling bathrooms and being useful to his relations and compatriots. When those meagre tools prove insufficient after an emotional blow, he sets off on a journey to an unspecified location with the aim of committing suicide in as quiet and polite a manner as possible.

**Hallgrímur Helgason – Woman at 1000 Degrees**

Hallgrímur Helgason's subject matters are so varied that if it wasn't for his florid and exuberant prose style it might be diffi-

cult to see his books as belonging within the same oeuvre. In this biographical work of fiction, a vicious and foul-mouthed octogenarian narrates her life from the islands of Breiðafjörður, through Nazi-era Germany and all the way to her current situation as a bed-ridden invalid living in a garage in the Icelandic suburbs. As she spends her time catfishing gullible men in distant lands with pictures of Icelandic beauty queens, her only companion is a live hand grenade; her final measure of maintaining control over her fate.

**Kristín Ómarsdóttir – Waitress in Fall**

Although Kristín Ómarsdóttir is still actively publishing new work, this collection, gleaned from her seven books of poetry published between 1987 and 2017, feels timely. It reveals the sleeping giant of Icelandic literature; a poetess with a voice that has remained consistent and relevant throughout her career. The collection is selected and translated by Vala Thorodds and is the first appearance of Kristín's poetry in English. Gathered together, the work herein presents overarching themes of grotesque femininity, surreal domesticity and voices driven to repetition; forced to be loud to be heard.

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# Hrafnhildur Björk Runólfsdóttir & Karítas Sigurðardóttir

Words: Hannah Jane Cohen  
Photo: Art Bicnick



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

Fancies' latest subjects are **Hrafnhildur Björk Runólfsdóttir** (25) and **Karítas Sigurðardóttir** (25), best friends and WOW Air flight attendants.

**Hrafnhildur is wearing:**

- ▶ Vagabond shoes
- ▶ Envii jumpsuit
- ▶ Nike cap
- ▶ North Face parka

**Karítas is wearing:**

- ▶ 66° North jacket
- ▶ Windbreaker pants
  - ▶ Buffalo shoes
  - ▶ Off-White belt
  - ▶ Carhartt bag
  - ▶ Black sweatshirt
  - ▶ Necklaces from Spúútnik

**Describe your style in 5 words:**

**Hrafnhildur:** Comfy, simple and warm.

**Karítas:** Boyish, comfy, and cozy. I like hoodies, joggers and oversized jackets. When I shop, I'm more in the men's section.

**Favourite stores in Reykjavik:**

**Hrafnhildur:** Spúútnik, Zara and 66° North.

**Karítas:** All of those and Kolaportið on week-

ends. But we mostly shop abroad on lay-overs, at Urban Outfitters or Topshop maybe. Our favourite city to shop in is Copenhagen.

**Favourite piece:**

**Hrafnhildur:** My first layer from 66° North. I am always freezing and I can wear it underneath whatever and then be warm.

**Karítas:** My North Face parka. I live in it.

**Least favourite trend:**

**Karítas:** When we met, at 16, we wore like mini leather jackets, tight dresses, ripped leggings, and too dark foundation. It was the high school skinka look.

**Hrafnhildur:** That was so terrible. I remember wearing leggings that were ripped in the front and the back, a really tight skirt and a lace tight top. Now I am like, oh my god, that's the worst. And the thin black eyebrows were awful. But that's how we met, how we bonded.

**Lusting after:**

**Hrafnhildur:** I want a new Barbour jacket. Mine is vintage.

**Karítas:** A lot of jackets from 66° North, North Face, Supreme, and also the new Yeezy 500s in black. 🐾

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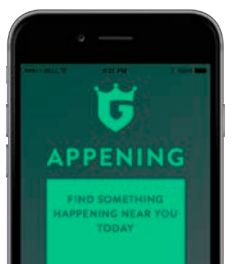
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# Food

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Don't let their friendly faces fool you, they mean to conquer the market

## New Ramen In Town

New soup café Hi Noodle prioritises authenticity and consistency

Words: John Rogers Photo: Art Bicnick

### Hi Noodle

Frakkastígur 9

Reykjavík foodies have long lamented the relative lack of Asian cuisines in this city that are readily available is most European hubs. Hi Noodle is a brand new 13-seat eatery located in a recently renovated house on Frakkastígur that's seeking to change the game.

The restaurant is run by Chen, the calm, amiable presence who's smiling face you'll see behind the high counter upon entering the pristine white dining room. "I had the idea for this restaurant two years ago," he says. "Before that I

was in the tourist business. I was always taking people to Noodle Station or other

**"Our broth takes at least for a day and a half, using temperature controlled cooking."**

restaurants, and I thought it would be nice for them to have some more authentic noodles."

### Years in the making

The noodles in question are freshly made at a workshop in London, and delivered every week for use in Hi Noodle's four recipes. "The noodles are Tonkotsu noodles, which is a very thin wheat noodle," says Chen. "Then we have four recipes: Tonkotsu, Miso Tonkotsu, Dan Dan, and the vegan option."

Chen spent a year perfecting the recipes before the renovations began. "There's no secret in ramen," he smiles. "There are five basic elements. First is the broth, then the noodles; then there's the tare, which means flavours like soy sauce. Then there's the topping, or chashu; and finally the seasoning. That's everything that's in the bowl."

### Daylong broth

However, Chen's versions of these classic dishes were long in preparation. "I use fresh ingredients from here in Iceland," he says. "Our broth takes at least a day and a half to make, using temperature controlled cooking. We simmer the broth for six to eight hours, then high-heat it to reduce it by 50% until it's creamy and white, then we test the concentration. The ramen in this restaurant will always taste the same. It's consistent, and that's important. Every time you come here you'll get the same taste."

Chen lived in China until he was 20 years old, absorbing influences from Chinese and Korean food into his cooking. "The Dan Dan recipe mixes Japanese Dan Dan and Chinese Dan Dan," he says. "In the Chinese version there's no broth, but in Japanese version there's a lot of broth. And in the Icelandic cold weather, I think people need the broth. Then the Tonkotsu is very classic—it's the same flavour you would find in Japan. Each bowl has 100 grammes of noodles. The different is only the toppings and the broth."

### Best ramen in Iceland

Many had told Chen that December was a bad time to open a restaurant, but the response has been good so far. "People have been very supportive," he says. "I have Icelandic friends who are coming in often."

There are plans to use the first floor when summer comes, and to expand the menu, but for now the intimacy of Hi Noodle is one of its charms. The dishes of steaming hot soup are handed straight over the counter from the smiling chef, giving the place a cosy and casual feel. It helps, of course, that all of the soups are delicious, flavourful, warming and filling. "I have confidence in my food," finishes Chen, before getting back to work. "I really believe it's one of the best ramen in Iceland." 🍜

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You'd brave any weather to try them gellur

## Swimmingly Good Food At Tjöruhúsið

A top notch seafood restaurant in Ísafjörður

Words: Shruthi Basappa Photo: Rebekka Guðleifsdóttir

If ever there was a time to be worried about mainstream popularity of our little island, it's now. But travel beyond the confines of Reykjavík, the South, and the Golden Circle, and everything glorious about Iceland shines.

The drive from Reykjavík to Ísafjörður is, even in October, breathtakingly beautiful. The late autumn skies are grey and heavy, creating a feeling of dark beauty. The slow crawl through fjord after stunning fjord is a testament to the resilience of the Icelandic people who call this region home.

Iceland's history as a fishing nation is nowhere as palpable as it is in the Westfjords. And nowhere is that heritage celebrated with as much humble pride and gusto as it is at Tjöruhúsið.

### Medieval tavern

Perched in a bucolic little harbour, Tjöruhúsið is housed in what once used to be a tar factory for ropes and other nautical needs. The restaurant hasn't shed

any of its 1781 charm—the interiors are reminiscent of a medieval tavern, with low timber beams and tables flanking the walls, and warm lighting reinforcing the 'long house'-like appearance.

The animated yells of “Gellur! Gellurnar eru komnar!” (“Cod tongues! Cod tongues here!”), as the staff plonk down hulking pans of sizzling fish furthers the medieval vibe. If one can ignore the delicious smells wafting from the kitchen, I swear you could still smell the tar, and be transported back in time to when long and loud feasting was the norm.

### Fish in a pan

Dinner is an eat-till-you-drop style buffet for the princely sum of 6000 ISK per person. Howev-

er, this isn't your average buffet, where food sweats under heat lamps, bubbling away sluggishly in a line of past-their-best Bearnaise clones.

Instead, Tjöruhúsið is famed for its 'fish in a pan' offerings of whatever is freshest from the sea on that day. Standouts were the plucky Plokkfiskur, peppered with fresh cracked black pepper so boldly that it was transformed into something more than the sum of its parts. The aforementioned gellur were simply flour-dusted and pan-fried in butter; at once creamy and crunchy, it's beguiling that such a humble ingredient can be such a decadent treat.

I recommend restraint—these little devils are too easy to wash down with a glass of beer. I also suggest that squeamishness be set aside where gellur are concerned. They aren't tongues at all, but succulent morsels of meat from around the fish throat.

### Generous Hospitality

The kitchen pushes out pan after pan of various fish: karfi (perch) in Hoisin sauce, steinbitur (wolf-fish) in a cream cheese sauce with grapes, salted cod with olives and tomatoes, and a sublime þorskur (haddock) simply cooked in butter, with whole baby potatoes and a chiffonade of fresh spring onions.

The staff exhort you to try everything, offering seconds and thirds, and remind you about all the meðlæti—that is, side dishes ranging from spiced wheat grain salad, to butter cooked cabbage, and a tureen of seafood soup. Thankfully, the restaurant has the good sense to skip dessert in favour of squares of chocolate—a fittingly simple end to a memorable meal in an unforgettable setting.

It is easy to see why restaurants like Messin emulate Tjöruhúsið.

This little outpost was dishing out local, seasonal, affordable, nose-to-tail seafood dining long before they became a buzzword in Iceland's dining scene. I'd get cracking and make reservations for next season—the restaurant is seasonal and is typically closed from early November through to late March. On any trip to the Westfjords, Tjöruhúsið is the icing on the cake. 🍷

**“Animated yells of ‘cod tongues here,’ as the staff plonk down hulking pans of sizzling fish, furthers the medieval vibe.”**



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# Travel

## Over The River

Wintry landscapes and experimental cuisine in Selfoss

Words: John Rogers  
Photos: Timothée Lambrecq



**Distance from Reykjavík:**  
57km

**Car provided by:**  
[gocarrental.is](http://gocarrental.is)

**Accommodation provided by:**  
[hotelfselfoss.is](http://hotelfselfoss.is)

**Meal provided by:**  
[tryggvaskali.is](http://tryggvaskali.is)

**How to get there:**  
Route One South

The Ölfusá river gushes down through southern Iceland, from the place where the Hvítá and Sog rivers meet. The rapidly flowing torrent is sped along by springwater tributaries, creating a roaring, tumultuous flow that winds its way circuitously down to the cold south coast, 25 kilometres away.

In days gone by, this wild river prevented fording or crossing by horseback or on foot, and ferries would transport people across to the eastern shore. The first bridge, built in 1891, was ultimately no match for the force of the river, and collapsed in 1944—the struts still protrude from the choppy water. The second was finished two years later, and has fared better.

### An interruption

It's across this sturdy suspension bridge that we coast into Selfoss on a wintry December day. The town sits halfway down the Ölfusá, cleaved in two by the busy southbound Ring Road that passes through on its way to the black coastline. Seen from the car, Self-

oss seems to consist mostly of this single main strip lined with chain stores, banks, a mini mall, some municipal buildings and a KFC. On a road trip to Skógafoss, Dyrhólaey, Jökulsárlón and beyond, Selfoss would flash by without note—a brief interruption in the vast swathes of the southern landscape.

Of course, wherever there are people to be found, there are stories, too. The settlement of Selfoss dates back to the year 1000, when it was founded by Þórir Ásason. By 1900, one hundred people lived there, growing dramatically—by Icelandic standards—to 6,500 by 2011, making it the largest town in rural Southern Iceland by a considerable margin. Amongst other curiosities, there's a museum dedicated to Bobby Fischer, whose improbable life path brought him here as his final destination.

### Frosted landscape

Today, it's hard to imagine the rural town of 1900. We cruise around the empty residential streets, eyeing the

nondescript houses, then circle back to the large roundabout that seems to be the somewhat unsettled heart of this oddly transient place. The church was built in 1950, with a proudly modern design. Not much about Selfoss suggests its long history.

Hotel Selfoss is a monolithic 139-room block that looks back towards the river the we crossed so easily moments ago. From our bedrooms, we get a pleasantly unencumbered view to the Ölfusá. Large shards of ice float on its surface, coasting along and getting caught in swirling eddies at the crook of a bend in the river. In the background, the mountains are dusted with snow, giving the landscape a frosted, wintry feel. It's a taste, perhaps, of Selfoss before the bridge.

### Room at the inn

The main reason for our trip, however, is to taste something else. Tryggvaskáli is a lauded restaurant located in an 1890 house that was the first hotel in Selfoss. Now a listed build-

ing, the interior layout has stayed the same throughout the decades and various uses. It sits just over the roundabout from the hotel on the banks of the river, and something about its placement feels perfect for an inn.

The interior has a convivial atmosphere, with eggshell blue walls, pleasingly creaky floorboards, and lots of little touches that speak to the building's history. The menu, however, is thoroughly modern. Chef and co-owner Fannar Geir Ólafsson's style is playfully maximalist, in stark contrast to the predictably traditional dishes served at most rural Icelandic restaurants.

### Up to eleven

Many of the dishes on the game menu come with unexpected flourishes and multiple garnishes—the tender slow cooked pork loin embellished with chilli crumble and serrano ham, or the tuna with leek and shallot, but also pear and a cured egg yolk. The beef



Lots of ingredients packed into each dish



A room with a view



Selfoss church has a modern 1950s design

Looking out across the Ölfusá



“Large shards of ice float on its surface, swirling in the bends and eddies of the river. In the background, the mountains are dusted with snow, giving the evening landscape a frosted, wintry feel.”

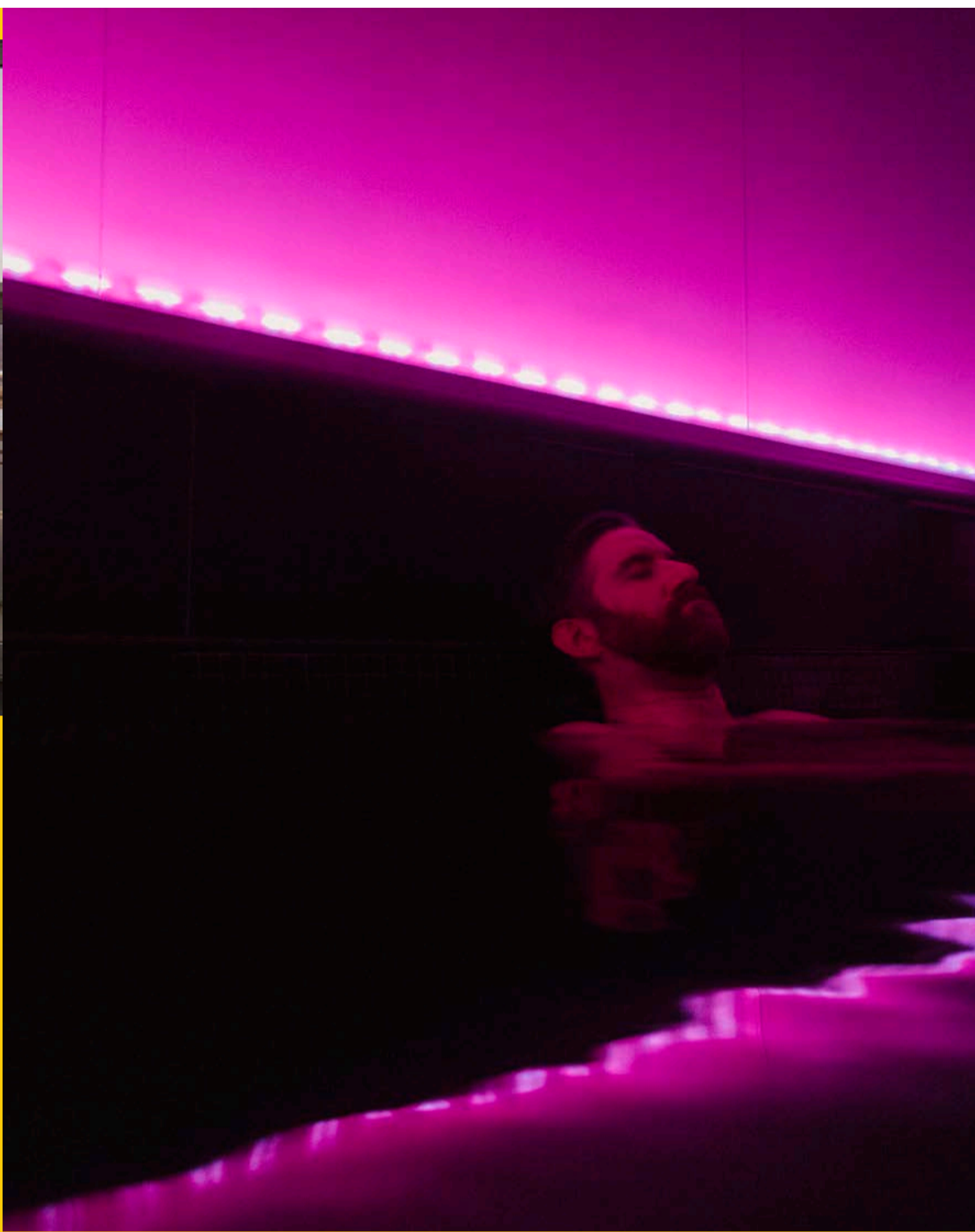
tenderloin is served with deep fried shiitake mushrooms and mustardy mash that pushes the flavours all the way up to eleven.

We're treated to a series of intriguing and varied desserts—a herbaceous skyr comes with a twist of lime, the mango creme brulee is crisply tart, and at some point in the series, popping candy is involved. Fannar clearly has fun creating every single dish, and so do we, puzzling over the unexpected flavour combinations and unusual ingredients. Eating at Tryggvaskáli means buckling up for the ride—and being prepared to loosen your belt a notch afterwards.

The next morning, we take a dip in the spa before packing up and hitting the road back to Reykjavík. As we cross the bridge once more, the ice on the river has gotten thicker, and the snow lies a little lower on the mountains. Winter is closing in, but the residents of Selfoss and off-season travellers can always look forward to a long, lingering night in the homely confines of Tryggvaskáli.



[gpv.is/travel](http://gpv.is/travel)  
Follow all our travels



The windowless spa of Hotel Selfoss, complete with neon lights



Fannar Geir Ólafsson, head chef and co-wner at Tryggvaskáli



Grandagarður 7, 101 Reykjavík

# How To Be Alone

Finding unexpected solitude on Sólheimasandur

Words: Hannah Jane Cohen Photos: Art Bicnick



**Distance from Reykjavik:**  
160km

**How to get there:**  
Route One South, turn left onto Route 222 and drive to the end of the road

**Trip provided by:**  
Arcanum Glacier Tours—book at [mountainguides.is](http://mountainguides.is)

The idea of having any part of Iceland to yourself has, in recent years, become increasingly unlikely. At every spot, from the misty Skógafoss to the colourful hills of Landmannalaugar, you'll be greeted by brightly clad groups of other travellers, or at least the signs of tourists having been there.

As a result, the awe-inspiring feeling of connecting to wild Icelandic nature—rather than being one of many spectators in an Instagram-driven crowd—has become elusive. At least, so I thought, until the welcome surprise of unexpectedly finding it once again on an ATV tour in southern Iceland.

## Rumble of the wind

The words “ATV” and “calm” might seem oxymoronic, but spend more than ten minutes on the machine and the at first jarring rumble of the engine fades into a soft purr. As you acclimatise to driving, the vehicle slowly becomes an extension of yourself, allowing you to whizz through nature with the cool morning breeze on your face. After a while, it feels like a form of meditation similar to long-distance running.

It is in this breathless haze that I find myself traversing the southern coast of Iceland astride a bouncing, bumbling quad bike. Three of us—myself, my guide and a photographer—race along a dirt path, winding around patches of moss and large rocks. We pause only to balance ourselves during the occasional river crossing, during which we rest our legs atop the ATV to avoid getting soaked.

## An undisturbed coast

After twenty minutes of off-roading, we arrive at the shores of Sólheimasandur. However, this yawning, panoramic stretch of black beach seems fresh somehow, and unlike any other time I've ever seen it. The reason dawns on me: it's completely abandoned. Not only are there no signs of other people in any direction, but no roads, or reminders of civilisation. On each side of us is only black sand as far as the eye can see, undisturbed but for the tracks of the ATV, and soundtracked by the methodical crush of the ocean waves on the shore. Behind us, the shining peaks of the Eyjafjallajökull glacier glare down protectively, and at our feet, the Atlantic stretches out

without end. It feels like there's nothing blocking us from staring all the way to the other side of the globe.

In that moment, the late Icelandic winter sunrise begins, and the horizon morphs into a spectrum of bright amber and peach. The glacier is suddenly illuminated, as is the ocean, and what had just moments ago felt so imposing and detached now seems softer and friendlier. We stand in silence, admiring a view that feels ours, and ours alone.

## Active participation

It is almost a shame to break the moment and continue to our next destination—the famous ghostly DC3 plane wreck that sits on the beach, close to the shoreline. Of course, there is a crowd of visitors surrounding it. After our earlier moment of peace, the site has lost some of its lustre. Standing among graffiti-covered wreckage and camera flashes, I just want to be back at the beach, to feel once again that I am a participant in nature, rather than a bystander.

My wish is granted soon enough. On the ride home, the sun shines on our backs through rocky fields and

“On each side of us is only black sand as far as the eye can see, undisturbed but for the tracks of the ATV, soundtracked by the methodical crush of the ocean waves on the shore.”

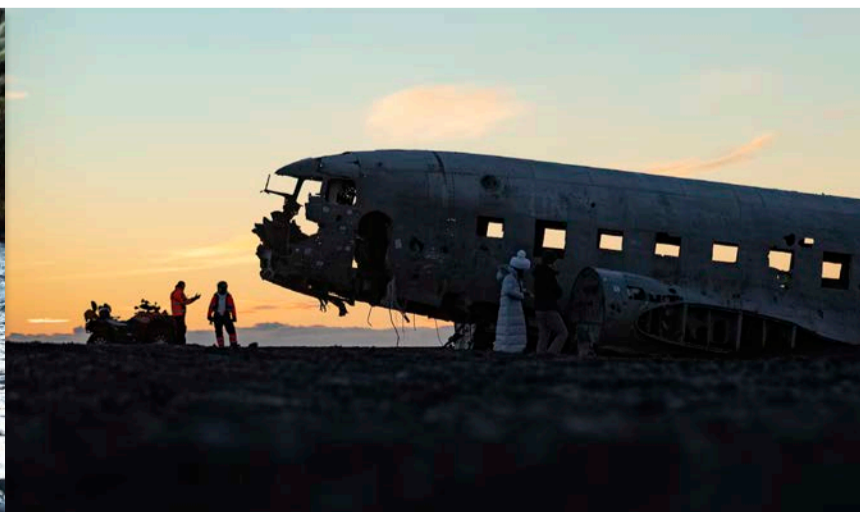
mossy crags, and I experience that same elusive sense of joy once again. This was why I'd first come to Iceland. That escapist beauty hasn't been lost to the crowds. It was right in front of me the whole time—I just needed to put the key in the ignition. ♡



YEAASSSSSS



Drinking fresh water from the river



The DC-3 plane wreck: too famous for its own good





The highlight of the trip—streaming out over the wet sands of Sólheimasandur surrounded with not another soul in sight

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OF ICELAND



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David Fricke, Rolling Stone.

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Íslands

The Icelandic Museum of Rock 'n' Roll

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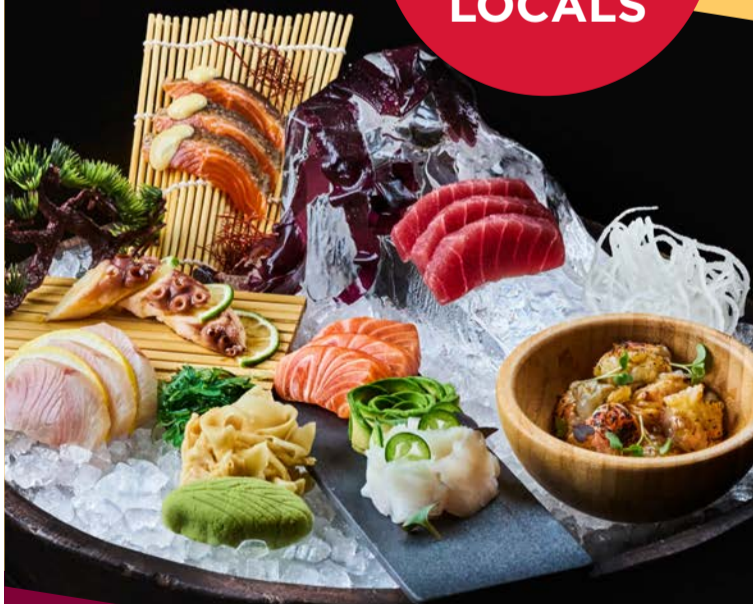
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Þingholtsstræti 5 • 101 Reykjavík  
Tel. 568 6600 • [sushisocial.is](http://sushisocial.is)

## Travel

Distance from Reykjavík: 180km

How to get there: Route One south

Accommodation provided by: Vík HI Hostel - [hostel.is](http://hostel.is)



### TOWN GUIDE

## Vík í Mýrdal

Words: **Mark Asch and Mulan** Photos: **Art Bicnick**

Vík í Mýrdal, the southernmost town in Iceland, is a popular stop on South Coast road trips. It's a regional service hub in a breathtaking location. A majestic mountain pass, with wheeling birds on the crags overhead, leads you down to a tiny settlement spread out on either side of the Ring Road, hemmed in by high cliffs and overlooked by an iconic church.



### Stay: **Icelandair Hotel, HI Hostel or Hotel Kría**

The local outpost of the Icelandair Hotel chain has a massive beach-facing complex including cabins and luxury rooms, but the town's affordable and Homestay International-affiliated guesthouse also features impressive views, set back as it is from the town and overlooking the ocean. The upmarket Hótel Kría has 72 rooms, a suite, and a nice restaurant serving local produce.



### Eat: **Víkurskáli & Halldórskaffi**

Maybe your idea of what constitutes an "authentic" meal in Iceland doesn't involve eating a fish burger and fries at a gas station. But maybe... get over yourself? The grill in back of the N1 convenience store does a Filet-O-Fish style sandwich, with crunchy fresh veg and

fries. It's satisfying in a primal way, and the dining room's view of the black sand beach is casually beautiful. If you're in town for a couple of days, the nearby Halldórskaffi is a nice sit-down place, too.



### See: **Reynisfjara**

Reynisfjara is an Instagram-friendly beach backed by sheer basalt columns. The sea arch at the Dyrhólaey bird preserve is off to the east, and right offshore are the Reynisdrangar sea stacks (by legend, a petrified troll that was caught out in the sun attempting to drag a ship back to its cave). Watch the waves from a safe distance and heed the warnings posted along the beach. Reynisfjara is known for sleeper waves and a very strong undertow.



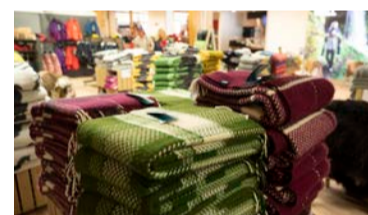
### Experience: **Ziplining**

Vík's adrenaline-boosting zipline takes you across the Grafargil canyon. After a five minute drive and a short hike led by an expert, you'll arrive at the launch platform. There are three different jumps to get your heart pumping as you fly over various canyons and the Hundafoss waterfall. This adventurous activity is available all year round and takes roughly two hours—book at [www.zipline.is](http://www.zipline.is)



### Visit: **Icelandic Lava Show**

The Icelandic Lava Show offers an impressive live simulation of a volcanic eruption. Mesmerised by the 2010 Fimmvörðuháls eruption, the founders of the show, Júlíus and Ragnhildur, wanted to recreate the experience for people who can't wait around for the real thing. As well as hot running lava flowing before your eyes, you'll see an animated short about the area's volcanic history.



### Shop: **IceWear/Vikurprjón**

At the massive-for-the-Icelandic-countryside Vík Wool outlet, you can kit yourself out in familiar Nordic outerwear, and find traces of the more ramshackle operation that occupied this space up until a few years ago. When you sift through the hand-made lopapeysur, check for the card identifying who knitted the sweater, and where; and when you go up to the balcony, have a look down into the factory where the itchy magic happens.




### Visit: **Skaftfelligur Museum**

The Skaftfelligur is a storied ship that now rests in the maritime museum of Vík. Commissioned in 1917, the vessel was built to transport fish from Iceland; during the Second World War, it rescued the crew of a German submarine, and transported goods between Iceland and the UK. The museum tells many more tales of the ship's odyssey. 🇮🇸

# Island Life

Hot news from the cold Icelandic countryside

Words: **Andie Fontaine**



West Iceland has had the worst aspects of the Icelandic winter this year: sleet, freezing rain, and icy roads. In a single week, the area saw five car accidents and three “black ice” wipeouts. Fortunately, no major injuries were reported.

The common refrain is that while Reykjavik is experiencing a housing crisis, the countryside is emptying out. That’s certainly not the case in East Iceland, where there is **growing demand for new apartments to be built**. Most of these apartment buildings are slated to be raised in Eskifjörður and Reyðarfjörður. The east certainly is pretty, so the demand is understandable.

In the South Iceland town of Eyrarbakki, an **unmanned car burst into flames** for reasons that were not fully disclosed. No one was injured in the blaze, although for a short time it seemed the fire was going to spread to another car, but that vehicle was moved from the area. The car was completely consumed in the blaze, and how it caught fire in the first place is still unknown.

## Best Of Iceland

A selection of winners from our Best Of Iceland travel magazine



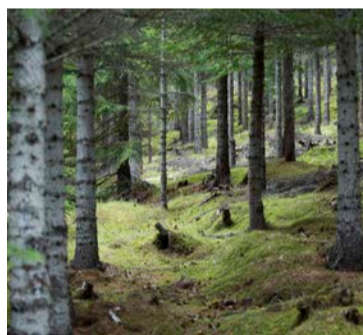
**West: Best Budget Meal**  
**Skúrinn**

Skúrinn is an all-are-welcome comfort joint. The cosy Stykkishólmur haunt boasts nachos, milkshakes and some of the best burgers in Iceland. Try the Senior Citizen, seriously. With low prices, a homey atmosphere and friendly staff, it’s light on the wallet while still yummy in the tummy.



**North: Best Budget Accommodation**  
**Akureyri Backpackers**

Budget Pick: We know luxury hotels aren’t for everyone, but even so, Akureyri Backpackers is a palace amongst hostels. With their clean and minimal rooms, dorms for those truly on a budget, and a choice of cooking for yourself in the kitchen or eating in the cosy café-bar (try their arctic char if you can), this is a reliable choice with a lot of charm.



**East: Best Easy Hike**  
**Hallormsstaðaskógur**

Lagarfljót One must-do for the outdoorsy types in the East is a light, free-form hike through the lakeside forest of Hallormsstaðaskógur. You can park and explore Iceland’s biggest forest, characterised by gushing streams, tucked away cabins, views over Lake Lagarfljót, and the famously picturesque and mild-weathered Atlavík camping ground.



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

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

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**SATURDAYS**  
**19.00 - 21.00**

**SKÝ RESTAURANT & BAR**  
**INGÓLFSSTRÆTI 1, 101 REYKJAVÍK**

## LIVE MUSIC IN THE SKY

**CENTER HOTELS**

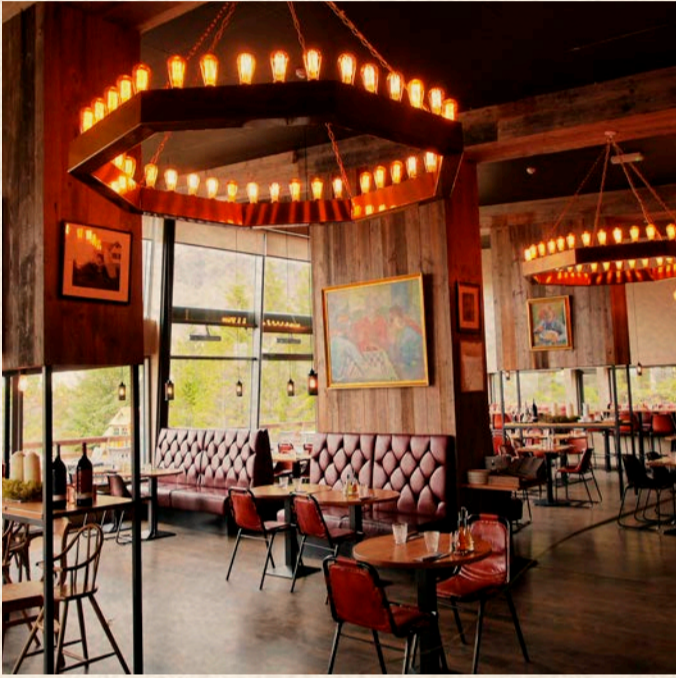
**MORE INFORMATION AT:**  
[centerhotels.com/centertainment\\_events](http://centerhotels.com/centertainment_events)



#centertainment

BREAKFAST, BRUNCH, LUNCH, DINNER

# Your journey to the Golden Circle starts at Þrastalundur



Great place to see the northern lights!

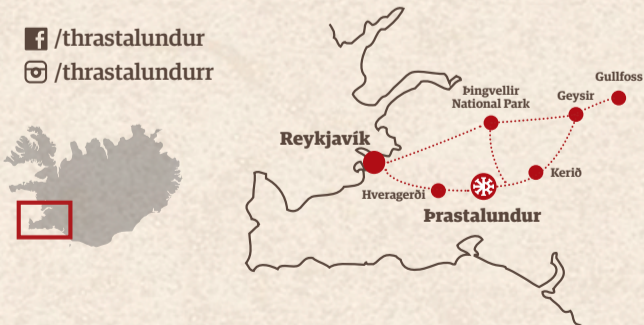


**Lovely Restaurant with a Stunning View!** We stopped @ Thrastalundur on our way to Geysir (40 min away). Everything about this place was just magical - the food, the coffee, the view and the team. Highly recommend for anyone who wants to rest in a very picturesque scenery and enjoy truly Icelandic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

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

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

[f /thralundur](#)  
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**ÞRASTALUNDUR**

SINCE 1928

LIFE IN PICTURES

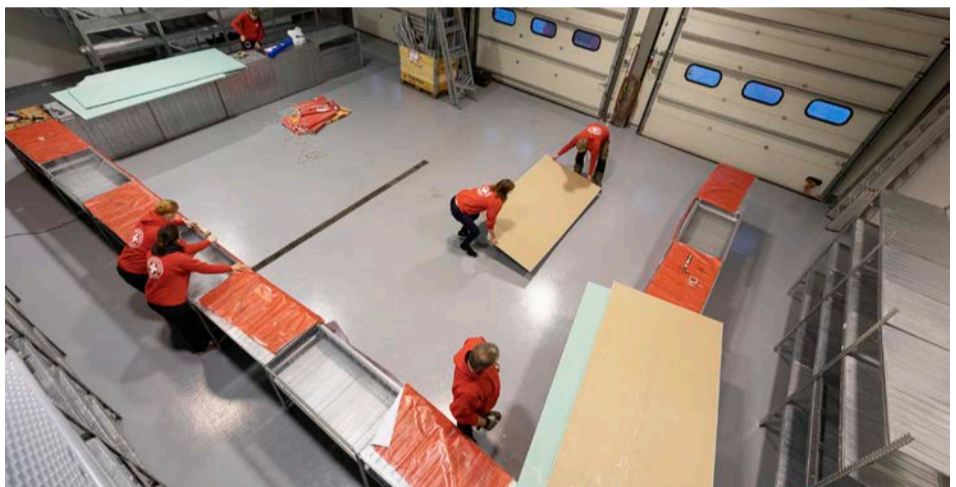
# FIRE- WORKS

Text: **Andie Fontaine** Photos: **Art Bicnick**

2018 marked the 90th anniversary of the Icelandic Rescue Squad, and their biggest revenue generator continues to be the sale of fireworks for New Year's Eve.

This year, the squad took into consideration the growing concern over the polluting nature of fireworks to also offered to plant saplings for a new forest near Þórlakshöfn in South Iceland. Those interested would, in exchange for buying the sapling, receive a symbolic paper tree.

While there are no official regulations on the use of fireworks, the Rescue Squad does offer safety goggles, and even gives them away for free to children in schools.



The Rescue Squad's Garðabær station gearing up for the sales rush, from December 28th - 31st



Squad putt



Ylfa seen here stocking the shelves at Ártún



Ártún delivers another shipment



Only 10 hours until Hour Zero!



Family man ready to buy fun for the kids



The pretty little paper tree you get for buying a sapling to be planted in South Iceland this summer





Hafrún: "I'm giving these paper trees away as a gift to family and friends, because I care for nature and I want to spread this new brilliant idea!"



Family team ready for shooting. Ingi Karl, Ólafur, Sigrún Emma, Þórarinn, Guðmundur Thor, Ingolfur Gauti



Elvar Jónsson - Chief of the Garðabær branch of the Rescue Squad, sporting the safety goggles they offer



ing the finishing touches on the sales drive



Downtown Reykjavik near midnight, as the sky is awash with explosions



Special edition: 90th anniversary fireworks packages



Coming soon: January 6, popularly known as The Thirteenth, is an unofficial holiday marking the end of the holiday season in Iceland.



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WELL, YOU ASKED

## Vegan Condoms

Words: Sveinbjörn Pálsson

**Where do you get Vegan condoms? Preferably fruit or nut flavour? Þór J, Reykjavík**

Heilsuhúsið. Get some Glyde Supermaxes, put one on and just slather it with marmalade.

**What if cheese, but too much? Bob C, Reykjavík**

Let's not and say we did. Or let's not and say we didn't, make a big fuss about it.

**How do you quit Facebook? Kári G, Reykjavík**

Get a fidget spinner. Befriend it. Show it your pictures, imagine that it likes them. Poke it and imagine that it pokes you back. Slowly start resenting it for its active social life, beautiful home and family and incredible prowess at exercising. Discard it and get a new one. Ad infinitum.

**Where is the snow? Símon G, Reykjavík**

In our hearts and in our souls. Also in the alps. And in the the future. Our future. Your future. It's gonna freeze next week. And it's gonna snow. Somewhere. Hopefully here.

**Where is my life? Frank M, Reykjavík**

You need to attend some dance classes. I suggest Kramhúsið. Don't be shy. 🍷

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

WAR OF THE NERDS

# War Of The Grammys: 15th Time Lucky

Coldplay? Really?

Words: Hannah Jane Cohen & Valur Grettisson Photo: GAS

Only a few weeks ago, Iceland's unofficial queen, Björk, was nominated for a Grammy award in the Alternative Albums category for her most recent effort, 'Utopia.' While you'd probably assume that the icon had a shelf of gold gramophones, the truth is that she, like Jimi Hendrix, has never taken home a trophy, despite being nominated a total of fifteen times.

### Freak on a leash?

In fact, Björk holds the record for most nominations—without winning—for Best Music Video. She's been nominated four times, losing against 'Steam' by Peter Gabriel, 'Scream' by Janet Jackson & Michael Jackson, and 'Ray Of Light' by Madonna. Stiff competition, yes, but Peter Gabriel? C'mon.

Her last defeat in this category was in 2000, where she lost to the controversial 'Freak On A Leash' by Korn. Yes, this is divisive, but you know, Björk should have included a rap metal solo in 'All Is Full Of Love' if she really wanted a statue. Know your audience. People loved that crap.

### Frowning Face Emoji

But who cares about music videos? It's all about the Best Alternative Album, which Björk has been nominated for a whopping eight times—another record. Here, it's clear that Björk is quite possibly the most unlucky artist of all time.

In 1996, Björk was nominated for 'Post,' arguably her most seminal album. You'd be forgiven for thinking she had this one in the bag. But no. The winner was the



What's a girl gotta do to win a Grammy round here

legendary 'MTV Unplugged' by the iconic, era-defining alt-rock band Nirvana. Fair enough.

Björk's next nomination came only two years later for 'Homogenic,' which, more or less, re-wrote the rulebook on how to make a textured, lyrical, electronica-pop masterpiece. Alas, again, she was defeated, this time by an LP you might have heard of—'OK Computer,' by Radiohead. Shit.

So, third time lucky, right? Björk's next nomination came in 2002 with the beautifully crafted 'Vespertine.' While you'd think

she couldn't possibly lose, she did, to Coldplay's 'Parachutes.' Yeah, Björk actually lost to basic frat-bro indie.

Over the next years, she lost to some band called Wilco, a past-their-time White Stripes, one-hit-wonder Gotye, and arena blues act The Alabama Shakes.

This year, she's up against the Arctic Monkeys, Beck, David Byrne, and St. Vincent. We'd say she has this in the bag, but seriously, the Grammy's have picked Coldplay over her so they'll probably award it posthumously to Oasis. We'd expect nothing less. 🍷

CITY SHOT by Art Bicnick



The young yellow vests are hitting the street

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reddot award 2018  
winner

LAVA

# VOLCANO & EARTHQUAKE EXHIBITION

The Lava Centre is situated at Hvolsvöllur on the South Coast of Iceland, surrounded by active volcanoes. It truly acts as the gateway to Iceland's most active volcanic area. It's a must-see for anyone wanting to get a better understanding of the incredible forces that have shaped Iceland.

The Lava Centre just received two Red Dot Awards, which cement its position as a world class exhibition.

More info and tickets at  
[www.lavacentre.is](http://www.lavacentre.is)

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9:00 - 19:00

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**LAST WORDS**

## The Danger of Claiming To Be Colour-Blind

Words & photo: Jewells Chambers

In an ideal world, race would have never been invented. We wouldn't have to talk about black, white or whatever other colour on the spectrum societies use when referring to a group of people. But that isn't world we live in. More times than not, people are treated differently based solely on the colour of their skin. I have mainly heard the term "colour-blind" used in the US, mostly by white people, but I have been informed that many Icelanders like to view themselves this way. To some degree, I can empathize with this view.

At first glance, it attempts to imply advocacy for equality. However, it is a dangerous philosophy to live by if you want to foster an inclusive society. It reduces cultural and racial issues to an individual basis instead of recognising it as part of a bigger issue in our collective societies.

Claiming to be colour-blind when a person of another race wants to talk about race related issues dismisses their lived experiences. Not "seeing" race does not erase the historical impact of racism nor does it change the current racist structure set up by many societies around the world. Additionally, you miss out on an opportunity to understand how a person feels as a minority and to broaden your knowledge about the treatment of people that look different than you.

So, if colour-blindness is not the answer, what is? The first step is recognising and valuing that others are different. Form personal relationships with people from different cultures and races. As you learn, teach and advocate for others to do the same. These cultural exchanges and interactions are critical for eradicating racism and creating truly inclusive societies. 🍷

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