

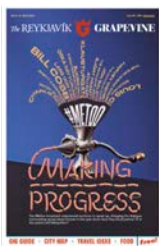
# The REYKJAVÍK GRAPEVINE

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## #METOO



The #MeToo movement empowered survivors to speak up, changing the dialogue surrounding sexual abuse forever. In the year since, have they found justice? Or is the system still failing them?



**ON THE COVER:**  
#MeToo

**ILLUSTRATION**  
Sveinbjörn Pálsson

**ABOUT THE PICTURE:**  
#MeToo is an even more complex subject for those in judiciary than most. In our feature we talked to the Minister of Justice, amongst others, about how the law is trying to evolve with the times.

# First



**14: The Unions Came To Slay Not Play**



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## #Me2.0

**EDITORIAL** The #MeToo revolution has had an incredible effect on the world, and raised a lot of questions about our legal system here in Iceland. The true effect, in my opinion, is giving women—many of them in pain and distress—a much-needed voice and platform. People are now more ready to believe a woman who comes forward after being subjected to violence, instead of doubting them by default. This is important. It matters when a victim can turn to the system for help in the system, rather than distrusting it.

We at the Grapevine decided to try and find out if the system is ready for the change—because the numbers are not in their favour. There's a shocking difference between the number of women pressing charges, and the resulting number of convictions. Also, if you look at the disparity between the number of women who seek help at the Stígamót support centre for survivors of sexual abuse, and the number

who press charges with the police, there's a similarly shocking disparity, to say the least.

So what's wrong here? Are those in charge of the justice system trying to improve it, or is it falling behind the times, at the cost of survivors? Are lawmakers perhaps trying to sit this one out? We asked Iceland's Minister of Justice, Sigríður Á. Andersen, some tough questions about how the system is reacting to #MeToo, and how the system can be improved to be more accessible and approachable for victims of sexual abuse.

It appears that there is some will to do better, including the establishment of the Bjarkarhlíð centre for victims of sexual violence. This is a huge improvement from what resources were previously available to victims. Furthermore, police officers are being trained to be more specialised in investigating these crimes, whilst treating survivors with respect.

But there will always be grey areas. Some organisations have

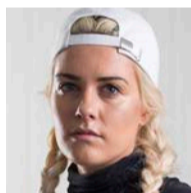
tried to tackle allegations internally via special committees, following in the footsteps of the Social Democrat party, and the National Church. But such solutions have proven controversial, and could also be improved. Perhaps we need more radical solutions. All we really know is that we need more tools to deal with these issues.

It's clear that many survivors, politicians, activists and others have gone through an incredible battle to spotlight this important issue, some suffering tremendous pain to do so. And now, it's time for the system to keep up with society; to evolve and to improve. We need a #Me2.0. We need more education, to be more respectful to each others' boundaries, and to be aware of the subtle forms of violence people can inflict on others. This is not only the job of the government—this is a collective assignment for all individuals and societies in the world, and a process will never end. **VG** 🇮🇸

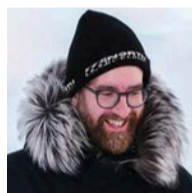
You can read our feature on page 19.



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



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



**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 Reykjavik, Best of Iceland and Iceland Airwaves sister publications. His first book, "Real Life," was published in 2014.



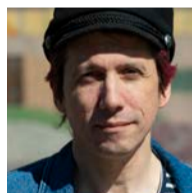
**Art Bicnick** is a man of mystery, moving like the wind through the parties, soirées, openings and social events of Reykjavik. Sometimes he can be seen abroad in the countryside, braving the spray of a waterfall or the frozen glacier air. Always, he will have a camera, documenting the moves of his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



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



**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.



**Aliya Uteuova** is a reporting intern all the way from Kazakhstan. She studied journalism in Maine and reported on ocean acidification, rising sea levels, and marine crustaceans (i.e. lobsters). Her fascination with sea life brought her to Iceland where she thoroughly enjoys the coastline.



**Lóa Hlin Hjalmtýsdóttir** is a national treasure. One of Iceland's leading illustrators, when she's not drawing in her unique style, 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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The hunger walk protest

# What Are Icelanders Talking About?

The latest social media brush fires

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

**NEWS** No subject has been dominating the news of the past month quite like the labour struggle (see page 14), as four major labour unions—who have formed an alliance and coordinated their demands to management—announced that talks with management were going nowhere, and the unions were, therefore, preparing a vote for a strike.

Shortly thereafter, the union Efling, which is part of the alliance, also announced they were preparing to vote on a one-day work stoppage that would apply to numerous hotel, guesthouse, and restaurant workers in the capital region. But strikes and stoppages have not been the only tool in the unions' box.

Recently, the union VR threatened to withdraw over 4 billion ISK from a bank that was set to buy a rental company that had been preparing a massive rent hike on its tenants—some of whom, it turned out, were VR workers. Amazingly, the rental company in question, Almennaleigufélagið, not only redacted the rent hike; they offered longer leases. Iceland's first "hunger walk," a protest demonstration that underlines the needs of Iceland's lowest-paid workers, was held.

In the midst of all this, management has been adamant that they have no money for pay rises, and have launched their own information campaign to dampen the

demands. With the above events in mind, we are likely in for a long labour fight ahead.

Iceland made international headlines once again because of whale hunting, a conversation renewed by a recent decision from Minister of Fisheries Kristján Þór Júlíusson to approve the hunt-

ing of minke and fin whales until 2023. This decision was based in part on a new report on whaling whose methodology and conclusions have been questioned. Moreover, the report's main author, Dr. Oddgeir Á. Ottesen, served as an alternate MP for the Independence Party, which has always been decidedly pro-whaling, or at least tolerant of whale hunting. The Fisheries Minister hails from this same party. While minke whales are plentiful and hunted by a few companies, fin whales are classified as endangered and are hunted by only one company, Hvalur hf. Further, there is no market for fin whale meat in Iceland, barely a market elsewhere, and Hvalur has been operating at a loss. All this continues to confound international observers and many Icelanders alike.

Finally, Eurovision has Icelanders talking, not least of all because the current favourite to win, unhinged cybergoth neo-Hoxhaist synthwave provocateurs Hatari, have repeatedly said their express purpose for wanting to win Eurovision is to deliver a pro-Palestine message in Tel Aviv, where the Eurovision contest is being held. Christian conservatives and social justice paladins alike have been tearing their hair out over this, to the delight of Hatari fans. Meanwhile, another frontrunner for the competition, Friðrik Ómar Hjörleifsson, has been accused of plagiarising Rihanna's 'Love On The Brain' for his song, 'Hvað er ég get ekki elskað'? Friðrik Ómar has denied this, saying his song is actually based on 'Unchained Melody.'



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Jon Jonsson (41) from Iceland missing since 11am on  
A mysterious disappearance

## Without A Trace

The strange case of Jón Pröstur Jónsson

**NEWS**

For over two weeks at the time of this writing, Jón Pröstur Jónsson has been missing. Disappearances in Iceland are uncommon enough—police records showing only 120 Icelanders have gone missing since 1945—but Jón disappeared in Dublin, Ireland. This fact is one of very few known so far in this case.

Words: **Andie Fontaine**

Photo: **The Independent**

Irish and British media have been diligently reporting on the matter, in part with the hope that someone will recognise Jón man and come forth with information that could lead to finding him. Icelandic media has also been reporting on any leads, but, information remains scant and the circumstances leading up to his disappearance

have only raised new questions.

**What we know**

We know that Jón arrived in Dublin on February 8th, with his fiancée, Kristjana Guðjónsdóttir, arriving the next day. The two had booked a 10-day stay in Dublin that included a three-day poker tournament. Jón had lost some money playing poker on Friday, reportedly in the area of €4,000. This, his brother Daniél has assured reporters, is not a great deal of money to lose. The motivation for this caveat is because of where the trail runs cold.

Shortly after Kristjana arrived at their hotel room, the two reportedly

had a conversation. He then left without his passport, wallet or phone. The last trace of him so far is CCTV footage of Jón leaving the hotel and then walking north up Swords Road.

That is where Jón's whereabouts enter the unknown.

**What we don't know**

There has been no activity on Jón's bank accounts since his disappearance. The press has been diligent to share his image, and family members have spoken repeatedly to the press in the hopes that someone watching might be able to point authorities in the right direction.

Those who know him consider it unlikely that he did something drastic, and they also contend it is unlikely that his poker losses provoked his flight. As it stands now, there are no new leads in the case. All his loved ones can do is keep Jón in the conversation and wait.

**ASK A**

### Textile Historian

Q: What Is The Story Of The Icelandic Sweater?



Words: **Aliya Uteuova / Ásdís Jóelsdóttir**  
Photo: **Art Bicnick**

Wearing this sweater is the proof you need for the world to know that you were in Iceland. An Icelandic lopi sweater is an indicator of quality, style, and survival in colder climates. Given its relatively short history, the sweater has gained impressive popularity, so we asked Ásdís Jóelsdóttir, an assistant professor in textiles at the University of Iceland: "What is the history of the Icelandic sweater?"

By the end of the 16th century, knitting skills were widespread in Iceland. During the Danish trade monopoly, wool goods were important for export and Icelandic women used their knitting skills to support their families.

Wool factories in Iceland were established at the end of the 19th century. The mechanisation of the wool industry created lopi — unspun strands. Knitting from strands of unspun wool was unknown in other countries. In the early 1910s, the rise of the fishing industry brought an urgent need for warm clothing for fishermen. During the war years, when imports, including yarn, were restricted, lopi became popular thanks to its affordability, the simplicity of the sweater and the speed at which it can be produced.

The iconic patterns of the sweater have roots in Icelandic heritage, representing clouds, mountain peaks and lava. In 1940's, the use of natural wool and traditional designs made the sweaters popular among visitors to Iceland.

The financial crisis of 2008 gave Icelanders a newfound reason to knit. Around that time, tourism to Iceland saw an exponential boost, and the Icelandic lopi sweater became a valuable sales article. These factors make the sweater a special part of Iceland's history and economy.

**FOOD OF ICELAND**

## Horse Meat



Some visitors to Iceland, especially North Americans, are surprised to learn that Icelanders do in fact eat horses, the shock mostly due to how beautiful Icelandic horses are. Icelanders are, in turn, quick to point out the obvious value judgement being made there: are cows and chickens not also beautiful?

But the consumptions of horse—typically available as salted

foal meat—does raise the question: how do farmers determine which horses are for riding and which are for eating? We asked Sveinn Steinarsson, the head of the Icelandic Horse Farmers Association, to elucidate:

"Farmers and those who raise horses predominantly raise horses for riding," he says. "Some horses, though, turn out to be unsuitable for riding, on ac-

count of being bad tempered or too difficult to train, or perhaps injured to where it would be inadvisable to ride them. Those horses are eaten. There are also some farmers who are producing foal meat. These horses are birthed in the autumn and slaughtered. So there are some farmers who are raising horses to be eaten, while there are other horse farmers who are

trying to raise riding horses, but for those horses that don't make the cut, they are slaughtered. The farmers have to choose. It's pretty simple."

If you do eat meat, then don't say neigh to horse. It might not be your mane entré, but hoof it to the store and—almost in words of Yoko Ono—give horse a chance.

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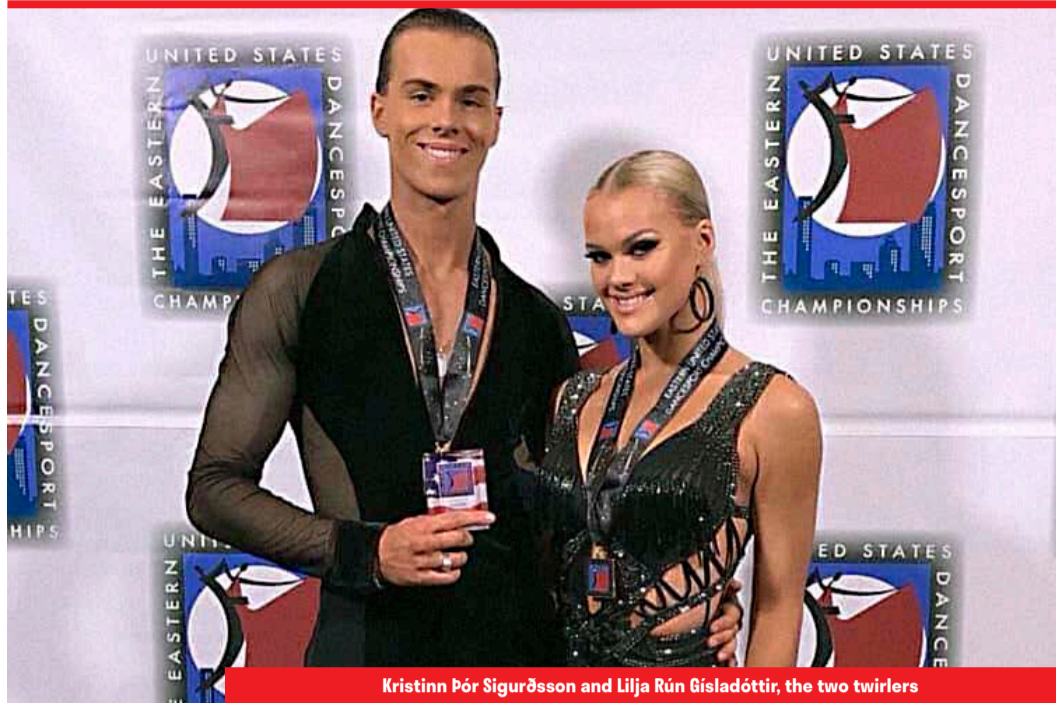


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Kristinn Þór Sigurðsson and Lilja Rún Gísladóttir, the two twirlers

# Two Sparkly Spinning Stars

Sashay, Lilja Rún & Kristinn Þór slay!

**WHAT HAVE WE WON?**

Words: **Hannah Jane Cohen**

Photo: **Sóley Ósk Hilmarsdóttir**

Inhumanly beautiful, flexible, delicate, graceful—you might not have known that Iceland is killing it in the dance world, but what else would you expect from a country known for bustling creativity?

Yes, every week, Icelanders are

snatching up dance medals left and right. Seriously—there are so many notable victories that, were we to mention all of them here, this article would just be a list of names, and who wants to read that? We're a magazine, not the Luxor Obelisk.

**Snatchin' up titles**

Therefore, we're going to focus our pirouetting magnifying glass on two of Iceland's most sparkle-clad stars, Kristinn Þór Sigurðsson and Lilja Rún Gísladóttir. The two twirlers, in the just the last few months, won the Under 21 Latin portion at the Eastern United States Dance Championships, the Milano Grand Ball, and the Champions of Tomorrow competition in Blackpool. And that's not to mention the stunning victories they've earned over the past few years.

The two met in May 2016 and competed together for the first time only one month later. They had an instant dancing chemistry—much like 'Center Stage', but probably without the bizarre love triangle.

**Overwhelming wins**

According to Lilja, their most cherished win was at the International Championships as Juniors in 2016. That was just their second time competing together and the contest is one of the three major worldwide competitions. "It was really an overwhelming feeling to win," Lilja said to the Grapevine. "A mix of a lot of emotions."

Their next competition will be here in Iceland in March and afterwards, they will make an appearance at the April European Championships. When asked what inspires her to keep competing, Lilja simply quoted athlete Bo Jackson, "Set your goals high, and don't stop till you get there." 🍷

**THE GRAPEVINE PLAYLIST**

The must-hear tracks of the issue



**Bjarki - Happy Earthday**  
Renegade producer and 2018 Grapevine cover star Bjarki's new album is enjoyably diverse and eccentric. Not one to shy away from doing whatever the hell he likes at any given moment, Bjarki has shaken off the shackles of the techno genre and turned in an imaginative, energetic and engaging nature-inspired LP that freewheels all over the electronica map. **JR**

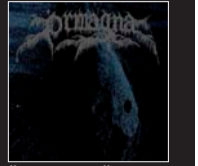


**Kælan Mikla - Draumadís**  
Iceland's premier witchcore collective Kælan Mikla celebrate their recent run of popularity with a cool video in which vocalist Laufey Soffía is first levitated by her bandmates, then gets her heart pulled out by bassist Margrét Rósa. **KALI MAAAAAAA. JR**



**Mighty Bear - Burt (Acoustic)**  
Here, Mighty Bear presents a bare rendition of 'Burt' off their 2018 EP 'Einn'. The video, which shows the normally masked performer fresh faced, is overwhelmingly intimate. Showcasing

their strong, emotive voice, it's at once expressive, frail and shrouded with a visceral air of tragedy. Hopefully this is just a taste of what to expect off the artist's upcoming EP. **HJC**



**Örmagna - Örmagna**  
This year is looking bright for Icelandic black metal, with nearly all of the country's finest dropping releases in the upcoming months. Heading this second wave is Örmagna. The band's name translates to 'Exhaustion', and their self-titled debut is just that: a 40-plus minute exploration of pure joylessness. This is black metal as it should be—horrific in the most enticing way. Definitely one to watch. **HJC**



**Sinmara - Crimson Stars**  
Sinmara's sophomore effort, 'Hvisl Stjarnanna', comes out on March 8th, but this slow-burn teaser track should keep you satiated through the wait. Though Sinmara is one of the more grandiose black metal acts in the country, 'Crimson Stars' takes a relatively upbeat approach to the genre. Energetic with deep vocals and surprisingly zealous drums, it's a new road for Sinmara, and one we're anxiously following. **HJC**

**WORD OF THE ISSUE**

You walk into your friend Helga's penthouse apartment. To your left, light shines down onto a not-IKEA sofa. To your right, her gorgeous husband

Jón—a part-time doctor, part-time yoga teacher—cooks up a vegan feast. Jealousy floods your eyes. You want Helga's perfect life. You challenge her to a 'hólmganga,' a battle that if you win, will bestow upon

you all of Helga's possessions—even her husband. No hólmgangur have been fought since the Viking years, but one week later, as you laze upon that sofa eating Jón's signature vegan lasagne, Helga's blood still matted in your hair, you think, who cares? **HJC**



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qualification comes the serious business of pillaging at the 2020 trophy, as written in the age-old prophetic sagas found buried in a cave on Langjökull by Erik Hamrén on a recent mushroom-induced vision quest.

the legendary Einar Smári as Iceland's all-time top scorer in the Premier League. He also equalled his own season best tally of eleven, having vowed just days before to smite it. Go Gylfi!

## Aron set his sails

The terrifying human battering ram, pro-level dragon wrestler and totemic bearded mage of the beautiful game, Aron "The Annihilator" Gunnarsson looks set to leave Cardiff at the end of the season. He signed a one year contract extension last summer after Iceland's first ever foray into the World Cup and has been a mainstay of Cardiff's defensive shield wall as they battle relegation. Indeed, after he returned from injury, Cardiff's ship was immediately stabilised, and he's even smashed in a goal against Wolves, and created one assist. However, Aron's terrifying steely hellfire has reportedly caught the attention of clubs in the faraway empires of Qatar and China, which are offering to drape him in fine furs and jewels should he be willing to move east. Aged 29 and still at the peak of his powers, this contract may be the biggest of Aron's career. We'll report news of his deep deliberations as they come.

## Gylfi smites goal record

The wondrous wizard, the smiter of ferocious beasts, the wing-boot'd warrior, he whose free kicks soar like a heart-lifting aria, the sweet-spot smiter, the top-corner terroriser, the bullseye bowman, the charging chimera, the suspiciously sorcerous sniper; Gylfi Sigurðsson is a wily prince who goes by many names. This season has, despite some travails, proven to be a fine vintage for Iceland's midfield marksman. The Viking virtuoso belted in two in a 3-0 win against Aron Gunnarsson's Cardiff, surpassing

## Finnbó is amazing pt. 3443

The fleet-footed arctic fox in the box Alfreð Finnbogason joined a very select group in February when he scored his fourth Bundesliga hat trick. This places him on a triple-threat par with the fearsome bald barbarian Arjen Robben and Arsenal hitman Pierre-Emerick Aubameyang, two of the top-rated attackers in European football. A terminally underrated player, Alfreð only sits behind Mario Gómez (12), Robert Lewandowski (8) and Claudio Pizarro (6) on all time Bundesliga hat tricks. If he keeps banging them in at this rate, eventually his name will be inked onto the scroll of top-tier strikers where it belongs.

## Berg scythes sorry Spurs

Jóhann Berg Guðmundsson heeded warlord-in-chief and Ice Prez Guðni Thorlacius Jóhannesson's orders to tar and feather his opponents at Turf Moor last Saturday. "The Berginator" entered the fray with the score finely poised at Burnley 1-1 Spurs, with his commander watching on like a proud father from the stands. A mere three minutes later, the winger wizard set up Ashley Barnes for the winner, disemboweling the North Londoners' backline and burning their title hopes to a cinder. After the game, Jói posed victoriously with the President, having added another scalp to add to his collection. ✂

**"The horde will decimate Andorra with the power of a thousand swooping sea eagles."**

# Iceland On Track To Win Euro 2020

We just need to smite the World Champions to qualify

## FOOTBALL

Words: John Rogers

Illustration: Lóa Hlín Hjalmtýsdóttir

As the European 2019-20 season heads to its climax, Iceland's quest to be crowned the best Viking football horde in Europe looms ever closer. The Euro 2020 qualifiers are coming and, like the White Walkers marching into Westeros, we're ready.

## Euro trophy looking icy

Iceland are on track to win Euro 2020. The first step of the plan to invade

and conquer European football will be qualification. On March 23rd, the horde will decimate Andorra with the power of a thousand swooping sea eagles; on the 25th, it's time to terrify World Cup holders France into submission like a herd of wild bulls charging with unstopably violent intent over a plain of deadly frozen tundra. Next to be put to the sword are Albania and Turkey in June, before the final skirmish against Moldova in September. After



BREAKFAST FROM 7  
LUNCH FROM 12

BERGSSON

MATHÚS

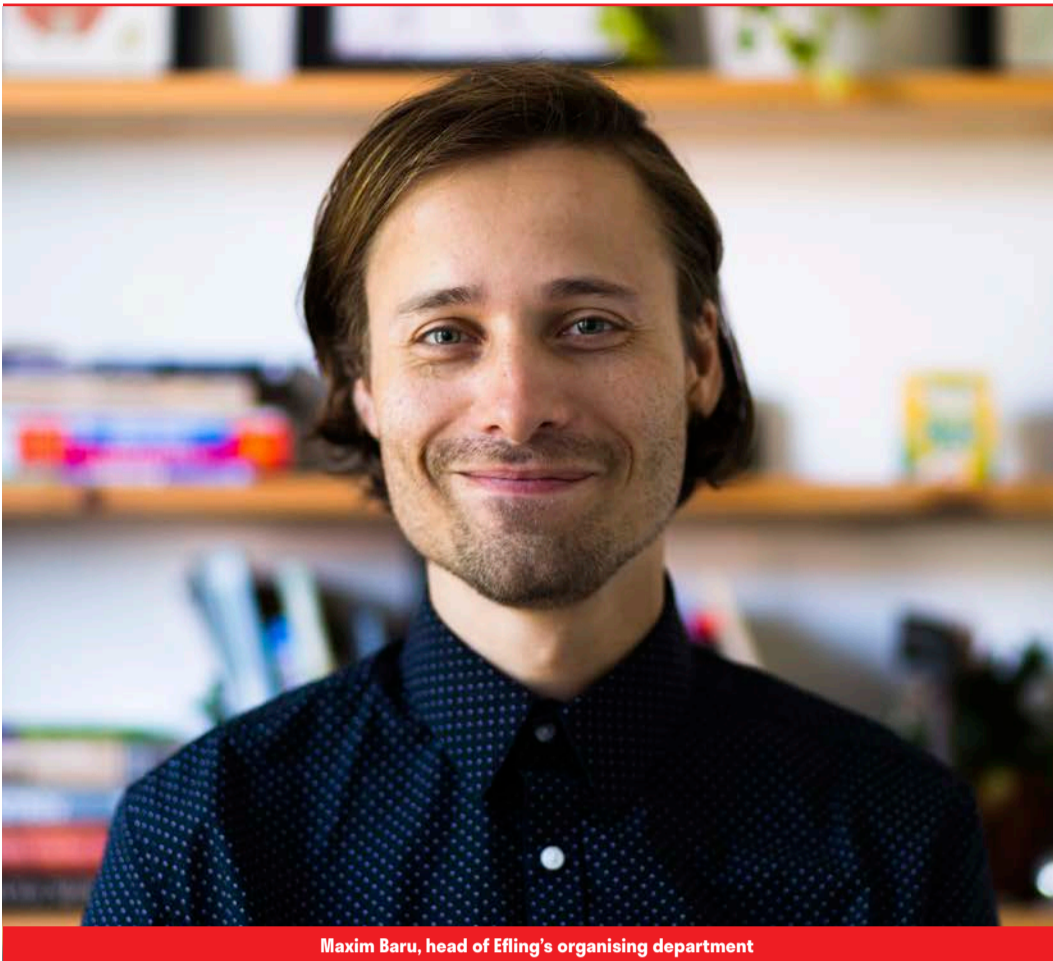


A woman with her eyes closed and a joyful smile is floating in clear, vibrant blue water. The water is splashing around her, and the background shows a soft, hazy landscape of hills under a bright sky. The word "Welcome" is written in a large, white, brushstroke-style font across the upper portion of the image.

# Welcome

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**BLUE LAGOON**  
ICELAND



Maxim Baru, head of Efling's organising department

# Bread And Roses: Iceland's Labour Struggle In High Gear

A strike is looming and management is on the defensive

Words:  
**Andie Fontaine**  
  
Photo:  
**Selena Phillips-Boyle**

Last February, four labour unions—Iceland's general labourers union Efling, the Store and Office Workers' Union (VR), the Grindavík Labour Union, and the Akranes Labour Union—announced that collective bargaining talks with management's Confederation of Icelandic Enterprise (SA) had broken down, and the unions were, therefore, preparing to go on strike. The next day, Efling announced they were also proposing a one-day work stoppage that would encompass hundreds of workers in capital area hotels and restaurants.

In many ways, Efling's more proactive approach should be entirely unsurprising. Last year, the union held board elections, in which a block of more radically-minded workers managed to win by a substantial margin over the incumbency. Since then, they have stepped up efforts for more substantial gains for their workers—and not just when it comes to wages.

## More than a pay rise

Maxim Baru, the head of Efling's organ-

ising division, told the Grapevine that the union's demands go beyond their proposed minimum wage increase from 300,000 ISK per month to 425,000 ISK.

"We're demanding access to Icelandic language classes paid by the employer during working hours," Maxim told us. "One of the demands I'm excited about is having specified that, for every worker in the workplace, the shop steward would get a specific amount of hours per month expressly for doing union work. There are also demands we are working on through the Icelandic Confederation of Labour towards the government around tax relief and rent controls. People abroad don't know just how little rent control there is here."

Tax relief is especially timely, as the government recently unveiled a new tax plan that Minister of Finance Bjarni Benediktsson contended this would provide relief to Iceland's lowest paid workers. A closer look at the numbers showed it in fact put them in a worse position.

Another major theme of Efling's demands is accountability. This need was highlighted by Kveikur, an investigative news programme on Icelandic public broadcasting, which recently revealed numerous foreign workers being subjected to inhumane conditions by the labour rental company Menn í vinnu.

"We are also demanding that there be penalties for employers who violate the collective bargaining agreement," Maxim says. "Right now, if we catch an employer breaking a collective agreement, we can win that person's wages back, but there's no penalty for the company. They're not even fined. So we want there to be concrete repercussions such as fines for companies who break the agreement."

## The solidarity influence

The subject of Efling now being "politicised" has been raised by critics and supporters alike. Sólveig Anna Jónsdóttir, the director of Efling, is also on the managing board of the Socialist Party, who have been very open about being allied with Iceland's labour unions.

Another influence on Efling's strategies and goals is the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW), a solidarity union originating in the United States over a century ago, with an established branch in Iceland for several years now under the name Heimssamband Verkafólks á Íslandi. A few of Efling's workers have either come from or are current members of this union—again, something those involved in Efling have been

very open about.

"The IWW has informed the practice of getting workers to meet, discuss their demands, organise an agenda for action through the union's resources and channels, and to participate," Maxim tells the Grapevine. "The role of the IWW here has been to inject that knowledge and that know-how. This philosophy places action and democratic participation at the heart of union activity. It's not that it shuns negotiations or contracts; rather it emphasises workers forming their own action plans by and for themselves. The day before the current industrial dispute began, the collective agreements were being broken, and the day after we sign the new collective agreements, they will be broken. So workers must be prepared for intellectual and industrial self-defence on the job."

## A long fight ahead

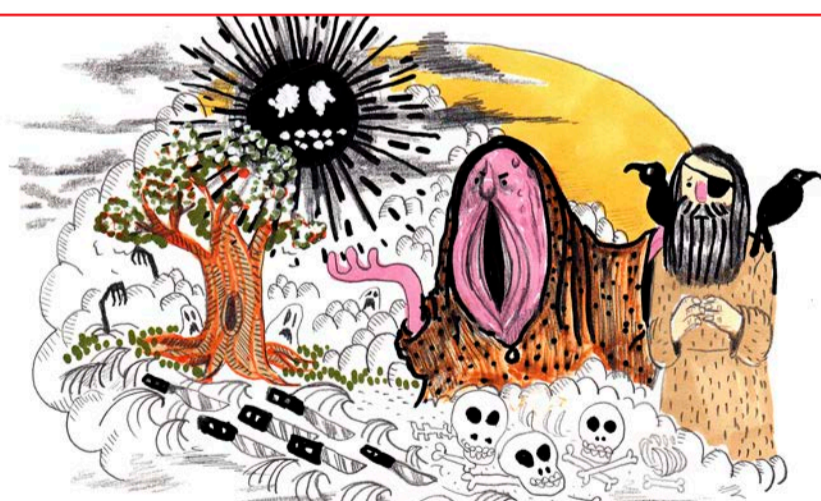
Maxim believes that the upcoming strike and work stoppage—if approved by the union's workers—could be just the beginning of a prolonged struggle, as management is pushing back hard.

"I'm not at all confident that management will respect people's rights," Maxim says. "As we've seen through the lifetime of the collective agreement, and during the negotiation phase, people have faced horrendous breaches of the collective agreement and the law, as well as basic morality. We've already heard from our members that they've been threatened, directly and indirectly, encouraged to vote against the strike. It seems to me that companies are battering down the hatches."

Over the past month, several businesses have announced 'reductions in staff'. To me, as an experienced student of strikes, these things are not unconnected, even though there's no official connection."

Nonetheless, Maxim remains confident the unions will prevail, as they are actively organising workplaces with the prevailing philosophy of "an injury to one is an injury to all", he says, citing a classic IWW slogan. While management—and most recently, hotel owners—have contended that there is no room to pay a living wage to many of these workers, this in itself raises the question if one has a "right" to own and operate a business if they cannot afford to pay full time workers a living wage. Iceland's unions are certainly putting that question to the test. 🍷

In this series, we illuminate the individual poems of the Edda—that most famous, epic masterpiece of Icelandic literary tradition—with humour, vulgarity and modern realism. If you're still confused, Google 'Saga Recap.'



Saga Recap is back! Edda Recap is go! Let's do this!

# Völuspá: The Prophecy of the Seeress

Words:  
**Grayson Del Faro**  
  
Photo:  
**Lóa Hjálmtýsdóttir**

This poem is basically the Old Norse origin story. You know, like what Genesis is to Christians, only nobody is stupid enough to take it literally these days. Aside from being the best account of pagan beliefs, it's a legitimately beautiful poem of awesome

shit like dragons, the apocalypse and a talking vulva.

## Into the vulvoid

She's not literally a talking vulva, sadly, but I want you to keep that

image in your mind anyway. The poem is narrated to Óðinn, the grandpa of the Old Norse gods, by a fortune-telling lady, which is called a völva in Icelandic. As you might expect, the 'vulva' has seeeen some shit (if you know what I mean) and she is all the wiser for it.

She's like, "let's start with the beginning of the universe." And honey, she is not kidding. So she explains how way back when, there was nothing in existence except a gaping void, which also sounds vaginal, but isn't. Somehow a giant dude appears, then suddenly a bunch of other shit starts existing, like the sun, vegetables and dwarves, which are clearly this vulva's fetish, because she does not shut up about them.

The vulva flaps on, explaining that there were two groups of gods, the Æsir and the Vanir. Things were totally chill between them until they went and created humans out of driftwood. They try to burn some woman, but she survives in full Khaleesi-ness. Anyway, this starts the first war in the world (typical humans), but the gods eventually unite in peace. Óðinn is like, "Yeah, yeah, I know this story. I'm like the main character. What else ya got?"

## Apoca-licious

A vulva is nothing if not ready, so she's all, "Fine. Lemme tell you about the end of the universe." Spoiler: they all die. Óðinn's hottest son, Baldur, gets the kiss of death from his little brother, who shanks him with mistletoe. Then shit gets metal. There is blood and weeping, betrayal and anarchy (the bad kind), and the tree at the center of the universe quivers in fear. There are rivers of knives, beaches of corpses, a black sun, and all kinds of monsters from hell and its suburbs.

The gods are massacred by a corpse-sucking dragon, a sea monster, big-ass wolves and eagles, and giants made of both lava and ice. Fire swallows the universe. The end. Psych! It is obviously reborn and Baldur plays checkers with his murderer, happily ever after... "But wait!" concludes the vulva. "What is that corpse-sucking-dragon-shaped shadow on the horizon?"

## Morals of the story:

1. Adam and Eve weren't real, dumbass.
2. We're all gonna die. 🍷



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And you thought this country was a hot bath haven...

# HotWaterGate

Icelanders faced a new and odd problem that they had not foreseen: a shortage of hot water during February's cold snap

Words:  
**Gunnar Hrafn  
Jónsson**

Photos:  
**Art Bicnick**

Iceland is often celebrated for its prodigious use of geothermal power. Apart from providing over a quarter of the national output of electricity (hydropower provides the rest) almost all Icelandic homes are heated with geothermally warmed water that passes through a vast network of pipes into simple radiators in each building. All in all, this provides 87% of the heat needed to keep every single building in Iceland toasty warm through the winter months.

Icelanders have a very old and intimate relationship with geothermal power. You can experience the Disney version of the love affair in the Blue Lagoon or visit one of countless local swimming pools around the country to witness the modern-day rituals of Icelandic bathers.

At least four ancient geothermal pools exist to this day, with the oldest being Snorralaug. It is believed to have been used by the incomparable saga-writer Snorri Sturluson in the 13th century, who would relax in its warm waters between the writing sessions that provided us with some of the most important texts of the old Nordic culture.

### Gold spell

It was with some alarm, then, that Icelanders received the news that they needed to start conserving the resource

that many considered infinite. In the tail-end of January, officials sent out a press release asking people to reduce their consumption of hot water to ensure there was enough to continue heating homes through a particularly bad cold spell. This was not a long spell, maybe a couple of weeks, so the fact that it was enough to test the limits of our hot water capacity raised some uncomfortable questions.

Some pools went so far as to close their hot tubs temporarily— if there is one thing you don't want to do, it is to get between an Icelander and

**“90% of the geothermal water consumed in Icelandic houses runs through our radiators.”**

his hot tub. But the pools, numerous as they are, aren't the major consumers of geothermal heat.

That would be the homes, offices, factories and other buildings that require a constant stream of new and warm water during the winter months.

90% of the geothermal water consumed in Icelandic houses runs through our radiators. Only a tenth is used for showers, baths, washing clothes and dishes, etc. This

would lead one to believe that rates of usage would be rather predictable.

### Not renewable

Veitur, the provider of hot water in the capital and surrounding regions, says the distribution network can actually handle much more than current demand, but they underestimated the increase in usage and are rushing to increase overall production capacity. Their spokesman was quoted in the media as saying they would soon bring online new boreholes that would increase capacity by 30%.

This ever-so-slight crisis (which is over for the time being) does put a spotlight on the unfortunate fact that geothermal power is not, in fact, renewable in the traditional sense. Or, indeed, in any useful sense. The heat produced diminishes steadily over the years a borehole is in use and the system thus requires constant exploration and drilling to maintain the same output.

It may feel like we sit on top of an infinite source of heat and power, but there are very real limitations to how it can be exploited with current technology. This becomes evident in instances like the ones experienced in the chilly first days of February.

### Water, water, everywhere

The response on social media, to these rather reserved calls for saving hot water temporarily, were quite interesting. They were largely indignant or mocking in tone, cursing the weather and wondering what would happen if it got really bad. The cold spell in February was not exactly noteworthy for its length or severity, after all.

Icelanders are not about to stop taking hot baths or regular trips to swimming pools and the notion that our energy comes clean and cheap is pervasive in the national psyche. Sooner or later, however, they are likely to come up against the limitations of such thinking.



To paraphrase Coleridge:

*Water, water, everywhere,  
Oh how shall we behave?  
Water, water, everywhere,  
Nor any drop to bathe. ☘*

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# #METOO, AND THEN WHAT? ICELAND EXPLORES THE TOUGH QUESTIONS OF A LEGAL GREY AREA

Words: Hannah Jane Cohen, Gunnar Hrafn Jónsson, with reporting from Andie Fontaine

At 13:21 on October 15th, 2017, the worldwide dialogue surrounding rape, sexual assault, and sexual harassment abruptly and irrevocably changed. With one 86 character tweet, sent out by actress Alyssa Milano, a firestorm erupted that has left, in its wake, careers, reputations, lives, and, for some, prison convictions. The tweet said simply, “If you’ve been sexually harassed or assaulted write ‘me too’ as a reply to this tweet.”

Though the term ‘Me Too’ was first created by activist Tarana Burke in 2006, Milano’s tweet, coming on the wake of the New York Times explosive report on Harvey Weinstein, resonated on an unprecedented level. Within months, the names piled up—from Kevin Spacey to Louis C.K.—and the campaign became international. In Spain, it was #YoTambien, in Italy, #QuellaVotlaChe, and from South Korea to Sweden, voice after voice was raised until the collective volume was too loud to dismiss. Powerful men—and some women—lost their jobs. Some even went to prison.

From being something that was unspoken, unacknowledged, private, and shameful, personal experiences of sexual abuse became a rallying cry. The ubiquity of social media and the interest of journalists allowed individuals to claim power over their trauma and to tell their stories publicly in a movement of solidarity. Through this process, it became disturbingly clear to all how pervasive the problems of rape, sexual assault and sexual harassment really are.

## PUBLIC GRIEVANCES

The #MeToo movement also planted deep roots in Iceland. The first day after Milano’s tweet saw an outpouring of social media posts with the hashtag accompanied by personal experiences. It also saw Björk post a Facebook status detailing her experiences being sexually harassed by director Lars von Trier when filming ‘Dancer In The Dark.’ Her remarks gained international media attention and resulted in many others sharing their own experiences with the director.

One month later, 136 stories of sexual harassment were published in the media, taken from a closed Facebook group for women in politics called ‘Í skugga valdsins.’ They varied from having their drinks drugged to being publicly humiliated by the sexual comments of co-workers. Soon after, similar reports were created. One presented 62 stories detailing sexual harassment in the performing arts industry. Another had 97 accounts from women of foreign origin. Then, in January 2018, all of Iceland’s political parties met to discuss the issues raised by #MeToo and to formulate a plan to combat the systemic problem.

In the year since, the public has seen many powerful men taken down by media outlets through the public airing of their alleged crimes. Jón Baldvin Hannibalsson, Robert Downey, Bjarni Már Júlíusson, and the list goes on.

The #MeToo movement, above all else, revealed a disturbing underlying viewpoint surrounding the prosecution of rape, sexual assault and sexual harassment. The hashtag was founded on an unconscious belief—whether true or not—that the victims of these crimes could not have found justice through traditional means; that were a survivor to pursue a judicial option, they would be failed by the system, that law enforcement wouldn’t care, that prosecutors wouldn’t be able to prosecute it.

This belief was just as prevalent in the Icelandic response to #MeToo

as it was anywhere else. Now, a year and a half since the movement came to life, the question remains: has anything actually changed? Is trial by public exposure still the only option, or has faith in the justice system been restored?

## WHO IS SHE TALKING ABOUT?

“It was not very common,” says Justice Minister Sigríður Á. Andersen when asked about the attitudes regarding pursuing legal action against rape, sexual assault, or sexual harassment only five to ten years back. “In terms of making issues a police matter, that was probably not very frequent.”

Sigríður first became aware of #MeToo through Facebook, when she was added to groups for Icelandic women in the legal profession, among others, and saw the initial posts relating to the hashtag. “I think that the general perception is these [Facebook groups] were eye-opening to everyone,” she says. “Of course, as with everything that appears on Facebook, you take it with a grain of salt, but this was so prevalent that it wasn’t possible to discard it all together.”

Iceland’s position as a small community gave #MeToo a unique edge within the country. “In a small community, people thrive on stories,” she says, explaining that in other places, while one might just read a story about a women’s experience with a man, here in Iceland, “It’s very common that people go, ‘who exactly is this guy?’ This prolongs the story and gives it a longer life than it would have in a bigger community. There are pros and cons with that,” she says, shaking her head.

## THE IMPORTANCE OF TIME

Sigríður often does this, acknowledging all angles of this complicated situation. She’s a no-nonsense woman who speaks with conviction, underscored by a strong sense of right and wrong. Above all else, her beliefs speak to the idea that a crime is a crime, and that legal processes exist and work for a reason. This, however, complicates the prosecution of the types of accusations brought up by #MeToo.

For Sigríður, it’s primarily an issue of time. “Victims of sexual assault should not wait with their accusation, but step forward and go to the police,” she strongly advises. “If you go to the police five or ten years after, then yes, that can be problematic in a judicial system. It is logical that it becomes problematic.”

It’s clear that Sigríður has empathy for survivors, but sees how—as days, weeks and years pass by—the rigid requirements of the burden of proof becomes complicated and evidence, from DNA to memories, gets hazy. “Time is the worst enemy in this,” she explains. “I think the most positive effect of #MeToo is that many women maybe now dare to step forward right away. If that is the one thing that comes out of #MeToo, then it is very positive.”

## JUDICIAL CHANGES AND CHALLENGES

Over the past year, Sigríður, along

# “This is people moving the system.”

KAREN LINDA  
EIRÍKSDÓTTIR

## What does accountability look like? A sample of attempts thus far.

People we spoke with on the subject of what tools are, or can be, used in the wake of sexual abuse claims brought up numerous ideas on what we could or ought to do. But what tools already exist? Some private and government actors have already taken steps.

### The Parliamentary Ethics Committee

This body is designed to examine any claims of unethical behaviour of parliamentarians, and sexual abuse and harassment would be under that purview. It does, however, have its limits, as the Klausturgate scandal has demonstrated, given that some MPs involved have simply refused to appear before the Committee.

### Trúnaðarnefnd

A loose translation of this would be a “confidential affairs committee.” The Social Democrats have one, which they use to investigate misbehaviour within their ranks and act accordingly. As stated in this feature, when allegations of sexual misconduct were levied against one of their own, Ágúst Ólafur Ágústsson, this committee convened and requested he take a leave of absence.

### Fagráð

This could be translated as a “professional committee”, and exists within the National Church. This body receives complaints about sexual misconduct within their ranks, and seeks reconciliation between the two parties involved. As the National Church has itself been at the centre of sexual abuse controversies, the existence of this body is understandable, but it is not just for government offices. Æskulýðsvettvangurinn, a youth activities organisation, also has a fagráð for sexual misconduct cases.

### HR

Any decent workplace should have a human resources department, where employees can air their grievances with a trusted colleague. Even the smallest workplace should have at least one “trúnaðarmaður,” who can be a union shop steward or the sole HR representative. This is a satisfactory measure in many respects, but becomes more complicated if the HR representative is themselves an employer engaging in sexual misconduct.

with the whole Ministry of Justice, put forward a formal agenda focused on tackling sexual offences within the judicial system. This included, first and foremost, widespread changes in how police officers respond to those reporting a crime.

While the Ministry initially only increased the number of police officers on duty, they later found out it was more helpful to create specialised roles for officers. “It used to be that they had a case on their desk and one officer was appointed to take that over and he followed it all through the system,” Sigríður explains. “But now someone is specialising in interviewing the victim, someone in interviewing the suspect, someone in going to court with the case, et cetera.” According to the officers, this has made the process much more efficient.

One of the most difficult questions for the Ministry of Justice has been just how active the survivor should be within the court process. “When we were preparing this agenda, there was a suggestion that the victim should have a formal status in the criminal proceedings before the court,” she says. “People are thinking of the possibility of keeping the victim up to date on the matter.” She points out, though, that this violates the fundamental principle of the Icelandic judicial system. “In Iceland, criminal cases are tried by the police and the prosecutor, not by individuals.”

On the other hand, Sigríður recognises that victims want and need to be kept apprised of their cases. She points to a new idea being practised by the Northern Icelandic police as a great solution to this. The law in Iceland requires that if the police have a case and investigate it, but see no chance of getting a conviction, then by law they must drop it. Oftentimes, this is done via letter. But, knowing the emotional toll this takes on survivors, the police are taking a different tack.

“They call the victims when they are dropping the case and explain why they are dropping it,” she explains, before giving a paraphrased rundown of what an officer might say. “That does not mean that this did not happen. It just means that by law it is difficult to get a conviction and that’s why we are dropping it.” It’s a much more respectful and dignified way of dealing with survivors. “It can help some victims deal with the fact that their case will not be tried before the court,” she adds.

These changes, along with the increased awareness of sexual crimes, have coincided with a huge increase in police reports relating to rape, sexual assault and sexual harassment over the past year.

## THE PUBLIC SECTOR RESPONDS

While the Ministry of Justice has been tackling sexual abuse through the legal system, many other organisations within Iceland have formed their own private committees to deal with complaints internally. The Bishop’s Office of the National Church of Iceland, for example, has a special “professional committee” for registering and investigating complaints of sexual harassment and abuse. The Social Democrats have their own “sensitive affairs” committee (“trúnaðarnefnd”) wherein they investigate and respond to sexual misconduct within their ranks, as they did when they asked MP Ágúst Ólafur Ágústsson to go on extended leave after his sexual harassment of a journalist was brought to light last December.

Sigríður is skeptical about these committees. She sees the good of having them deal with minor incidences, but also points out that committee investigations take time. If the victim isn’t happy with their results of the committee and decides to go to the police, the interval will hurt their case.

“If it’s a serious crime I would always recommend going to the police rather than trying to solve this internally,” Sigríður says simply. “From my point of view, crimes should be solved by the police.” She refers to a committee as a good idea for a side-project, but not as a replacement for proper law enforcement.

Parliament itself currently does not have one of these committees, and Sigríður feels no need for one, pointing to the ethics committee as a potential vehicle for complaints. That said, she doesn’t foresee Parliament ever establishing one. “If a Parliamentarian cannot step forward and report a crime,” she says, emphasising the word “Parliamentarian” with a small laugh. “Where are we then?”

## FAILING ACCOUNTABILITY

Not everyone feels the same. Helga Vala Helgadóttir, member of parliament for the Social Democrats, says the recent Klausturgate controversy has exposed the impotence of the current parliamentary framework for holding elected officials accountable.

“The problem, when you are dealing with elected officials of any kind, is that in the end no one can show them the red card,” says Helga Vala. “The parliamentary ethics committee is meant to handle a wide variety of cases that range from unethical behaviour all the way to potentially criminal behaviour.”

“When we tried to get [Centre Party] MPs Sigmundur Davíð Gunnlaugsson and Gunnar Bragi Sveinsson to appear before the committee to answer for the things they said on the Klaustur tapes about trading favours for ambassadorial positions, they simply refused to appear. That was a potentially criminal matter and yet there is basically no other recourse when an MP refuses to speak to the committee. That’s just the end of the story, really.”

## THE PRIVATE SECTOR

When it comes to non-criminal matters and grey areas, Helga Vala believes parliament lags behind both the private sector and her own Social Democratic party, with its temporary suspension of the aforementioned MP.

“People who work for private companies, civil servants and other administrative officials can all be fired for conduct that is deemed inappropriate,” she says. “And we have seen improvements in how this is handled as procedures are developed that kicked into action in cases like the harassment claims in Orkuveitan and Ágúst Ólafur’s case. I actually think we could make this kind of framework more universal by slightly amending current laws about shop stewards that already represent union workers.”

Helga Vala envisions adding a clause to the law that the size of the committee should depend on the size of the workplace. “That committee could then receive and process complaints about unseemly behaviour or other non-criminal matters,” she continues. “The sports and athletics authorities have set up their own framework and channels for reporting inappropriate behaviour and that is important because these cases so often hinge on an inherent power imbalance that makes reporting difficult. If it’s not something that rises to the level of criminality, but does create a hostile working environment, you don’t really know where to turn.”

## A COUNSELOR'S PERSPECTIVE

But, as Sigríður fights in the judicial system against the sexual crimes brought up by #MeToo, there is a whole other group feeling the brunt of the hashtag in a different way. Stígámót is a grassroots organisation that offers free counselling for those suffering in the aftermath of sexual abuse. While they’ve been around for 28 years, #MeToo has precipitated a noticeable leap in its user numbers.

“People are more aware. People are seeking help,” says Karen Linda Eiríksdóttir, a counsellor at Stígámót who has been working with the organisation for seven years. “There are a lot of people coming and saying ‘this happened to me and I hadn’t really realised how it’s affected me today.’”

Karen, like Sigríður, says that in the years before #MeToo, pursuing legal action against a perpetrator was uncommon. “People were afraid to go to the police. They had to go to a big building downtown and often felt like they were being treated as guilty,” she explains. “By the time they had worked up the guts to go, there was no evidence. It was word against word and that wasn’t enough.”

But only last month, Karen along with the rest of Stígámót met with the sex crimes department to see how they react to survivors. It was nothing like the old days. “They have streamlined everything over there and it’s more inviting,” she explains. It’s clear Sigríður’s agenda has done some good.

But one of the most helpful changes in facilities for sexual abuse survivors,

**“I actually think we could make this kind of framework more universal by slightly amending current laws about shop stewards that already represent union workers.”**

**HELGA VALA HELGADÓTTIR**



**KAREN LINDA  
EIRÍKSDÓTTIR**



**SIGRÍÐUR  
ANDERSSEN**

Karen finds, has been in the development of Bjarkarhlíð. The centre, located near Elliðaárdalur, is a refuge for survivors of violence, and provides counselling, a detective on site, and also weekly talks from legal teams and the women’s shelter. “They immediately feel like they are in a place that isn’t an institution and that has changed a lot of the experience for survivors,” she says. Sigríður agrees with her on the importance of the centre, simply stating, “It’s a one stop shop.”

## NOW WHAT?

Karen attributes the rise of the #MeToo movement to the fact that the law simply wasn’t working for survivors. “People will take things into their own hands and just do what they have to do. #MeToo has moved people there,” she says. “This is people moving the system.”

She explains that, from her experience, people have begun to pursue justice through the police in a way they never did before #MeToo. The campaign, it seems, has moved the system itself, enabling people to start using it once more.

## A COMPREHENSIVE SHIFT

For Sigríður, though, the way forward involves a much more comprehensive shift—one that the system can’t change. “There has to be an awakening [at] the root of it,” she says. “Why are people behaving in a way that leads to someone feeling uncomfortable in their natural environment? In their workplace? The way forward is prevention and education.”

Helga Vala says the unaccountability of MPs themselves sends the wrong message to wider society. “Elected officials refusing to be held accountable for their behaviour, ignoring established norms and challenging even obvious truths as being part of some conspiracy? Well, we have seen that in other places recently, haven’t we? The United States and parts of Eastern Europe come to mind.

“I think it’s part of a dangerous and worrying trend where people have become,” she continues. “What is the word? Too tolerant? Complacent? I mean, this kind of behaviour still shocks people when they read the headlines, but it’s just one thing after another where it comes so thick and fast that you just move on with your life and it all becomes background noise. Elected officials and other public representatives around the world lie constantly and openly to the public and

it has been normalised. Then, looking back over the cacophony, people are just like: ‘Wow, did all that really happen?’”

While there’s no single answer to what steps we should take to prevent sexual abuse and harassment, maybe that’s the entire point—that different environments call for different preventative and responsive measures. Just as each case is examined on its own merits, the way in which we handle each case might be dependent upon the environment in which it occurs.

This is perhaps why everyone the Grapevine spoke to for this piece emphasised the importance of education as prevention; that we teach our children the meaning of consent, body autonomy and mutual respect. With time, there may come a day when the #MeToo movement is looked upon as a turning point in gender relations, in Iceland and elsewhere. ♡



**HELGA VALA HELGADÓTTIR**

**“I think the most positive effect of #MeToo is that many women maybe now dare to step forward right away.”**

**SIGRÍÐUR ANDERSSEN**

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## Cue The Cadenza

The Icelandic Opera: La Traviata

March 9th, 16th, 23th, 30th & April 6th - 20:00 - Harpa - 4,900-12,900 ISK

Remember back when you were sick, nursing your Tuberculosis while flirting with a potential love interest at a party in your salon? No? Well bring it all back at the Icelandic Opera's new production of Giuseppe Verdi's classic "La Traviata." 'Sempre Libera,' 'Libiamo, ne' lieti calici' and 'Ah, fors'è lui' are total earworms and the story as a whole is a great way to introduce your non-operatic friends to the joys of vibrato. And for a bonus treat: Get ready for an entirely Icelandic cast. **HJC**



## Get Experimental

Teebs + Thomas Stankiewicz

March 10th - 21:00 - Mengi - 2,500 ISK

Experimental producer, musician and visual artist Teebs comes to Reykjavik for a one-night-only collaborative show with Thomas Stankiewicz. Teebs' acclaimed 2010 debut album 'Arbor' was one of the first to be released on Flying Lotus' Brainfeeder label, and since then he's cemented his reputation as a creative and unpredictable talent to watch. Thomas is an Icelandic composer and musician known for his cinematic work. See what happens when the two join forces at Mengi on March 10th. **JR**



## Bubble Bubble...

Poetry Brothel: The Witching Hour

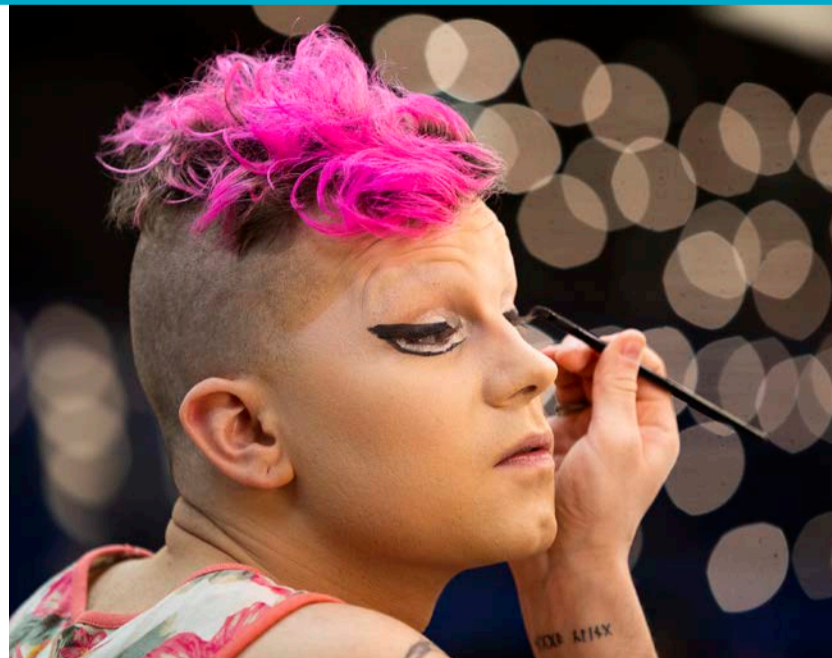
March 8th - 20:00 - IDNÓ - 3,000 ISK

Get your spell on and celebrate International Women's Day with the seductive cast of the Poetry Brothel. Sip on a potent elixir of magic, phantasm and an all-female cast as you enter a world of tarot card readers, burlesque dancers, musicians and poets. Note: Tickets are 3,000 ISK in advance, but 3,500 ISK at the door. But students, never fear, y'all get 50% off. And please, dress in theme. **HJC**

## CULTURE NEWS

### Drag Show

See Gloria Hole and Alaska on March 22nd at Gamla Bíó, with plenty of local and international talent. Get tickets via [tix.is](http://tix.is)



Girl, look at how pink your hair looks

## Throw Some Glitter, You'll Be Fine

Reykjavik drag blowout to feature Drag Race All-Star Alaska Thunderfuck

Words: Aliya Uteuova

Photo: Art Bicnick

Hjálmar Poulsen—or, as the world knows him best, Miss Gloria Hole—first performed as a drag artist for the guests of her 12th birthday party. Keen to celebrate her 25th year with a bang, Miss Gloria is now preparing for her biggest show yet—a large-scale blowout featuring RuPaul's Drag Race hall of famer and superstar Alaska Thunderfuck.

In recent years, RuPaul's Drag Race has continued to gain a worldwide audience, propelling drag into the mainstream. But, in many ways, Miss Gloria Hole paved the way for drag in Iceland. That road was often lonesome.

"It was terrible to have this dream,"

Miss Gloria recalls of the early days on the scene in 2006. "You constantly think 'What's wrong with me? Why do I like this?'"

### Hot glue

Not having a drag mother to mentor her pushed Miss Gloria to build herself from scratch. After years of perfecting her craft, Miss Gloria built an arsenal of tools for creating unforgettable shows.

"If your face start leaking somewhere, you can just throw some glitter on it and say it's a look," Miss Gloria says. In addition to doing drag, she teaches makeup at Mask Makeup and

Airbrush Academy in Reykjavik. One thing she has to have when getting ready for drag shows is a hot glue gun. "It might burn a little, but you have to sacrifice yourself sometimes."

### Not real

A hot glue gun is not the only thing that stings for Miss Gloria. When she decided to pursue drag full-time, she knew that she was signing up for a career that comes with hate and criticism. Miss Gloria often uses dry humour onstage to cover heavy subjects, and believes that laughter helps get through terrible things. "When you have a person in drag, it's a character and not a real person with real ideas or opinions," Miss Gloria says. "If you can't take a joke then don't come to a drag show and sit in the front row."

Miss Gloria shared that drag queens also get a fair share of hate from gay guys. "A lot of guys don't want to date a drag queen because they think it's unattractive," Miss Gloria says. "But what if I were an actor in a theatre or movies, would it still be a problem?"

### Fuck it

Miss Gloria says the American superstars set to perform in her upcoming show at Gamla Bíó are impressed by Iceland's drag scene. "Many drag queens in America live in a box where everything has to be planned, but in Iceland we don't have that. We have the 'fuck it, it's gonna be fine' attitude.

"If I were not Icelandic with this mentality, I think I'd never have dreamt about staging a show like this."

Miss Gloria's Birthday Party will have cabaret, parodies, live performances and cutthroat comebacks. "We will have no limits, it's going to be sexy, nasty, beautiful, ugly, but mainly bitchy," Miss Gloria says. "If you're easily triggered, don't come to my show." **♾**

## ELECTRIC DREAMS

### Info:

Listen to "Aloner" now on YouTube and see Good Moon Deer's new audio-visual performance at Sónar Reykjavik 2019



## Always Searching

Designer/musician Good Moon Deer is a tireless electronica experimentalist

Words: Alexander Jean de Fontenay

Photo: Good Moon Deer

Guðmundur Úlfarsson—also known by his musical moniker Good Moon Deer—is an Icelandic graphic designer and musician who currently lives in Belgium. He released his first album, the sample-heavy 'Dot,' as a limited run of 50 special edition LPs in 2015, and he's currently preparing to unveil a new album, and readying himself for a live set at Sónar Reykjavik 2019.

Being a designer, Guðmundur is interested in the idea of 'the whole package.' "I make visuals and videos to accompany my music, and design and produce the record covers," he says. "Taking care of all of these things can be extremely time consuming and stressful, but really enjoyable in the end."

Guðmundur's first musical

memories are from when he was a teenager. "The Prodigy sparked my interest in electronic music, and I guess it has shaped my taste in music ever since," he explains. "Then, while studying in Amsterdam, I started DJing and realized mixing together different tracks to create something new was something I liked."

Searching, experimenting and running into happy accidents and weird combinations drives Guðmundur's music making. "I'm always trying to find something new that I like or that excites me," he says. "The other enjoyment comes after I release it into the world so people can make up their own minds about it."

Even Guðmundur struggles to describe the style of music he makes. "It has some experimental breaks in a wide range of tempos, mixed with hints of techno and trip-hop, even," he says. "During the first years of this project, it got described as 'jazz for the digital age,' which I quite enjoyed."

Guðmundur says that his forthcoming album—due for a summer release—will be more gear-heavy than his sample-based debut. "I've been experimenting with some new instruments and effects that are really hard to control," he says. "At Sónar you'll hear the result—completely new material with a new visual show. Not to be missed!" **♾**



A movie star in the making

# Caught Between Two Cultures

María Thelma Smáradóttir, the star of 'Arctic,' on a theatrical childhood, working with Mads Mikkelsen, and navigating the film industry

Words: Aliya Uteuova Photos: Art Bicnick

a certain point in your life, you just get curious about who you are and where you came from."

Growing up as a child of a Thai mother and an Icelandic father, María felt no different from her peers. "My childhood felt normal because I didn't know anything else than coming from a biracial home."

But she did have to grow up fast, helping her mother navigate daily hurdles, such as bank visits and doctor's appointments. "My mother speaks broken Icelandic," María says. "She's a human being who speaks a language, but she doesn't speak the same language."

## Movie

See 'Arctic' at your nearest Sambió movie theatre

"You've got to be really good at being bad," says María Thelma Smáradóttir. Over the course of 10 years of studying and auditions, María has experiences her fair share of rejections. But hearing thousands of no's for every callback only developed her resilience.

In her final year at the Icelandic Academy of the Arts, María was tasked with presenting a 20-minute play as part of her final project. Not knowing

what to create, María consulted her mother and older sister over a cup of tea. "My sister asked me if I ever wondered where our mother was born," María says. "I felt so ashamed that I hadn't even looked into my other heritage."

This kitchen table conversation led to María creating 'Welcome Home'—a spoken word performance of her mother's immigrant story performed at the

National Theatre of Iceland.

## Where you're from

María's mother, Vala Rún, was born during monsoon season in the middle of Thailand's rice fields. Having lost her parents at a very young age, coming to Iceland felt like a homecoming. "My mother's journey is something I've discovered only recently," María says. "At

## Gifts and sacrifice

During her play, María addressed the obstacles that immigrants face when trying to build a life for themselves. "It's so rude when people start to speak louder to my mother, or speak to her like she's deaf, articulating e-ve-ry syllable, as if she's stupid or something," she says. When María and her sister were children, their mother always spoke to them in Thai, giving them the



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



Getting connected to her roots



María Thelma acted with Mads Mikkelsen in 'Arctic'

gift of bilinguality while forfeiting the chance to practice her own Icelandic.

"Her sacrifice is the biggest gift she has given me, and today I'm able to help others by translating for them," says María.

### Just one look

When she travels abroad, people often ask María where she's from. "When I say that I'm from Iceland, some people ask, 'No where are you really from?' I say 'Iceland,' and they say, 'No, but where are you really really from?' Just ask me about my heritage—because that's another question. When I finally say I'm Icelandic and my mom is Thai, then they always go, 'Oh, I knew it, because you don't look Icelandic.' But what do Icelanders look like? Is there only one look?"

For María, the most rewarding part of performing her show is the ability to give someone else a voice. Mixed-race children and immigrants who came to her shows expressed gratitude for having their thoughts spoken out loud. "It's a really basic story but it's a story that has not been heard on

ness, to the extent that she didn't even invite her parents to her performances. At the premiere of 'Welcome Home', María's mother sat on the front row. For María, telling her family's story on stage felt like a peak of her career because only six years ago, she lived in a constant doubt of her abilities.

"I was really afraid that I didn't have a chance to be an actress in Iceland because there were no Asian role models," María recalls. That all changed when she looked at her background as her strength.

"I spent so much time thinking 'I'm a half-Asian in a pretty much white society, I don't have a chance,'" María recalls. "But you can also look at it from a different view and think, 'I'm going to get that role because I'm this and that, because my nose is big,' or whatever it is. Developing an unshakeable

**"I spent so much time thinking I'm a half-Asian in a pretty much white society, I don't have a chance."**

American actress Viola Davis and a Canadian-Korean actress Sandra Oh as women who shaped her confidence. "There are very few minority actors in Hollywood and they talk openly about it," she says.

María herself doesn't dream of being a Hollywood movie star—she'd much rather explore her creativity in lower-budget movies. Just seven months after graduation, María auditioned for one such film. She got the part, starring alongside Danish actor Mads Mikkelsen in 'Arctic,' a survival film set in Iceland.

The harrowing plot became reality for María and tested her limits during the filming process. María discovered she's claustrophobic when she and Mikkelsen were zipped up in a double sleeping bag and buried in the snow. In another scene, María was in a cave and Mikkelsen was setting off a flame to scare away an animal. "The cave was so narrow, so if the flame touched my sleeping bag it could've caught on fire," María says. Luckily, everything went well and the entire film was shot in 19 days.

### Million dollar advice

During the filming, María received some advice from Mikkelsen that stuck with her. "Mads believes that nobody is bigger or smaller than him," María says. There were scenes when María wasn't in the frame with Mikkelsen, but he asked her to do the scenes with him anyway to help him out. "He doesn't consider himself above it," she says.

When 'Arctic' premiered at the 2018 Cannes Film Festival, María was overjoyed to see the Icelandic crew at one of the most prestigious festivals in the world. "I just thought 'wow, we made it so far, this small isolated island North Atlantic,'" María finishes. "It was really the definition of hard work."



María Thelma, looking fierce

stage in this country. We're talking about immigrants, about racism, about being biracial, about being stuck between two worlds," María explains.

### Family story

When she was just beginning her career, María struggled with shy-

belief in yourself is the only way you can make it."

### Future looks bright

María is deeply aware that there is a generation of mixed race actors that will come after her, but there weren't many role models that came before her. María credits

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**Food was so good, we came back twice!** We really enjoyed eating at Þrastalundur 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.*

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One word: Stunning

## Stay Queer

Supportive spaces and rainbow-splashed party spots

Words: Rex Beckett Photos: Art Bicnick & Hörður Sveinsson

In a country where the Pride festival is more widely attended than the Independence Day parade, it's no surprise that there would be some pretty great LGBTQ+ spaces in the capital city. Reykjavík queers are vast and diverse, as is the case worldwide, and while there are still many hurdles to knock over towards full inclusivity, here are some of the most inclusive places where love is love.



### Gaukurinn

Tryggvagata 22

Known as one of the most steadfast bars in downtown, Gaukurinn has gone through a few transformations and reinventions – much like Madonna or Cher – and is currently the place for edgy, cruelty-free queers and allies. They host the majority of the drag

shows in town, book a wide array of underground artists of all genders, and have a staunch “No Xenophobia” warning on entry. It's a place where one can truly be anyone they are or want to be.



### Kiki Queer Bar

Laugavegur 22

This go-to gay dance club is the rainbow splashed spot to slam shots, scream for fun and go wild to Katy Perry remixes. Weekends here are crazy and fun parties for the pop-minded dancing queens, and the crowd is quite diverse. It is rather tame by most gay club standards and you won't find glory holes or a den of iniquity, but you might just find your new crush and make out on the dancefloor.



### Samtökin '78

Suðurgata 3

The queer association of Iceland is an all-inclusive supportive space in the heart of downtown where people can go for information on practical matters as well as attend cosy social functions, educational talks in Icelandic and English, support groups, and dating introduction meetings. It is a great place for sober people, it hosts family hours for parents and kids to meet and play, plus bingo and board game nights and karate classes. Samtökin '78 is also the official headquarters of the annual Pride parade and there is an amazing unicorn mural on the side of their building!



### Andrými

Bergþórugata 20

This non-profit radical community centre in Reykjavík is a sober, vegan, queer-inclusive safe space that contains work spaces, a community kitchen and meeting room for folks from all walks of life. They are a particularly important space for the trans community, hosting monthly support groups in English as well as drop-in social hours for trans and non-binary folk to meet and mingle. They also hold vegan cooking classes, sex positive workshops, political discussions, language classes and family hours. They have a small membership fee or ask for donations at each event, and they are well worth it.



### Vintage Box

Hafnarstræti 4

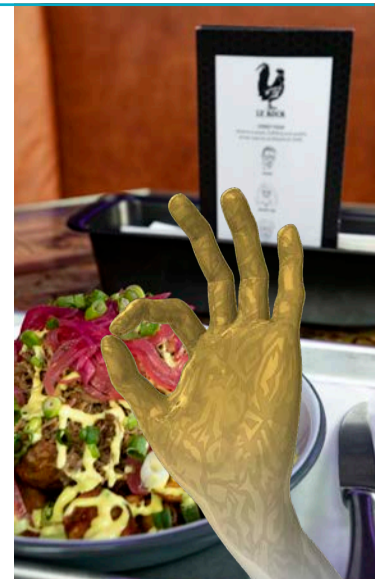
The newest member of Iceland's queer scene is this very cool, very dark, very fabulous little bar right downtown. Fittingly, it's tucked away upstairs behind another bar and one enters the premises through the smoking patio and bathrooms, only to then enter a small den with black and grey rococo brocade wallpaper, a small selection of top shelf drinks, and very cute staff. Run as a community organisation, the bar opened at the end of January and runs men-only, women-only, and non-binary queer mixers. The music is loud and fun and people are dancing and flirting all over.



### Loft Hostel

Bankastræti 7

While not exactly a dedicated queer space of its own, this cool downtown hostel and bar is definitely a fun LGBTQ+ friendly place with all kinds of great events. Located right on the main drag, it's an ideal accommodation for the party-minded traveller. One can often start their day with a clothing swap, a speed dating or friending session, or watercolour workshop, then heat up their evening with one of the funnest karaoke parties in town or screenings of RuPaul's Drag Race hosted by Iceland's reigning mother queen, Gógó Starr. Go have a ball! 🍻



### BEST OF REYKJAVÍK

## Best Burger

Joint Winner: Le Kock

Tryggvagata 14

Despite their fast-expansion and subsequent opening of the one main outpost at their current location, Le Kock's burgers have, thankfully, remained consistent. The house-made potato rolls hold their own until the very last bite. No soggy bottoms here. You may want to ask them to be light handed with the sauce, though. Insider tip: their veggie burger (vegan optional) gives meat patties a serious run for their money.



Joint Winner: Búllan

Geirsgata 1 & Bankastræti 3

Búllan's meteoric rise to fame with multiple locations across Europe isn't really surprising when you bite into one of their luxuriously decadent 'Steak Burgers'—a glorious, juicy mix of tenderloin, rump and rib-eye, with the perfect meat-to-fat ratio. Búllan is a solid burger that seals Iceland's reputation as a worthy burger destination.



Newcomer: Bastard Brew & Food

Vegamótastígur

Bastard Brew & Food occupies the space formerly known as Vegamót, serving entendre-laden beers and snacks, from the “Hazy Bastard” ale to the juicy “Fat Bastard” burger served with a mound of brisket on top. The relish is a winner, and the pickle pucker. If your heart desires something classic, the Double Bastard is a smoky treat.



March 1st—March 21st

# 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



“I’d bust some moves, meet new people, and end the night with a gorgeous couple at their hotel suite in an intimate cultural exchange.”

Words: Aliya Uteuova  
Photo: Art Bienick

### Skaði Þórðardóttir

For Skaði Þórðardóttir, an Icelandic musician and producer, a perfect day is between 10-15°C in autumn, a season that symbolises new beginnings for Skaði. This is how she’d spend her perfect day.

#### First thing in the morning

I would wake up at 6:30, go back to sleep, and wake up again at 6:45. Doing that would make it feel like I slept until noon.

#### Mid-Morning

I would have downed a double espresso and an energy drink by now. Then I would rush out and do a morning judo training with my gym buddies at **Júðófélag Reykjavíkur**. I’ll end the workout with a good stretch session. For breakfast, we would eat a home

cooked breakfast of eggs and bacon, french toast, garlic bread, and pancakes with syrup.

#### Midday

I would take a good nap. I would wake up from that nap with a massage from my lovers (at least two of them). It would be a long and enduring massage with a prolonged but very happy ending for everyone involved. After that, I would head toward **Nauthólsvík** and go for a swim in the ocean then relax in the hot tub and sauna.

#### In the afternoon

I would meet up with friends and grab some good Thai take-away, head to my studio, the **Compulsive Creations**, for a recording session, and write a new song that would just happen out of the blue.

#### For Dinner

I would go to **Sæta Svinið** for the all you like to order menu. I’ll meet up with all my favourite friends, and we would eat and drink, recall old memories, past relationships, love affairs, and laugh about how silly life can be.

#### In the heat of the night

My friends and I would head over to **Kiki** and there I would do a surprise gig with my partners in crimes, **Mighty Bear** and **Kría**. We would all end the day in a dancing frenzy, after which I would sneak out to **Kaffibarinn**, **Gaukurinn**, **Húrra**, **Vintage Box** or some random place I’ve never been to. I’d bust some moves, meet new people and end the night with a gorgeous couple at their hotel suite in an intimate cultural exchange. ♡



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<b>American Bar</b> Austurstræti 8 <b>D3</b>	<b>ASÍ Art Gallery</b> Freyjugata 41 <b>G6</b> Open Tue-Sun 13-17
<b>Andrými</b> Bergþorugata 20 <b>G6</b>	<b>Aurora Reykjavík</b> Grandagarður 2 <b>B1</b> Open 09-21
<b>B5</b> Bankastræti 5 <b>E4</b>	<b>Asgrímur Jónsson</b> Museum Bergstaðastr. 74 <b>G4</b> July 8-Sep 1, Mon-Fri
<b>Bar Ananas</b> Klappastígur 28 <b>E5</b>	<b>Berg Contemporary</b> Klappastígur 16 <b>E5</b> Tu-F 11-17, Sat 13-17
<b>Bió Paradís</b> Hverfisgata 54 <b>E5</b>	<b>The Culture House</b> Hverfisgata 15 <b>E5</b> Open daily 10-17
<b>Bjarni Fel</b> Austurstræti 20 <b>E4</b>	<b>The Einar Jónsson</b> Museum Eiríksgröta 65 <b>F5</b> Open Tue-Sun 10-17
<b>Braut</b> Laugavegur 22 <b>E5</b>	<b>Ekkisens</b> Bergstaðast. 25b <b>F4</b>
<b>Boston</b> Laugavegur 28b <b>E5</b>	<b>Galleri List</b> Skipholt 50A <b>H10</b> M-F 11-18, Sat 11-16
<b>Dillon</b> Laugavegur 30 <b>E5</b>	<b>Hafnarborg</b> Strandgata 34, 220 <b>D3</b> Open Wed-Mon 12-17
<b>Dubliner</b> Naustin 1-3 <b>D3</b>	<b>Hitt Húsið</b> Pósthússtræti 3-5 <b>D4</b>
<b>English Pub</b> Austurstræti 12 <b>D3</b>	<b>Hverfisgalleri</b> Hverfisgata 4 <b>D4</b> Tu-Fri 13-17, Sat 14-17
<b>Gaukurinn</b> Tryggvagata 22 <b>D3</b>	<b>i8 Gallery</b> Tryggvagata 16 <b>D3</b> Tu-Fri 11-18, Sat 13-17
<b>Hard Rock Café</b> Lækjargata 2a <b>D3</b>	<b>Kjarvalsstaðir</b> Flókagata 24 <b>H8</b> Open daily 10-17
<b>Hressó</b> Austurstræti 20 <b>D3</b>	<b>Kling &amp; Bang</b> Grandagarður 20 <b>A4</b> W-Sun 14-18, Th 12-21
<b>Húrra</b> Naustin <b>D3</b>	<b>Listastofan</b> Hringbraut 119 <b>F3</b> Open Wed-Sat 13-17
	<b>Living Art Museum</b> Grandagarður 20 <b>A4</b> Tu-F 11-17, Sat 13-17
	<b>Mokka Kaffi</b> Skólavörðustíg. 3A <b>E5</b> Open daily 9-18:30
	<b>Museum Of Design and Applied Art</b> Garðatorg 1 <b>F3</b> Open Tu-Sun 12-17
	<b>The National Gallery of Iceland</b> Frikirkjuvegur 7 <b>F3</b> Open daily 10-17
	<b>The National Museum</b> Sudurgata 41 <b>G2</b> Open daily 10-17
	<b>The Nordic House</b> Sturluggata 5 <b>H2</b> Thu-Fri 11-17, W 11-20
	<b>Hafnarhús</b> Tryggvagata 17 <b>D3</b> Open 10-17, Thu 10-22
	<b>Ásmundarsafn</b> Sigtún <b>F8</b> Open daily 10-17
	<b>Kirsuþerjatréð</b> Vesturgata 4 <b>D3</b> M-F 10-18, Sat-Sun 10-17
	<b>Reykjavík City Library</b> Tryggvagata 15 <b>D3</b> Mon-Thu 10-19, Fri 11-18, Sat-Sun 13-17
	<b>Árbæjarsafn</b> Kistuhyllur 4 <b>B1</b> Open daily 9-18
	<b>The Settlement</b> Exhibition Adalstræti 16 <b>D3</b> Open daily 9-18
	<b>Reykjavík Museum of Photography</b> Tryggvagata 15 <b>D3</b> Mon-Thu 10-18, Fri 11-18, Sat-Sun 13-18
	<b>Saga Museum</b> Grandagarður 2 <b>B2</b> Open daily 10-18
	<b>Sigurjón Ólafsson</b> Museum Leugarnestangi 70 <b>F3</b> Open Tu-Sun 14-17
	<b>SÍM</b> Hafnarstræti 16 <b>D3</b> Open Mon-Fri 10-16
	<b>Tveir Hrafnar</b> Baldursgata 12 <b>G4</b> Open Fri-Sat 13-16
	<b>Wind &amp; Weather</b> Window Gallery Hverfisgata 37 <b>E5</b>

## 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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# 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. Grillmarkaðurinn

Lækjargata 2a

The tasting menus with produce sourced from local purveyors have been a hit with diners since Grill Market opened its doors. We suggest choosing one of the set menus and letting the chefs go to town.

### 2. Hamborgarabúllan

Geirsgata 1

Hamborgarabúllan Tómasar is beloved among Icelanders for slinging honest, sweaty burgers to the masses. Would you not want to indulge in the meat options, try their chickpea-and-barley-based patties, which boast a texture that's very sumptuous. We approve!

### 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. Reykjavík Roasters

Kárastigur 1

With an in-house roaster, a shiny, handmade Synesso and a regularly trained staff, this place serves the best coffee in town. Drop by for some 24-hour-brewed Peruvian cold brew and a fragrant cinnamon scone; then pick your favourite record and people-watch in this fast-paced environment.

### 5. Sandholt

Laugavegur 36

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

### 6. Matur og Drykkur

Grandagarður 2

In how many ways can we say, "eat here"? Is it the whole cod head you

should get, or perhaps the double-smoked dried lamb, or the creamy halibut soup? Whatever you get, rest assured it'll have roots in Icelandic culinary history, elevated to fine dining standards. And do not leave without trying the fried-to-order kleinur.

### 7. Systir

Hverfisgata 12

This sibling restaurant for the Michelin-starred Dill serves up á la carte dishes in the new Nordic style, a specially curated natural wine list, and some excellent cocktails all for a great price. Pick up a five course tasting menu for 5,990 ISK.

### 8. Taqueria la Poblana

Hlemmur Mathöll

Taqueria la Poblana serves "authentic Mexican tacos and other delicious fare from the region." Pick up soft homemade corn tortillas, fresh chili sauces, and a michelada crowned with spices to wash it down."

### 9. Messinn

Lækjargata 6b

Messinn is modelled on the well-known Westfjords restaurant Tjoruhusið. What keeps us coming back is how the food keeps getting better every time we dine there. Our favourites include their savoury plockfiskur, velvety graflax, and a perfectly seared trout with honey and almonds.

### 10. Mandi

Veltusund 3b

Here you'll find the perfect lunch for a sunny day, the perfect meal after a night out and the best bite for your hangover. Whatever it is you crave, the friendly staff of Mandi understands. No fries in town rival Mandi's, seasoned with chilli and garlic sauce. They also prepare the freshest hummus and tastiest shawarmas—just remember to ask for extra spice. They'll know what you mean.

## Drinking

### 11. Kex Hostel

Skúlagata 28

Despite being a hostel bar, KEX Hostel kind of transcend that description, with an amazing sea view over Faxaflói and Mount Esja, beautiful décor and a large wraparound bar. It's especially fun if they've got a live show booked, with the bonus

of great food and a good beer selection.

### 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. Húrra

Tryggvagata 22

Húrra has been a stalwart in the bar scene for quite some time, and with a good cause. It's a great place to go anytime and for almost any reason—early weeknight drinks with work mates, late weekend nights on your own, dancing with your friends, or catching a quality gig.

### 16. Miami

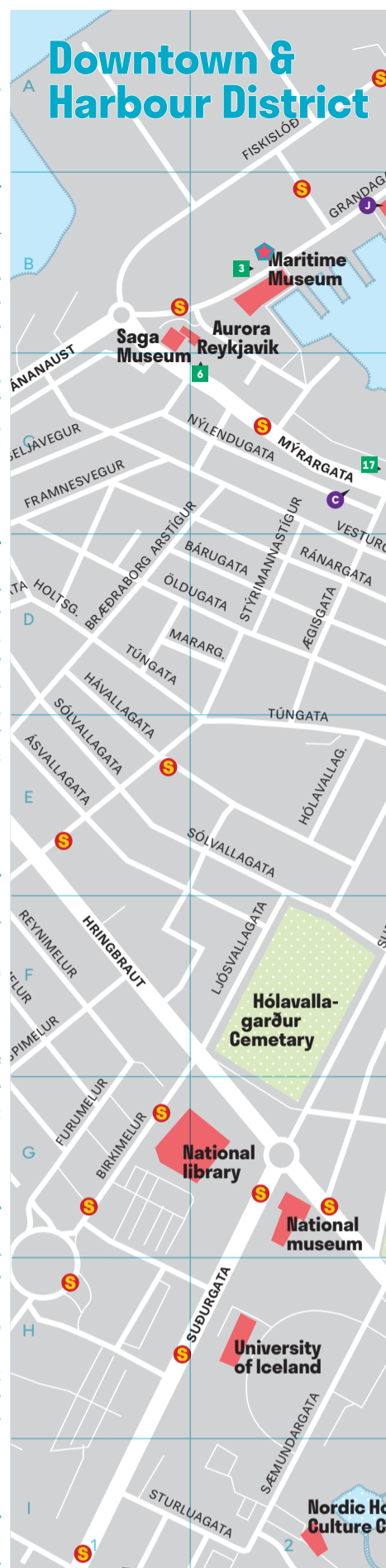
Hverfisgata 33

Reykjavík's new out-and-proud theme bar takes on the Magic City of the '80s. With a sharp aesthetic, Miami serves up pure vice with a splash of cosmopolitanism and a dedicated ping-pong room in the basement. It's pricey, but it has a good happy hour, the cocktail menu was crafted by mixology veterans, and the wine and champagne list is well-curated.

### 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. Bastard Brew & Food

Vegamótastígur 4

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. KronKron

Laugavegur 63b

If it's cutting-edge, international designers you are in the market for, then this store will not disappoint. Fully stocked in the chicest young



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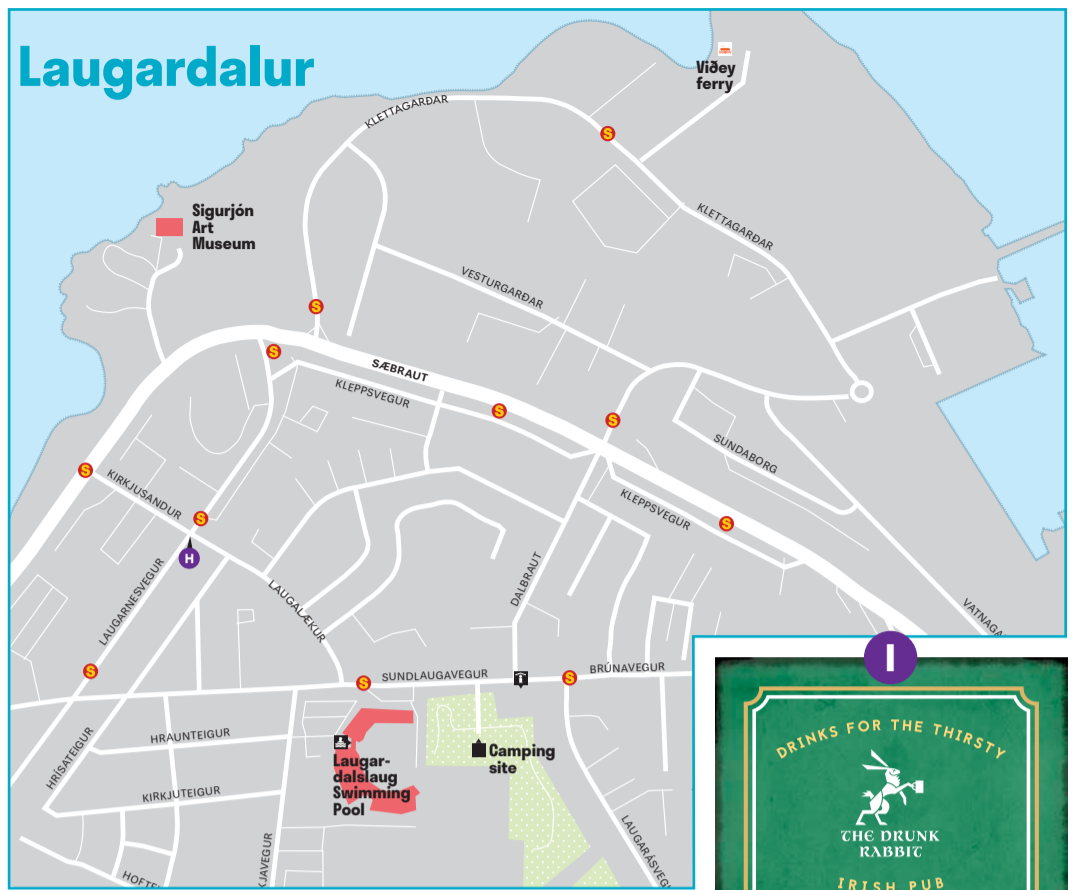
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### New In Town



### Luna Flórens

Cocoo's Nest, Grandagarður 23

Tapping into the interests of the owner Íris, Luna Flórens is Iceland's only "gypsy bar." Part flower-child, part spiritual and with a whole lot of whimsy thrown into the mix, this cosy and hand-crafted bar is so intimate it makes you wanna spend the day musing about geodes, slow smoothies, lunar cycles and tarot card readings. You can do all this and more while sipping on some excellent pressed pomegranate juice, trying the house cocktails, or participating in one of the many regular pop-up events. **SB**

names and one-of-a-kind local designs too, it's a dream come true

### 20. Fischer

Fischersund

More art installation than regular store, the "Sigur Rós shop" is an aesthetic environment with a soothing soundtrack, sweet scents floating in the air, and a natural, earthy colour palette. They sell a range of amazing things, from hand-picked herbal tea, to artworks, records, and custom herbal scents.

### 21. Bókin

Klapparstígur 25-27

Bókin is the kind of place you'd imagine an eccentric genius spends

his afternoons. They have a great selection of used books and rare Icelandic publications. It's the best place for a treasure hunt or simply to get lost in a quiet, dusty maze.

### 22. 12 Tónar

Skólavörðustígur 15

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

### 23. Farmers And Friends

Hólmaslóð 2 & Laugavegur 37

If you want to pick up an Icelandic

sweater, peruse the Farmers Market outlet. Their wares combine Nordic style with a fresh aesthetic, providing you with a modern take on traditional pieces.

### 24. 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. Yeoman Boutique

Skólavörðustígur 22b

Fashion designer Hildur Yeoman's

boutique is a must-see. As well as her own womenswear—characterised by flowing shapes made with colourful, busy prints—the store features work by an assortment of Hildur's fellow designers, as well as shoes, jewellery, French tea and other trinkets.

### 26. Rauðhetta & Úlfurinn

Skólavörðustígur 8

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

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“There’s a light at the end of the tunnel and it is a house in Florida.”

If it looks like a celeb and quacks like a celeb...

TRACK BY TRACK

# ‘Celebs’ By Axis Dancehall

Words: Axis Dancehall & Hannah Jane Cohen  
Photo: Patrik Ontkovic

Imagine blasting an old school video game soundtrack in a dirty Berlin basement while having a realisation of your own mortality. Welcome to the genre bending ‘Celebs’ by Axis Dancehall, explained here in full by the band.

AXCELLENT

Isolation! Downtown swallowing you whole. The moment rises while the bass drum beats you to a pulp. Synths autotune and devolve. Kristbjörg, the voice of anxiety, looms over everything. Fun for the whole family.

ORIGINALS

WE IS THE ORIGINALS! RUN THE TRACK!

FINISH LINE

There’s so much negativity today. Sometimes we need a pat on the back because we are but frail human beings. This song is about encouraging yourself and others to be better. It’s a bright future! We have light bulbs, the internet and Javascript. Everything is possible.

GAMECHANGER

Break out of the everyday loop with some inspiring words by the best preacher! We are constantly trying to change the game, the channel, frantically switching YouTube videos, unable to control the ADD tearing us

apart. Maybe it’s time to dance and shout?

SPITT

Moments of aggression come at the weirdest points. Where does the need for loving to hate and hating to love come from? Are we incapable of finding the right people to spend our valuable time with or are we just bored?

TIME OF MY LIFE

This is the time of my life! I am the King of this world with my beautiful queen and she’d never leave me. And if she did, I’d just get a new one. I have been blessed by Dionysus and Narcissus! This world is mine!! I just hope I feel the same when I wake up tomorrow.

KYRIE ELEISON

Lord, have mercy upon us. For we do not know what we do... aside from when we know, then help us say ‘no.’ Even though we can go online and research what would be the ideal, we still don’t want to because it’s just too much. We only have so much passion in us and I need that for the next big news or football match.

BLESS 17

An ode to youth, life and death. From sweet sixteen to sour seventeen to

all of a sudden umami eighteen, one birthday can change everything. Endless socially-accepted pressure is put on your fresh shoulders. Work, career, family, vacation, family vacation, golf fishing, artisan beer—being in is suddenly everything you ever wanted.

CHER

Angst! Angst about being loved, loving, not having that Mai Thai on that beach you saw on Instagram, not realising that love comes from within, but rather focusing on the eternal question: “Do you believe in life after love?”

LEGAL TONIC

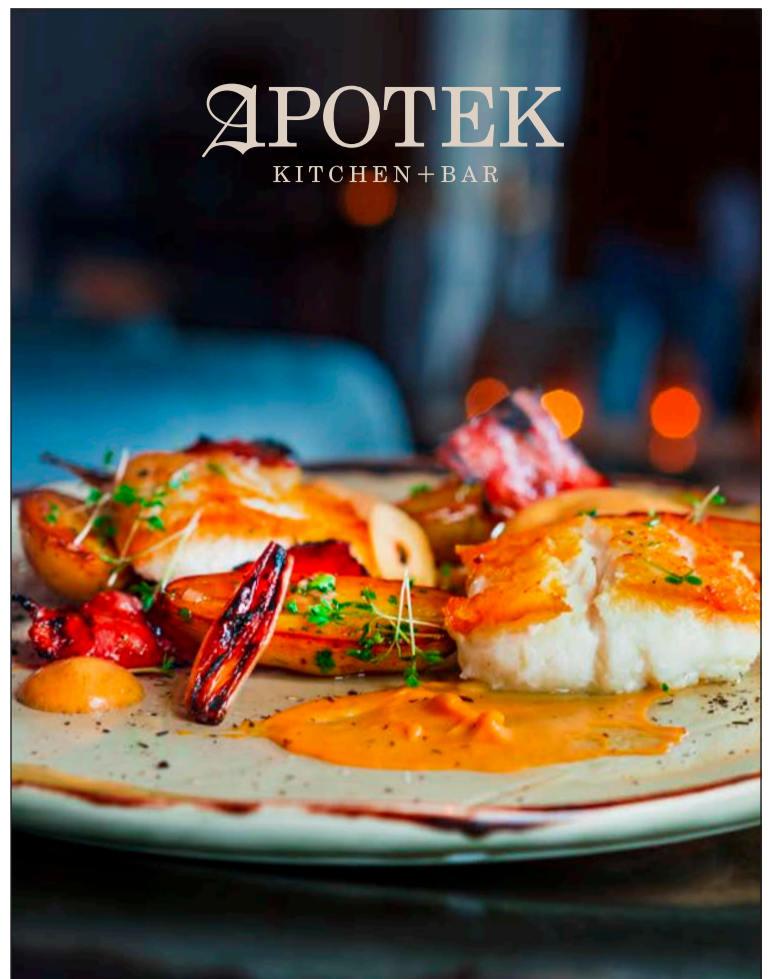
The war on drugs has officially been won! We are safe, free from college drug lords making an extra buck killing our innocents. We can finally throw away the prescription medicines soothing our nerves, but it’s best to keep them in case those big-hooded gangsters escape prison. I’m so glad I’m not imprisoned. I can make my own choices. Poca Pola or Gepsi?

SRY

What makes a good night out? You already know all the people and you aren’t wearing the right clothes, but goddamnit, you just wanted to dance. All of a sudden, everybody forgets their burdens as the freshest tune ever is played by Deed Jay. It’s so good the bouncers start dancing.

DANCE WITH ME

We take the chance of dying to live our lives to the fullest. But there’s a light at the end of the tunnel and it is a house in Florida. 🇺🇸



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# Music



The neighbour of your dreams

## Happily Under The Radar

Do I listen to ILO, or don't I?

Words: Árni Kristjánsson Photos: Siyao Li

### Album

ILO's "ILO Sessions" is out now on double-LP on Headphoniq Records

The most unrecognised and underappreciated Icelandic album of last year happened by design. ILO, a mysterious figure on Iceland's ever-expanding deep house scene, put out a belter of an LP, to absolutely no fanfare. But, as it happens, that's just the way he likes it.

A graphic designer by trade, ILO (real name Óli Breiðfjörð) keeps his musical ventures at arm's length from his nine-to-five in his current hometown of Glasgow. "Music is just me thinking about me," he explains. "The album is an extension of that mindset—and part of that is not doing any promotion. It just exists."

### Cascading delays

His near-Buddhist approach to promotion is reflected in the album's cover art—a plain white cover with a tiny sticker indicating the album title, with absolutely no other information on what it contains. In stark contrast to the austere visuals, the music is lush and filled with personality and nuance. ILO revels in delicately mixing disparate elements. The undulating filter work and cascading delays are the building blocks of his deep house excursions, some of which run up to 18 minutes long. He also has a knack for taking complete left turns when you'd least expect it.

ILO started out at the cross-section of graffiti and music, making a well-liked but overlooked trip hop album on local Thule Records in 2000. The same year, his first house music outing appeared, a samba inspired EP including "Poble Sec," an all-time Icelandic house classic.

[gpv.is/music](http://gpv.is/music)  
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### Tidal wave

His current success began with an unofficial remix of New Musik's synth-pop anthem "Warp". With the help of local legend Maggi Lego and Chicago house music don Jordan Fields, the white-label release made it to the record bags of many of the world's top DJs.

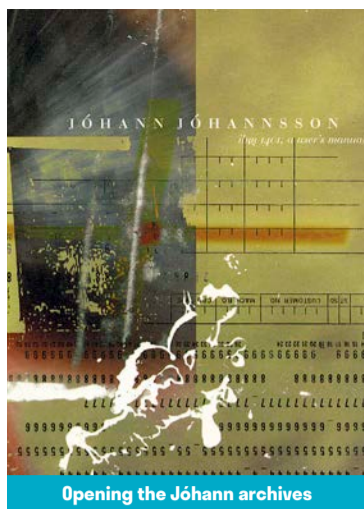
After getting word that bass music aficionado Martyn was playing the track at peak times of his set, he knew something was up—the track had struck a chord with the underground. "Suddenly I was hit by a tidal wave of messages from labels," he explains. One of those messages led to his releases on Re-birth Records.

### No demons

A chance reencounter on Facebook with Jordan Fields would then result in the release of "ILO Sessions," his mostly overlooked but brilliant 2018 long-player. The influences behind the album were varied. "I was into hardcore as well as techno and house at the time, while also making my edits of other people's work," says Óli.

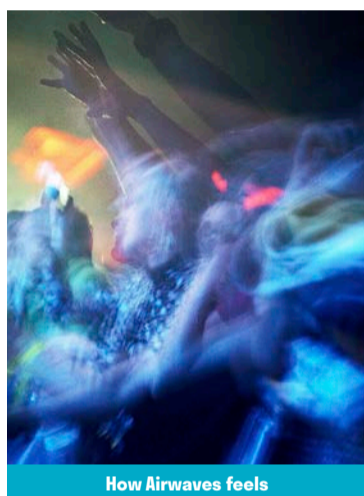
The tracks "No Demons" and "Do This Right" were made in conjunction with his Polish neighbour in Glasgow, after a chance encounter over a noise complaint. "I was tuning a bass drum sound and he came over almost shaking he was so angry," says Óli. Once they started talking, they hit it off, and their combined efforts represent some of the best points on the album.

While he has no plans to release the album digitally, or even press more records, he does encourage Grapevine readers to seek him out when he's in Iceland or Glasgow, playing his music to unsuspecting crowds. 🍻



Opening the Jóhann archives

**MUSIC NEWS** German label Deutsche Grammophon are set to celebrate the life and work of the late **Jóhann Jóhannsson** with a two-volume retrospective of his most important works. 'RETROSPECTIVE' will be issued on April 26th as a hardback book, including seven albums of his early work, and the unreleased soundtrack for 'White Black Boy.' A second part of this retrospective is also in the works as the archive is... unarchived.



How Airwaves feels

**Iceland Airwaves 2019** is go! After a successful 2018 edition under new ownership, Iceland's best festival have announced the first wave of acts for 2019. The biggest name is lo-fi indie eccentric and music media darling **Mac DeMarco**—expect pint-in-hand crowdsurfing from Le Big Mac. The other international names announced are **Whitney, Shame, Anna of the North, Boy Azooga, Georgia, Alexandra Stréliski, The Howl & The Hum, Sons, Murkage Dave, Amanda Tenfjord, Pavla** and **The Garrys**. So, we have some research to do. A host of top Icelandic names were also added; tickets are on sale now.



Jónsi, shredding

**Jónsi and Alex Somers** will perform their collaborative album 'Riceboy Sleeps' with the London Contemporary Orchestra on June 8th at London's Barbican Hall. It's the first time the album, which turns ten this year, will be performed in its entirety. The album has proven to be a sleeper hit, with some of the tracks making their way into popular Spotify playlists. Tickets are on sale now. Jónsi also staged another edition of the 'Liminal Soundbath' recently at the Los Angeles art museum. A collaboration with Alex Somers and **Paul Corley**, the event was a hit with the West Coast hippy crowd—so much so, that the trio created a Spotify playlist so you can try it out a sound bath at home. JR

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## Music



It's hot in Atlantis. And on stage at Húrra

## Reality Is All You Want It To B

Dj. flugvél og geimskip talks "Our Atlantis," her video game and the creation of the universe

Words: **Phil Uwe Widiger** Photos: **Patrik Ontkovic**

### Album

'Our Atlantis' is out now. Order a copy at [geertruida.net](http://geertruida.net).

Once upon a time, long before anything existed, there were ancient creatures telling stories. These stories came in the form of songs and those songs emitted vibrations—the soundwaves that created the universe.

Don't believe it? Go into a silent room, take a breath and sing a melody. There's something there that wasn't there before, right?

Welcome to dj. flugvél og geimskip's theory of the universe.

### Just let go

The origin of this theory lies in the concept behind the song "Let Go!" from dj. flugvél og geimskip's new album "Our Atlantis." While her previous album was made for the purpose of getting other musicians to take her seriously, 'Our Atlantis' was created without any such aims.

"It's just something I like," says Steinunn Eldflaug Harðardóttir, the person behind the project. "It's nothing too serious."

### Everything is nonsense

However, as it turns out, the idea behind the album is actually as serious as it gets. 'Our Atlantis'

addresses a weighty matter—the age-old existential question of why anything exists at all.

"I am always looking for what I should be doing in life," says Steinunn. "What kind of music should I make? Should I be travelling on airplanes? Or should I maybe just die? It didn't matter who I asked, nobody could tell me anything. So, I thought I might as well just



make up my own reasons for things. While I am on this planet, I just want to have fun and enjoy it."

The title of the album refers to this exact philosophy. Some say the story of Atlantis—a utopian civilization created by god-like humans—is nothing but a legend or a hoax. Others say it actually existed, complete with spaceships and portals to other dimensions.

In the end, Steinunn posits, the questions become irrelevant, and

the only thing that matters is what you choose to believe. "Everything is nonsense," she says. "Nothing really exists. It's all in your mind."

### A whole new world

The first single from the album, "The Sphinx," was accompanied by the release of a videogame. In the game world, you can walk around a psychedelic and chaotic environment created by Steinunn, gathering loops that make up the song. You'll also encounter the animals that appear on the album. It's an effective combination of Steinunn's visual work, music and creative imagination.

But it doesn't stop there. For her next single, Steinunn created a whole 3D world to use as the video, and flew a camera around inside it. Both the game and this 3D world are now available to experience on dj. flugvél og geimskip's website.

### Lightning strikes

In January, back in the real world, dj. flugvél og geimskip went on tour with veteran noise-rock band Lightning Bolt. She has little in common with them, other than the fact that both have released a video game. The collaboration came into existence through a mutual friend, and the two acts met the first time on tour.

"I was a little worried because they play such heavy music, and I was supposed to open for them," recounts Steinunn. "But in the end, it all worked out really well. We feel like one big family now and we all wanted to continue touring and playing together."

If nothing else, this is further proof of the immense charm of dj. flugvél og geimskip's otherworldly music. 🌩️

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Your future bosses

## Taking Care Of BUSINESS

CYBER go to work

Words: Rex Beckett Photo: Callie Lugosi

### Album

'BIZNESS' is out now. Find upcoming events at [facebook.com/cyberiscrap](https://facebook.com/cyberiscrap)

CYBER are too busy to meet for an interview. Since beginning as a spin-off of the buzzworthy rap group Reykjavíkudætur, in their current incarnation they're so busy they hardly even have time to perform.

Now a high-flying sensation in their own right, CYBER have proven to be chameleons, transforming themselves on a regular basis to fit the dynamic of their current mode or mood. From presenting as goth-horror spectres in all-black clothing and leather, the multitasking trio of Jóhanna Rakel, Salka Valsdóttir and Þóra Stína have shifted to wearing stylish pantsuits for their office-based concept album 'BIZNESS,' released quite suddenly last November.

The album was produced entirely by Salka, and puts the trio's hard-working attitude at the forefront. It is also, incidentally, the first Icelandic hip-hop album to be entirely produced by a woman.

### Utopian office

The concept of 'BIZNESS' started from a place of inner determination for the band to become more business-oriented in order to succeed. "We were broke," says Salka, the only member with a gap in her iCal for a Skype interview. "We had a goal that this year we would actually create a company and have our shit together."

The three musicians have different approaches to handling business. "Þóra can handle her shit—she manages to get things done," says Salka. "But me and Jóhanna are terrible business women. We're very all over the place and very anxious people. So it's more like a dream for us."

### Wealthy, powerful, lost

Salka describes the 'BIZNESS' concept as a sort of utopian office through which CYBER explored their shared fascination with the business world. The idea also had roots in the band's day-to-day reality of trying to find ways to generate a solid income, which then spilled over into their aesthetic.

"Some of the clothes we've been

wearing have been like a rich girl whose father owns a really big company or something," says Salka. "Some of it is more like attire for the office party. What we have in mind is to seem sort of wealthy or powerful, but at the same time kind of lost. We think a lot about what we're wearing, how it affects the way we perform, and how it all works together. It makes the visual world around the content we're making feel more whole."

### Recording printers

This advanced approach is also woven into the album's soundscape and lyrical content. 'BIZNESS' describes a day in an office, from morning until just before quitting time, when one woman finally breaks the glass ceiling and takes her rightful place as the boss.

Salka recorded most of it in her home, using common objects from office life. "A lot of the sounds were produced from office supplies," she says. "Many of the samples and beats came from printers, pens, staplers, the copy machine, and stuff like that," she says. "I made them into drum sounds, or used them to compliment the groove or add to the beats. A lot of it was me recording printers in my house. It's very funny."

The result is a sharp, witty and well-observed work that cements CYBER's place as fast-rising future CEOs of the Reykjavík hip hop scene." 🍷

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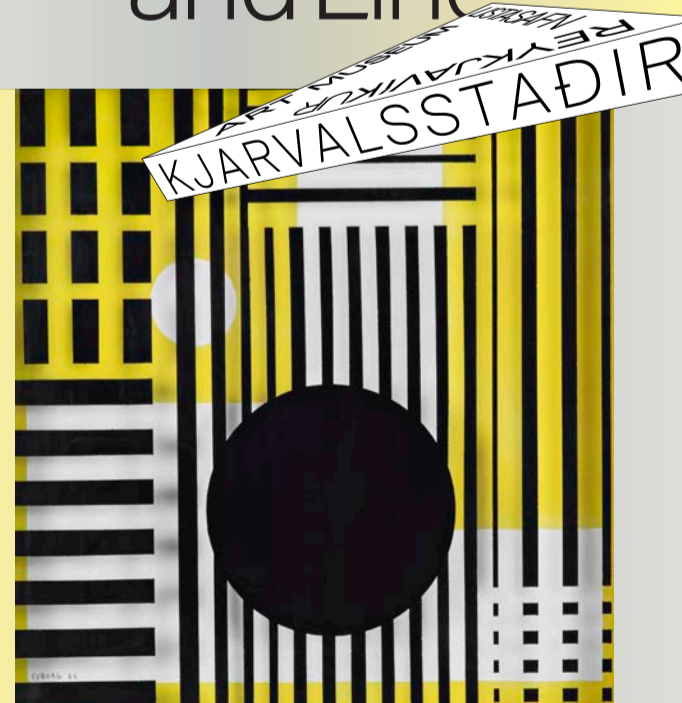
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Kathy, communing with the goddesses

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**Return To  
The Primal**Kathy Clark on finding the  
ancient feminine divineWords: **Rex Beckett** Photo: **Art Bicnick****Dance**Kathy Clark's "**& Again It Descends  
To The Earth**" opens on March 2nd at  
Studio SólEntering Kathy Clark's studio is like going into a little magical world. The modest sized space located behind the Wind & Weather Gallery is adorned with hanging objects, large sculptural works and installation pieces. At the far end is a large table covered in several wax-on-paper paintings currently being prepared for her upcoming exhibition "**& Again It Descends To The Earth**." The American-born artist is coming down to the wire as we meet to discuss her work.**Higher power**

"I'm getting my inspiration going way back in time to the primal ancient times of almost the late Neolithic period, just when civilisation is becoming agrarian and settling," she says. "My inspiration is these people and their closeness to nature. They're questioning all these natural phenomena that are happening around them and they feel there is some higher power, you

know, through the earthquakes and the rainbows and those kinds of things." This inspiration is a call to the viewer to return to a primal state, stripping down the burdens of everyday life and finding a connection to a higher state.

**Goddesses and  
deities**

The source of her inspiration also centres greatly around the feminine divine that was prevalent during this period of history. "I find it really interesting to go back and revisit this time where they created the female goddess and the deities and the myths and stories around that and the power that the feminine, female, is the creator of life, the giver," she says. "The strength, the power, that has been taken away from the female all through history, and we're still struggling to this day to bring that back."

The exhibition, set on two floors, will consist of many elements to create this experience, in

which Kathy hopes to engulf the viewer. "Maybe it'll spark something inside of them that questions their existence or something that's significant to them that brings out some emotion," she says.

**Fertility and creation**

Representing the idea of the feminine is a collection of mound formations symbolising fertility, breasts and creation, adorned with sculptures of female deities. The series of wax-on-paper paintings will introduce the ideas of lower, middle and higher ground that were of essence in that period.

A massive collection of hieroglyphic, spell-like symbols will methodically adorn the walls to create a visual mantra. The pieces are entirely black and white, creating a stark, stripped down effect. "It's like a subterranean world," she says. "It will maybe make more of a dream-like quality to it."

**Creatures and spirits**

Ultimately, Kathy's goal is to draw people towards a state of consciousness of connecting to parts of nature that we have lost touch with through modern living. "We are energy and everything around us, all living things, is energy," she says. "I feel like there's this

strong connection to nature and that's basically my work in general. I'm trying to grow into other worlds with my creatures and spirits, and telling different stories that connect us." ♡

**"We are energy  
and everything  
around us, all  
living things, is  
energy."**

## Our Picks



**The Power Of Monstage: Reborn**

★ **Physical Cinema Festival**

Until March 10th - Bió Paradís

Every other year, Bió Paradís plays host to the Physical Cinema Festival, which for this iteration is running in conjunction with the Stockfish Film Festival. Think of it as a big salad bowl where art, sound, cinema and special effects are mixed together. There will be short films, there will be documentaries, and even video installations. Get ready to be thrilled, appalled, moved and heart-broken all at once. The festival will feature films with tragic storylines and joyful endings, or vice versa, depending on how you see the world. If you want to try your film critic skills, this is the festival for you. **AU**



★ **TENGING**

Until March 10th - RAMSKRAM

Tening means 'connection,' and here, María Kjartans presents a haunting series of photographs

that dive deep into the evolving relationship between human beings and their environment. How can we heal this spiritual connection? **HJC**



★ **BEIRÚT, BEYRUT, BEYROUTH, BEYROUT**

Until March 31st - Listasafn Íslands

Beirut, has become a fashionable locale within the art world. This exhibition highlights the

socio-politically complex society, whose unstable political situation has had a lasting effect on the creativity, words and dreams of its inhabitants. **HJC**



★ **Trophy: Flétta Design Studio**

Until March 28th - Ásmundarsalur

Flétta takes over to deconstruct trophies—objects representing the pin-

nacle of human achievements. The workshop will be open until the beginning of DesignMarch, after which the results will be exhibited. **HJC**

## March 1st—March 21st

# 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

**REYKJAVÍK ART MUSEUM - HAFNARHÚS D36 Steinunn Önnudóttir**

Steinunn explores the materiality of paintings in her works. The D-Series exhibits up-and-coming artists, of which Steinunn is the 36th. • Opens on March 14th, 2019 • Runs until April 28th, 2019

**HAFNARBORG**

**Reservation**

Here, rural, urban, and cultural areas are connected in an attempt to forge new relationships between environments—all through mixed-media art, of course. The exhibit is presented as part of Design March. • Opens on March 6th, 2019 • Runs until May 19th, 2019

**GALLERÍ FOLD**

**Reservation**

Porri Hringsson has been painting the nature of Aðaldalur for more than two decades. His canvases combine water, earth, and light in a gorgeous and visceral melange of texture and feeling. • Opens on March 2nd, 2019 • Runs until March 16th, 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

**Violin Power I**

Steina is one of the pioneers of multimedia and video art, having experimented with electronic sound, stroboscopic light, and video in the late '60s. Here, come see her first autonomous work 'Violin Power I'. • Runs until May 1st, 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 April 30th, 2019

**MUSEUM OF DESIGN AND APPLIED ART 100years100items**

To celebrate 100 years of independence, 100 pictures in 100 days from the museums collection will be posted by the museum on Instagram. Follow them: @honnunarsafn • Runs until March 10th, 2019

**AND ANTIMATTER**

AND ANTIMATTER is a creative studio founded by Pórey Björk Halldórsdóttir & Baldur Björnsson. They've set up a live workspace in the museum to explore the in-between of design and art, objects and experiences. • Runs until March 17th, 2019

**ÁRBÆR OPEN AIR MUSEUM**

**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: Under the Same Sky - Art In Public Space** Ásmundarsafn is named after sculptor Ásmundur Sveinsson. This new permanent exhibition presents the artist in a new light. What dialogue does his works provoke? • Runs until December 31st, 2019

**Sigurður Guðmundsson:**

**Intimacy & Sculpture**

Using various mediums, from photos to performance, conceptual artist Sigurður Guðmundsson presents an exhibit where, as he says, there are no ideas behind the works. • Runs until March 31st, 2019

**REYKJAVÍK MUSEUM OF PHOTOGRAPHY**

**...now**

Páll Stefánsson has spent 37 years as a traveller and photographer. Here, he captures the silence of the present. From refugees to endless glaciers to random strangers, he explores everything from discrimination to the inevitability of nature in a momentary glance.

• Runs until April 12th, 2019

**Primary Colors**

Every week, idiotic tourists get themselves in stupid situations only to be heroically rescued by the Icelandic Association for Search and Rescue. In this exhibit, photographer Catherine Canac-Marquis captures their daring fearlessness. Bravo. • Runs until April 8th, 2019

**NATIONAL MUSEUM OF ICELAND**

**Discovering Iceland's Monastaries**

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

**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 25th, 2019

**Anna Guðjónsdóttir: Pars Pro Toto**

Here, Anna Guðjónsdóttir questions the boundary between the original and the copy. Two-dimensional painted surfaces and three-dimensional real spaces collide. • Runs until May 19th, 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 28th, 2019

**Eyborg Guðmundsdóttir:**

**Circle, Square and Line**

In this retrospective, experience the

abstract geometric art of Eyborg Guðmundsdóttir. Called Op-Art, Eyborg's paintings are based on the primary qualities of art—shapes. • Runs until April 28th, 2019

**I8**

**Figures In Landscape**

Ragnar Kjartansson's newest exhibit functions as a timepiece: seven distinct 24 hour scenes play simultaneously and repeat continuously. The sets are archetypal landscapes: a forest, a desert, a jungle and more. • Runs until March 16th, 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 9th, 2019

**HAFNARBORG**

**Upheaval**

Marta María's works are abstract, crossing the boundaries between drawing and painting, where the imagery is poetic and open. They portray a mysterious world on the edge of recognition. • Runs until March 17th, 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

**WIND AND WEATHER WINDOW GALLERY**

**MYTHISTORIA -Chapter III -**

**The Great Whale**

Mythistoria, in Latin, means a fabulous narrative and tall tale. Artist Tanja Thorjussen takes this and

combines it with underwater sea creatures, forming, well, a whale of a work of cut-out drawings and ink. • Runs until April 28th, 2019

**GAUKURINN**

**Alma + Júnía**

Júnía Líf Mariuéría Sigurjónsdóttir and Alma Líf Þorsteinsdóttir have long been the de facto photographers of the Icelandic metal scene. Now, they've curated their selection down to the best of the best at this special photo exhibition. • Runs until March 23rd, 2019

**HARBINGER**

**No Happy Nonsense**

In this new exhibit, artists Anna Hrun and Helen Svava work with mundane materials, which they dissect, dismantle, and rearrange, ultimately forming new, exotic hybrids. • Runs until March 9th 2019

**STUDIO SOL**

**& Again It Descends To The Earth**

Kathy Clark's multi-media installation dives deep into the divine connection of the female form and human's existence in a cosmic void. Bow down. • Runs until April 13th, 2019

**GERÐARSAFN KÓPAVOGUR ART MUSEUM**

**OH SO QUIET!**

A number of international and Icelandic artists present a tête-à-tête on the parallel histories of modern art, contemporary art, and cinema, all within the context of music—or, more specifically, noise. Within the spacious rooms of Gerðarsafn, they've created complex sound installations that'll lure you into abstract tonal worlds. • Runs until March 31st, 2019

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## What's happening at Hard Rock in March?

Föstudagslögin - 1. March

Sólstafrir - 2. March

Meistari Jakob - 9. March

Styktartónleikar samtakanna 78 - 10. March

Gréta Salome - 16. March

Danssveit Hermanns - 22. March

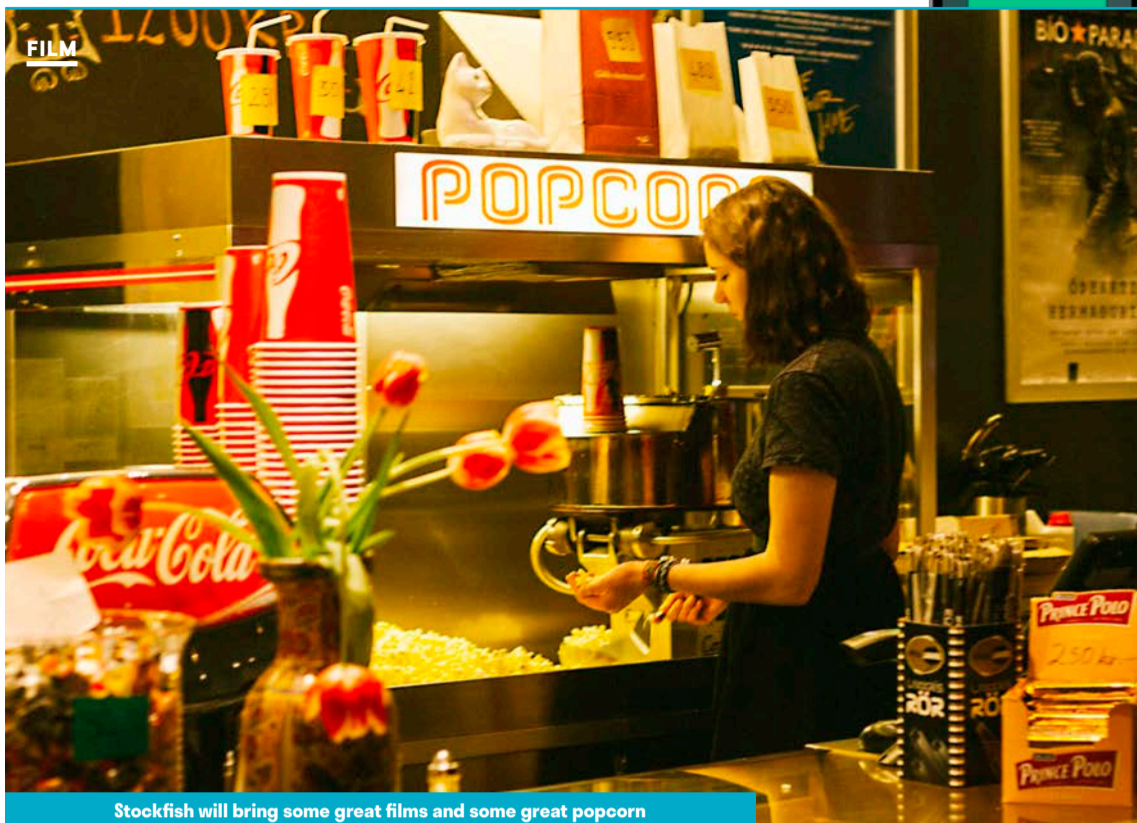
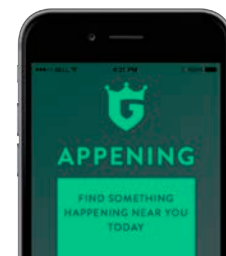
The Swamp Shakers - 29. March

Prins Póló - 30. March



# Film

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Stockfish will bring some great films and some great popcorn

## Crème De La Crème

Stockfish Film Festival brings the best of the festival circuit to Iceland

Words: Hannah Jane Cohen Photos: Provided by Stockfish

### Festival

Stockfish runs from March 1st-11th at Bíó Paradís. Single films are 1,500 ISK; a four-film pass is 4,800 ISK; a full festival pass is 10,900 ISK.

"We try to be as diverse as possible and pick the best films available," Ársæll Sigurður Nielsen explains calmly. The actor and producer is the guest coordinator of this year's Stockfish Film Festival which seeks to bring together the standouts of last year's festival circuit. This year, the festival will present 25 films from France to Taiwan, and everything from documentary workshops to Q&As with award-winning directors.

### Connections and beginnings

While this is only the fifth iteration of Stockfish, the festival is based off the first Icelandic film festival—called Kvikmyndahátíð í Reykjavík—which ran until the early 1990s. "Friðrik Dór Friðriksson, who was the founder of Kvikmyndahátíð í Reykjavík, is on the board of Stockfish," says Ársæll, with a grin. Though the festivals are separated by more than a decade, he explains, the two are still intimately connected.

While the format of Stockfish hasn't changed drastically since its rebirth in 2015, last year the organisers added a new panel to the programme called the Nordic Female Filmmakers Meeting Point. "This will now be an annu-

al thing, and we're really excited about that," emphasises Ársæll.

The panel brings together female filmmakers from all Nordic countries to explore pertinent issues in their field. This year's discussion will be focused around gender equality issues in the Nordic filmmaking industry as well as the general topic of #MeToo. The

so we've got five more minutes of gruesome footage," says Ársæll, with a laugh. "It's currently the highest selling film at Stockfish."

Other than this controversial pick, Ársæll recommends Luis Ortega's 'El Angel', which documents the life of Argentine serial killer Carlitos Robledo Puch, and Ciro Guerra and Cristina Gallego's 'Birds Of Passage', a Columbian, Danish, and Mexico co-production detailing a Wayuu indigenous family's travails in the weed business.

### Best of the best

"There's also 'The Raft', which is very interesting," says Ársæll. The documentary, made by Marcus Lindeen, captures a scientific experiment where five women and



Discussing important film things

panel is free and takes place at Bíó Paradís on March 3rd at 18:00.

### Gruesome footage

When asked for specific festival recommendations, Ársæll falls silent. With 25 films on the menu—plus a short film competition—it's clearly hard for the coordinator to cherry-pick individual flicks. That said, Lars Von Trier's notorious 'The House That Jack Built' is a clear standout. "We are actually screening the uncut director's cut,

men journeyed across the Atlantic by raft. "People started to show their true colours and there were a love of love/hate relationships," he explains with a grin.

But, as Ársæll emphasises time and time again, each film selected represents the best of last year's circuit and was hand-picked by Stockfish's guild due to its excellence. "Ten films have a representative coming for a panel or Q&A, which is a record," he says. "We have an Oscar nomination, a Golden Bear winner, a Goya award nominee, and more. These are really the best films available." 🍿

"We are screening the director's cut of 'The House That Jack Built', so we've got five more minutes of gruesome footage."

## Various Events



Fix your life and your hairdryer at Reykjavík Tool Library's monthly café party

### Friday March 1st

- ★ **STOCKFISH FILM FESTIVAL** ★  
**2 1/2 Brits: Comedy Night**  
20:00 Kaffi Laugalækur
- Dragaoke: Drag Karaoke**  
20:00 Loft
- ★ **Physical Cinema Festival**  
18:00 Bió Paradís
- Carnevale In Reykjavik: Venetian Masquerade**  
20:00 Iðnó
- Icelandic Beer Day**  
18:00 Húrra

### Saturday March 2nd

- ★ **STOCKFISH FILM FESTIVAL** ★  
**Northern Laughs: Comedy Show**  
20:30 The Secret Celler
- How To Become Icelandic In 60 Minutes**  
19:00 Harpa
- Harpa Guided Tour**  
13:00 Harpa
- Family Video Art Workshop**  
13:00 Gerðarsafn
- Clothing Market**  
14:00 Loft
- ★ **Physical Cinema Festival**  
18:00 Bió Paradís

### Sunday March 3rd

- ★ **STOCKFISH FILM FESTIVAL** ★  
**Guided Tour In English**  
11:00 National Museum Of Iceland
- Icelandic Sagas: The Greatest Hits**  
19:30 Harpa
- Gloria Hole: Think You've Got Talent?**  
21:00 Kiki Queer Bar
- Party Bingo With Sigga Kling**  
21:00 Sæta Svinið
- Harpa Guided Tour**  
13:00 Harpa
- Donation-Based Yoga Class**  
12:00 Loft
- Creative Reading Night**  
20:30 Loft
- Monthly Repair Café**  
13:00 Reykjavík Tool Library
- ★ **Physical Cinema Festival**  
18:00 Bió Paradís

### Monday March 4th

- ★ **STOCKFISH FILM FESTIVAL** ★  
**Stand-Up Comedy (in English!)**  
21:00 Gaukurinn
- Miami Open Ping Pong Tournament**  
20:00 Miami
- Eye Contact Experiment**  
19:00 Loft
- ★ **Physical Cinema Festival**  
18:00 Bió Paradís

### Tuesday March 5th

- 19:00 Harpa
- Northern Laughs: Comedy Show**
- 20:30 The Secret Celler
- Harpa Guided Tour**  
13:00, 16:00 Harpa
- Pink Party #10: Masquerade Ball Hosted By Detox!**  
22:30 Pink Iceland
- ★ **Physical Cinema Festival**  
18:00 Bió Paradís

### Sunday March 10th

- ★ **STOCKFISH FILM FESTIVAL** ★  
**Guided Tour In English**  
11:00 National Museum Of Iceland
- 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
- Harpa Guided Tour**  
13:00, 16:00 Harpa
- Donation-Based Yoga Class**  
12:00 Loft

### Monday March 11th

- Stand-Up Comedy (in English!)**  
21:00 Gaukurinn
- Miami Open Ping Pong Tournament**  
20:00 Miami
- Mindfulness Discussion**  
20:00 Loft
- Julius Caesar: National Theatre Live**  
20:00 Bió Paradís

### Tuesday March 12th

- Funniest Four: Comedy Show**  
21:00 The Secret Celler

### Wednesday March 13th

- Open Mic Stand-Up Comedy**  
21:00 The Secret Celler
- Coney Iceland: Circus Sideshow**  
20:00 Gaukurinn
- Swap A Book!**  
16:30 Loft

### Thursday March 14th

- Julius Caesar: National Theatre Live**  
20:00 Bió Paradís
- Taiwan Film Festival: Taiwanese Short Films**  
20:00 Bió Paradís

### Friday March 15th

- My Voices Have Tourettes**  
21:00 The Secret Celler
- Retrocup: Mario Kart 64 Tournament**  
21:00 Gaukurinn
- Donation-Based Yoga Class**  
12:00 Loft
- 'Plastic' Film Screening**  
20:00 Loft
- Prump i paradís: 'Road House' Screening**  
20:00 Bió Paradís

### Saturday March 16th

- Miss Gloria Hole: Drag Show**  
21:30 Kiki Queer Bar
- Taiwan Film Festival: 'Long Time No See'**  
20:00 Bió Paradís
- "Nerdlesque!": Burlesque Show**  
21:00 Gaukurinn
- Speed Dating**  
21:00 Loft

### Sunday March 17th

- How To Become Icelandic In 60 Minutes**  
19:00 Harpa
- Northern Laughs: Comedy Show**  
20:30 The Secret Celler
- Harpa Guided Tour**  
13:00, 16:00 Harpa
- Clothing Market**  
15:00 Loft

### Monday March 18th

- Guided Tour In English**  
11:00 National Museum Of Iceland
- Black Sundays: 'Amores Perros' Screening**

- 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
- Harpa Guided Tour**  
13:00, 16:00 Harpa
- HANS.mov [night]: 'Saved!' Screening**  
21:00 Gaukurinn
- Donation-Based Yoga Class**  
12:00 Loft
- Taiwan Film Festival: 'God Man Dog'**  
20:00 Bió Paradís

### Tuesday March 19th

- Stand-Up Comedy (in English!)**  
21:00 Gaukurinn
- Miami Open Ping Pong Tournament**  
20:00 Miami
- Poetry Open Mic Night**  
20:15 Stúdentakjallarinn
- Knitting Night**  
20:00 Kex Hostel

### Wednesday March 20th

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

### Thursday March 21st

- Open Mic Stand-Up Comedy**  
21:00 The Secret Celler
- BYOB: Bring Your Own Boardgame**  
21:00 Gaukurinn
- Taiwan Film Festival: 'Warrior Of The Rainbow'**  
18:00 Bió Paradís

### Friday March 22nd

- My Voices Have Tourettes**  
21:00 The Secret Celler

  
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Getting his two minutes of sunshine

"If I'd count how many pairs of Jordans I had as a kid, I'd feel sorry for my parents' bank account?"

Jordans I had as a kid, I'd feel sorry for my parents' bank account. Seriously, without sounding like a total spoiled brat, I had to have every single pair of sneakers that was released.

Michael Jordan made the impossible shots possible, so I felt like if I had Jordans on I could do anything possible, perhaps that's why the famous quote from Picasso, "everything you can imagine is real," always stuck with me and that is exactly what my career is all about today. I paint oil paintings of Icelandic landscape by memory only, without any photo references in front of me, what some would call a dream-like realism, a place you think you've seen or been to, but you can't really put a name or the exact location to it.

### Eazy-Duz-It From My Mom

Then there is the main influence to us all, music. Now, I could probably write words that would fill out an entire issue of Grapevine when it comes to music influences, but I'd rather write a few words about how I was introduced to the genre that stuck with me from the beginning: rap music. My brother and I used to ask our mom, since she was a flight attendant, if she could buy the most explicit CDs she could find in the States; and she did. I was 7 years old when I got the newly released Eazy-Duz-It from my mom.

She didn't care about the foul language, she's always been an O.G., but when my dad would come home from work and he'd hear the lyrics, he took the CDs away and threw them in the trash, but that was ok, since my mom would just go buy the exact same CDs for us on the next USA flight she had. Thanks, mom!

### Around Great Thinkers

My dad is an artist and he's always had a studio at home, so when I was younger I would watch him paint and observe every move he made. The most amazing artists and characters would come visit his studio such as his late great friend Stefán Stórval Jónsson, Thor Vilhjálmsson, Erró, Siggí Örlygs and so many great artists that would subconsciously shape and influence that young mind of mine into becoming an artist. ✨

## Parental Advisories And O.G. Mom

Elli Egilsson is a landscape artist and Jordan fanatic

Words: **Elli Egils / Valur Grettisson** Photo: **Elli Egils**

### Art

Elli Egilsson is one of Iceland's most interesting landscape artists. He is based in LA, where he lives with his wife and actress, María Birta Bjarnadóttir. You can look him up on [elliegilsson.com](http://elliegilsson.com).

Elli Egilsson is one of Iceland's most interesting landscape artist these days. He is based in Los Angeles, where he lives with his wife and actress, María Birta Bjarnadóttir. You

can look him up on [elliegilsson.com](http://elliegilsson.com).

### Bonding With Nature

Besides being inspired by other people and other people's work, such as musicians, painters, artists, filmmakers and overall good, hard working people, I truly believe that these days, the Icelandic nature and landscape is my number one go-to source for inspiration and not just for my paintings and artistry, but for someone like

myself that was born in Iceland but hasn't really lived there for the past 15 years or so. It seems that the older I get, the more I bond with the scenery and understand and respect the magnificent nature that is around us.

### Grandpa Is An Idol

When I was a youngling, I didn't have a lot of friends so I took every possible opportunity I had to get out of the city with my grandfather, Bjarni Guðjónsson, to his summerhouse in Grímsnes to help him fix the deck, paint the roof or basically anything that needed a touch up. My grandfather was my idol! He taught me how to build and fix things with my bare hands, which is something I now do on a daily basis. For example, I build my own stretcher bars and frames for my paintings, and I mix and make my own paint.

### Jordan Was God

Like many other kids born in the early 80s, Michael Jordan became my God. If I'd count how many pairs of

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Wine 750 ISK.

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

**IÐA ZIMSEN**  
Every day from  
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Beer 495 ISK.

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Every day from  
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Beer 600 ISK,  
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Beer 550 ISK,  
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Cocktails 1,500 ISK

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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.

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Wine 750 ISK.



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Beer 600 ISK,  
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Cocktails 1,500 ISK.

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Fish of the day -  
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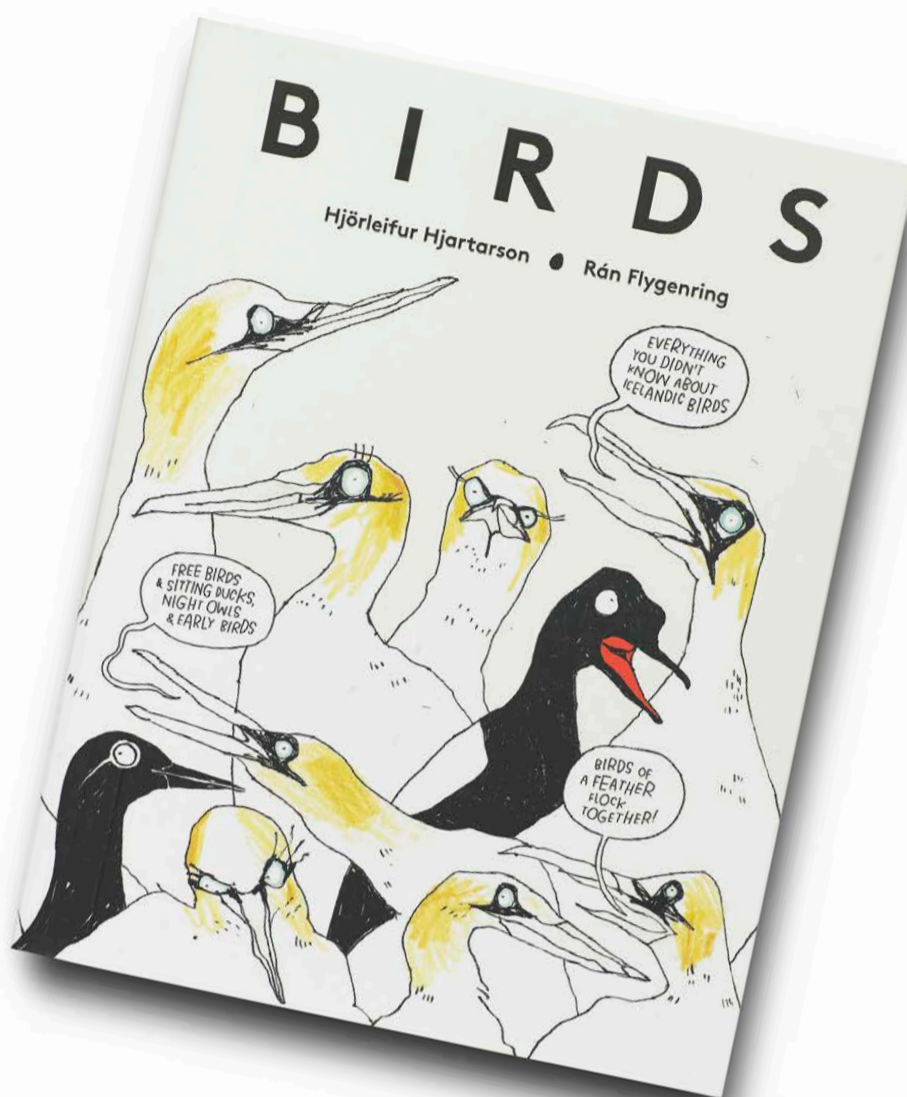
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Put a bird on it!

## Sketches In The Sand

Rán Flygenring on illustration, Icelandic birds and the balance of art and play

Words: Björn Halldórsson

### Book

Available now in all bookstores that like birds

Recently, the niche market of Icelandic-bird-guides-in-English gained a new addition in the form of “BIRDS,” a translation of Hjörleifur Hjartarson and Rán Flygenring’s award-winning ornithological guide. The volume is illustrated in Rán’s distinctive drawing style, which provides ample means of identifying the birds while also enhancing the character and eccentricities of each species (Icelanders love to anthropomorphize the country’s feathered fauna).

### Birds, front and back

“We wanted to create an emotional connection between the readers and the birds,” explains Rán, who is currently sojourning in New Zealand—another bird paradise. “That’s why Hjörleifur’s writing pays so much attention to the characteristics of each species and the folklore surrounding it. I applied all sorts of stylistic and technical devices to the illustration in order to find an approach that suited each bird best.” She admits that prior to working on the book, her knowledge of feathered creatures was rather limited. “I couldn’t

have cared less about birds,” she says. “They were up there with ancestry studies: No thank you! Now, however, I love them.

“To prepare, I went through dozens of bird guides and looked at mounted birds. I also kept my eyes open for any birds I could see in the wild.” She laughs. “Drawing birds from the front and back is tricky as hell! You learn a lot just by watching a couple of sparrows fluttering around; see all sorts of angles that you won’t find in any book.”

### Preserving joy

Jumping into the deep end and tackling new and unfamiliar subjects is par for the course in terms of the way Rán approaches her work as an artist and illustrator. “I’m concerned with not stagnating creatively,” she confesses. “I’ve been working in this field for so long that sometimes I get completely fed up with drawing.

There’s a certain skill involved in preserving the joy I find in my work. It’s not really that I have to force myself to the sketch pad, but when you’ve been working with certain forms and styles

for a long time, you end up creating a brand for yourself, and if you create something that works, there is always going to be a demand for more of the same. Of course you want to be able to

earn a living with your art, but sometimes it comes at the risk of becoming caught in repetition.”

### The importance of play

Having to create art that has a set deadline and page count can be draining for Rán, but she has found various ways of counteracting such fatigue. “I’ve actually resorted to drawing on napkins and the backs of envelopes,” she says, “just to trick my brain and pretend that it’s all fun and games—that I’m just goofing around.”

She stresses that she finds that state of play much preferable to the sort of “flow” that some artists talk about. “What I find the most useful in my process is the same sort of unbridled creativity you experience in childhood,” she says. “I have to make sure that I have the space to play. In recent years, spending time with my son has given me so many additional opportunities to do that—to just goof around with him. Like, we went to the beach the other day, and there was a three-legged dog that tagged along with us, and we decided to draw bones in the sand for him. We ended up drawing all kinds of bones, big and small, even though the dog never seemed particularly appreciative.”

### Honesty and art

Frowning, she continues: “Something like that, just playing around, it releases some energy that helps overcome blocks that you might develop in your art. Finding that creative place by playing and goofing around always delivers better work. It leaves behind a grain of honest joy. My goal has never really been to capture something artistic or beautiful. I just want to make something that’s honest. It’s fine if it’s a little messy or impulsive, just as long as it’s honest.”

**“It’s fine if it’s a little messy or impulsive, just as long as it’s honest.”**



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

Words: Bjarni Óskarsson & Hannah Jane Cohenn Photo: Art Bicnick

# Bjarni Óskarsson

**Bjarni Óskarsson** (26) is a virtual reality game developer and the co-owner and CFO of Drag-Súgur.

**Bjarni is wearing:**

- ▶ Socks from Happy Socks
- ▶ Shirt from Zara
- ▶ Jeans from American Eagle

**Describe your style in 5 words:** Fancy socks. Fun patterns. Comfortable.

**Favourite stores in Reykjavik:** Wow, I hardly ever shop in Reykjavik. I mostly shop when I am travelling. But if I have to get something here, I like Fatamarkaðurinn at Hlemmur, I like second hand stores. Also, Zara, of course.

**Favourite piece:** That's a tough one. I'm going to have to go through my whole closet in my mind right now and we'll be here forever. I think it's this completely over-the-top black, red, and silver yakuza jacket with skulls and tigers on it from Diesel. I got it while touring the US with Gógó Starr, my fiancé.

**Something I would never wear:** I would never wear bland socks. Plain black or plain white—you are not going to see me in those. I think I have about 40 pairs, mostly from Happy Socks. I have pinstriped, checkered, colour-blocked, cow-pattern, Batman-themed, ones with cats on them, all kinds of weird things. I also have this Beatles pair. You know the bad blue guys from their animated Yellow Submarine movie? I have pink socks with those guys on it.

**Lusting after:** This yellow and black Diesel jacket I saw after I got the other Diesel jacket. It haunts me. Also the scorpion jacket that Ryan Gosling wears in the movie 'Drive' 🐍





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#### PLAICE

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# Food

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The seafood soup is loaded with bright orange scallops

## Eatin' On The Dock Of The Bay

Bjargarsteinn has a welcome sense of flair

Words & photo: John Rogers

We completely miss Bjargarsteinn on the first approach. I'd expected to find it right away as we trundled around the small harbour of Grundarfjörður—but no. I open up Google Maps and, under a heavy grey sky, we circle for the second time through the narrow seaside network of dripping warehouses and workshops. Up a discreet pebbled track by the sea wall, Bjargarsteinn finally appears, with a welcoming golden light glowing from the windows.

### Grandma vibes

We're the first guests of the evening, and we mill around the bright, tidy dining room. There's a charming collection of bric-a-brac to take in—an old stove is topped with irons and antique crock pots, and the mossy green walls hold shelves of antique food tins with retro designs, and porcelain ornaments.

"I used to be able to tell people that this was both the oldest and newest house in town," says our beaming waitress as she seats us to take our order. It turns out that the oldest part of the building was brought here from Akranes, the attic of which still holds a museum-

apartment area with a sewing machine, shelves of old framed photos and crochet-blanketed sofas under the low rafters. It's traditional and retro, but curated rather than kitsch.

### Seafood cornucopia

The same can be said of the handwritten menu, which—at first glance—looks like the same seafood and lamb fare you'll find in most of Iceland's restaurants. However, the attention to detail becomes quickly apparent. The seafood soup is a light, savoury bisque loaded with plenty of shrimps, juicy king prawns and bright orange scallops, served in a beautiful old cast iron pot. The broth carries a fresh leek flavour, the chunks of succulent white fish flake perfectly, and the scallops are meaty, tender and fresh as can be. More than an overly familiar starter, the soup is a seafood cornucopia, and an event in itself.

### Mysterious vegetables

Despite tempting catfish and ling specials, I'm curious to see if the kitchen can also elevate the traditional Icelandic staple of lamb,

served here with beets, white cabbage, and figs. My companion, with an understandably raised eyebrow, opts for the single "vegetarian dish," which—unlike everything else on the menu—doesn't contain any more specific ingredient information.

Such fears are quickly allayed when the plate arrives—a colourful arrangement of carefully prepared vegetables complete with a crisp salad and a mini saucepan of creamy pasta. It turns out to be something of an extravaganza, with everything from mustard-coated Brussels sprouts to puréed carrots with a burst of passion fruit flavour. The pasta is a filling comfort-food addition; it's a hearty meal that gets a firm seal of vegetarian approval.

### Playful imagination

The lamb dish comprises four perfectly grilled loin fillets with a welcome gamey flavour, arranged over al dente broccolini and cauliflower, and surrounded by swirls of bright green herbal emulsion and purple beet juice. The chef's sense of playfulness is evident, but never overbearing—the top quality ingredients are always allowed to shine through.

We sadly don't have time for a dessert, and as we finish up a heavy storm starts to lash the windows with rain, blotting out the view of Kirkjufell over the fjord. We head out into the wet gales with a spring in our step, and a bit of Bjargarsteinn's domestic tranquility and warm glow to help us on our way. ☘

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DV. 17.06.11

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“I’ve tasted things at the festival I never would have tried anywhere else.”

Are you hungry yet?

## The Foodie Free-For-All

Food & Fun festival turns 18, imports acclaimed international chefs

Words: John Rogers Photo: Art Bicnick

### Festival

Food & Fun runs Feb. 27th-March 3rd at restaurants around the city. Check [foodandfun.is](http://foodandfun.is) for the programme. Bookings essential.

Every year in February, Reykjavik foodies start preparing for the annual culinary extravaganza of the Food & Fun festival. Now in its 18th year, this five day event brings vaunted chefs from around the world to Reykjavik, pairing them up with top local restaurants to bring some fresh flavours to the 101 dining scene.

This year, the festival has 21 visiting chefs, collaborating with 19 different restaurants all over the city, from classic joints like Holt and Vox to upscale eateries like Nostra, Apotek and Essensia and recent newcomers like Reykjavik Meat and Skelfiskmarkaðurinn. The tasting menus are priced at 8,900 ISK—and with only five nights to choose from 19 eateries, the rumour mill gets to work fast. Hungry diners gossip furiously about the hot tips of the festival, make their bookings and flood the city en masse to try out the various

tasting menus on offer.

“This year, we have guests from all over the world—from Africa to Canada to Belgium to the US, and more,” says Krista Hall, one of the members of the family behind the event. “We’re very excited about it—the menus look amazing.”

### Arrival of the off-menu

For those with a bit of commitment-phobia when it comes to multi-course meals, or with pockets too shallow for fancy meals, the festival is also hosting an “off-menu” selection this year. In line with the recent trend towards small courses, gastropubs and street food, four different spots will offer a taste of some Food & Fun flavours in a less formal setting. “It’s places that have a big Food & Fun menu with smaller courses,” says Krista. “You can pop by and taste a little bit rather than the whole menu. It’s a nice addition.”

There are some eye-catching pairings to consider this year. Georgiana Viou brings flavours of Benin to Apotek, including duck with tamarind sauce and the

seldom seen on Icelandic menus octopus; in Kopar, vaunted and Michelin-starred Belgian chef Kobe Desramauts will serve his enticing haute cuisine. At Grandi Mathöll, Deuki Hong brings the Korean barbecue from hit NYC joint Kang Ho Dong Baekjeong, available as single courses, or a 4,900 ISK tasting menu.

### Spices and twists

The partnerships come together in a variety of ways. “Sometimes the restaurants have picked up on chefs they want to bring over,” says Krista. “Then, my father, Soggi, also goes abroad to eat a lot and check out different restaurants, then pairs them with restaurants here. It’s a mixture of methods.”

Visiting chefs collaborate on the menus with their local counterparts. “Many chefs want to try out local products, and put their own twist on it,” says Krista. “Then others will bring products that are new to Iceland with them, like spices we’re not used to. So it’s both a very good way for Icelandic products to be introduced to foreign chefs, and for the chefs here to experience something new in the kitchen. I’ve tasted things at the festival I never would have tried anywhere else.”

But the food and the fun isn’t just for the chefs—it’s for Reykjavik residents too. Find out what’s cookin’ at [foodandfun.is](http://foodandfun.is), follow the festival on Instagram for a peek behind the scenes, and get stuck in; check our next issue to see what went down. 🍷



# SNAPS

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# Travel

## Under The Weather

High gales and wild waves on the Snæfellsnes Peninsula

Words & Photos: John Rogers



**Distance from Reykjavík:**  
179km

**Car provided by:**  
gocarrental.is

**Accommodation provided by:** budir.is

**How to get there:**  
Route One North, turn onto Route 54 at Borgarnes

A sudden blinding flash lights up the room. I wake from a sleepy reverie, leaping up from the bed to the attic room's window to determine its cause. Was it some kind of electrical fault outside, or just a car arriving? Or, could it be...

My eyes scan the murky sky as heavy rain drums on the glass, distorting the dark horizon into a watery scribble. A minute later there's another bright flash. This time, there's no mistaking it. It's that rarest of phenomena in Iceland—a bolt of lightning, forking down silently from the clouds and licking the ground somewhere south of Hótel Búðir.

It shouldn't come as such a surprise. The two hour drive from Reykjavík was beset by violent weather from the off. High gales buffeted the car as we passed Kjalarnes, and grabbed at the car doors when we pulled over for a break in Borgarnes. Throughout the journey, bands of inky, fast-moving clouds sent freezing rain and volleys of hailstones down at regular intervals. Rounding the tip of the Snæfellsnes peninsula, the raging wind was deafening when we pulled over to look at a frozen waterfall. At the wide beach of Skarðsvík, the tide tore up the beach into the boulder-strewn clefts of the shoreline at a frightening speed; at

Lóndrangar, the waves crashed in so hard they splashed higher than the rooftop of the closed-up visitors centre.

After a few more blasts of sheet lightning illuminate the churning sky, I pull down the blind, turn up the radiator, and feel grateful to have reached the warm and comfortable confines of the hotel.

### Ever-changing cloudscape

There are few better places to hide from such weather than Hótel Búðir. A luxurious getaway spot located in a small nature reserve, this proud building is surrounded by a spectacular 360° vista of raw Icelandic nature. The house stands on an undulated stretch of coastline where huge shards of ice mass on the white sand beach, backed by the rugged Búðahraun lava field. On a clear day, the towering peak of the Snæfellsjökull glacier dominates the area, standing 1,446m tall against the ever-changing cloudscape of the westward horizon.

The hotel is a welcoming beacon in this engaging wilderness. The lobby has an open fire, the bar has floor to ceiling sea-view windows, and the furniture and decor has a classy, old-world

feel. The rooms are nicely appointed and quiet, the upscale restaurant serves hearty portions of fresh fish and local produce, and the generous breakfast buffet has everything you could want to start the day.

### Salt spray fog

After filling up on coffee, scrambled eggs and fruit, we head out into the grey morning to further explore the peninsula. Snæfellsjökull looks over the nearby hamlet of Hellnar, which is all-but abandoned at this time of year. Past two closed cafés and a Fosshotel undergoing renovations, an icy path leads down to the rocky shore, where a large basalt tidal cave is under assault from the high seas. The frothy torrent smashes into the swirling rock formations so hard that it creates a fog of salty spray.

There are several other stops around the tip of the peninsula. At Lóndrangar, two huge spiked sea stacks stand silhouetted against the dim sky, as if in conversation. At Djúpálónsandur, a gaggle of tourists meander between the rusted shards of a 1948 shipwreck that now form a spectral permanent memorial. Back at Skarðsvík, the aftermath of yesterday's storm is visible: seemingly immovable car-sized boul-

ders have shifted around overnight, blocking off rock pools and coves that were open for exploration just a day before.

We drop by the Freezer Hostel and heatre in Rif to find the owner, Kári Víðarsson, working on some improvements to the building's insulation in the spluttering rain. "The waves were unusually high yesterday," he says, taking a break in the cosy lounge. "The sea was so high it was splashing the windows of our apartments in Hellisandur, and it pulled down the dunes in Krossavík. The shape of the bay has changed." He takes a sip of coffee, finishing: "This is a new thing, weather like this."

### Animal nature

It isn't only the humans who are noticing the weather. At Ytri-Tunga, the seal colony has moved closer to the shore than usual into a tucked away inlet, where twenty or so plump animals bask on the rocks, flopping into the water occasionally to peer curiously at the gathered crowd of observers.

In Grundarfjörður, an innumerable flock of sea gulls are massing over the beach. Thousands of birds wheel in the air as one, circling the cliffs, swooping over the white tideline below and drawing an impromptu audience who've pulled over to watch the spectacle unfold.

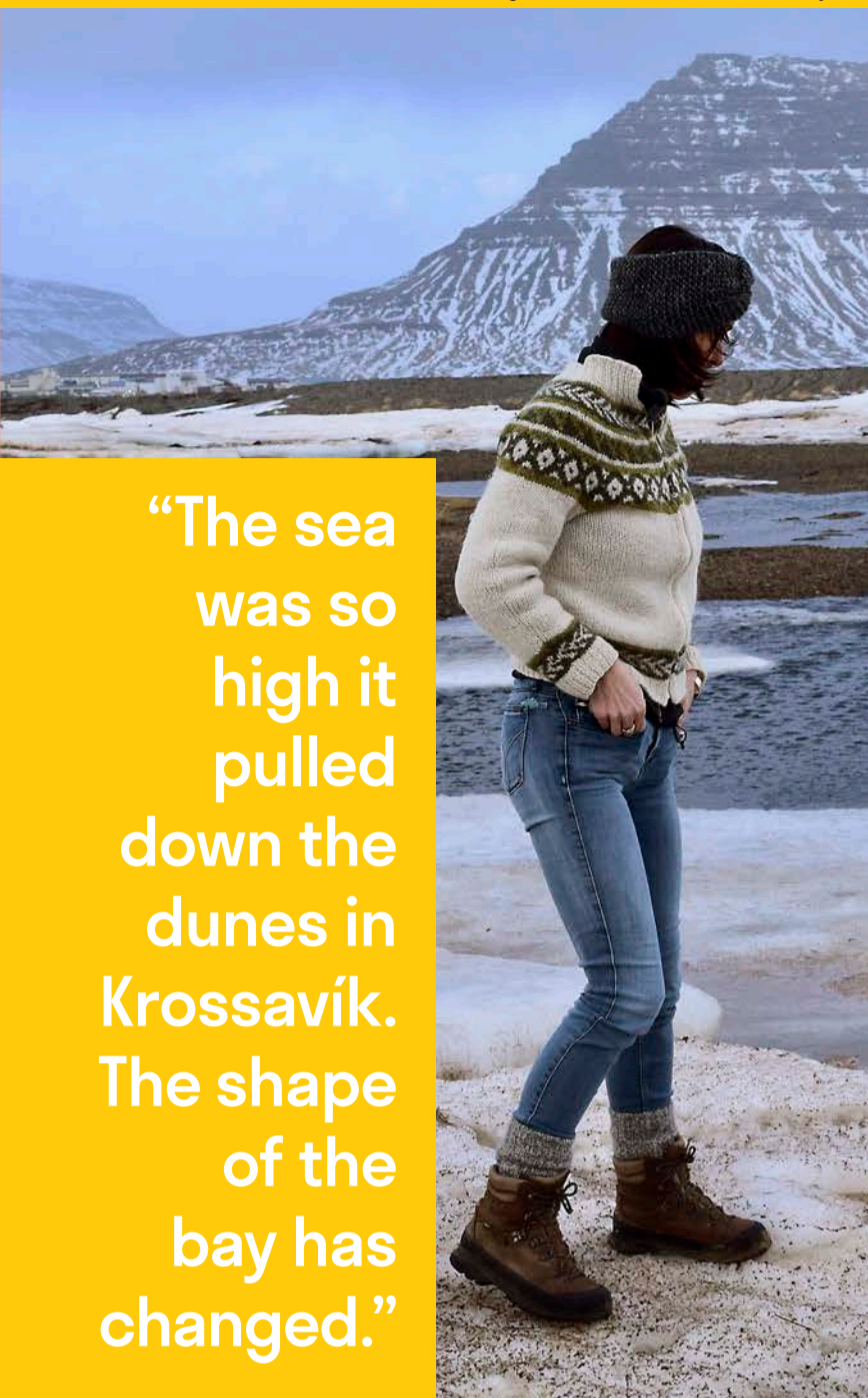
As the sky starts to dim, we set out back towards the hotel via the Snæfellsvegur mountain road. Rain starts to fall as we pass the distinctive wedge of Kirkjufell and before long, the windscreen wipers can't work fast enough to sweep away the water. We creep over the mountain slowly, peering out into the gloaming. In awe of the wild nature and violent elements of Snæfellsnes, the car is enveloped by darkness and deluge alike, and we're beyond grateful when the lights of Hótel Búðir appear once more through the downpour. ☔



The mass of wheeling gulls at Grundarfjörður

Looking out to the ocean from Hótel Búðir

Treading over beached sea ice beneath Kirkjufell



The lighthouse at Lónrangar under assault from the sea



Hellnar tidal cave, awash with churning waves

“The sea was so high it pulled down the dunes in Krossavík. The shape of the bay has changed.”

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# Tölting Through Time

Exploring the landscape Viking-style

Words: Aliya Uteuova Photos: Art Bicnick



**Distance from Reykjavik:**  
16km

**How to get there:** Hit Route One South, for just a couple of kilometres

**Trip provided by:**  
[vikinghorses.is](http://vikinghorses.is)

Hundreds of thousands of people come to Iceland with a singular purpose: to meet one of the island's most interesting creatures. It's not the trolls, the hidden folk, or the elves—it's the humble Icelandic horse.

Famed for their calm and friendly demeanor, Icelandic horses' mild temperament reflects the relaxed lifestyle that most Icelanders lead. But that's not the only trait that makes these horses stand out from the herd.

## Purebred explorers

This unique breed is among the purest in the world—crossbreeding was forbidden as early as the settlement of this North-Atlantic island. This means today's horses are just like the original Viking steeds—so it makes total sense to experience riding them with Viking Horses.

Viggó Sigurdsson ran a horse farm with his mother until 2014. It was at that time that he and his girlfriend, Verena Wellenhofer, ventured out to begin their own equestrian adventure in the quiet Almannadalur valley. Located right on the edge of Reykjavik, the family-run Viking Horses is just a 20 minute drive from Harpa, ideal

for the city slicker yearning for an afternoon in the saddle.

On my day on horseback, the riding group comprises four people: a couple from Australia, the Grapevine's trusty photographer, and myself. We were matched with horses based on our riding abilities. I rode Sprettur, a horse the colour of brown Autumn leaves. Despite the name, Sprettur wasn't much of a sprinter, which suited me just fine.

## Living the Sagas

We went out on a morning volcano tour, which began with a short riding lesson. After getting acquainted with basic horse signals, we rode out to the Hólmsheiði hills, passing icy lakes and volcanic rock formations backed by a scenic view of the city.

The hills around Reykjavik are absolutely breathtaking, and exploring them on horseback felt like recreating scenes from the Sagas. Wind, rain, and sleet only added to the drama, and, luckily, Viking Horses provided us with waterproof gear. The only thing that would've made me happier are glasses with windshield wipers.

## Five gaits

Icelandic horses can perform five gaits. And this, as it turns out, is a big deal. With over 350 breeds of horses and ponies in the world, Icelandic horses are the only ones that not only walk, trot, and gallop, but also do "flying pace," which is—as the name suggests—very fast, and the "tölt," a quick walk during which horses touch the ground with one hoof at a time.

During the tour, we got to tölt on more than one occasion. Richard—one of the Australian guests—came in with zero riding experience, but his tölt looked impressive thanks to his well-trained horse, Óðinn. After the seven kilometre tour, Richard vowed to go riding again.

## Human connections

What makes Viking Horses special is the personal touch. After the 1.5-hour tour, we were welcomed to Verena and Viggó's cosy loft, where our lovely hosts served us a traditional spread of skyr, smoked lamb, blueberries, kleina, and locally produced chocolate. Over a cup of coffee, we had the

“Exploring the hills on horseback felt like recreating scenes from the original Sagas.”

chance to share stories from home, and we discussed everything from Stephen King to Australia's own—notoriously dangerous—native animals, from insects to jellyfish.

The gesture of inviting someone into your home speaks volumes when you're in a foreign land. With 60 Icelandic horses, three Danish-Swedish farm dogs, and one absolutely adorable baby, Viggó and Verena are definitely busy. “When you work with horses, you miss the human connections,” said Verena. “That is why we love meeting our guests from all over the world.”



Saying hi to the horses...



... making a few friends...



... and we're off!



Wonderful hospitality from the generous hosts



Trot before you tölt



A pause at the red rocks of Rauðhólar



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## Brahms Bruckner Mendelssohn

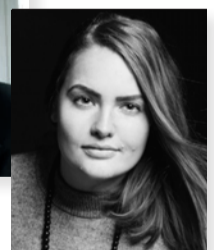
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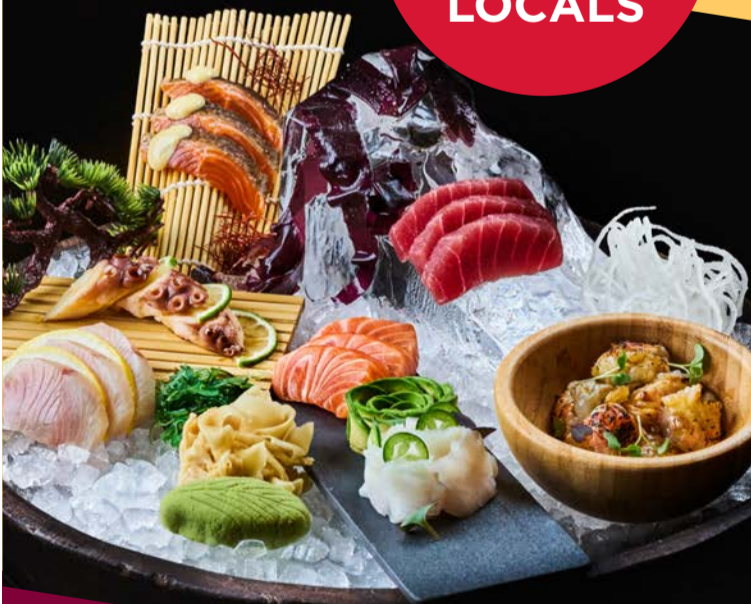
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# Travel

Distance from Reykjavik: 203 km

How to get there: Route One North, Turn onto Route 54 at Borgarnes then Route 574

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

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



The town at the end of the rainbow

## TOWN GUIDE

# Hellissandur

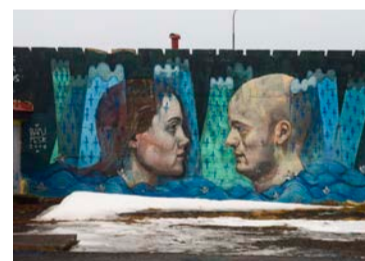
Words and photos : **John Rogers**

Perched out on the tip of the Snæfellsnes peninsula, Hellissandur is the last town before the Snæfellsjökull National Park. With a small tangle of streets, this windswept settlement occupies a narrow 400m shelf of land between a lava field and the sea shore. It's a tiny place, but what it lacks in conveniences, it makes up for with quirky personality and proximity to one of Iceland's most stunning sights.



### See: Snæfellsjökull

The Snæfellsjökull glacier is mesmerising, looming large over the entire area. There are various ways to enjoy the glacier—you can drive around it and take in the majestic view from all angles, or book a summit tour via snowmobile or a good ol' guided ice hike. There are two roads that lead to the glacier, driveable only in summer. In winter, check before you set out, and don't venture onto the ice without the proper experience and equipment, or—even better—a guide.



### See: Murals

The minds behind the Freezer Hostel decorated Hellissandur with a variety of colourful and distinctive murals in 2018 in collaboration with international street artists. Look out for them as you drive around town, and expect more to be added this summer when artists flood into the town once more.



### Stay: **Hótel Búðir & Freezer Hostel**

There are relatively few options for accommodation in the sparsely populated area around Snæfellsjökull, but a couple leap out as the best on offer. For those seeking some luxury, Hótel Búðir is a stunning, historic hotel on

the southern coast of the peninsula. Those on a budget can stay at the Freezer Hostel in nearby Rif, which also has a theatre, entertainment programme and a cosy bar area. Freezer also operates several apartments in Hellissandur, available to book via AirBnB; their popular studio apartments are particularly nice, with big windows looking out over the ocean.



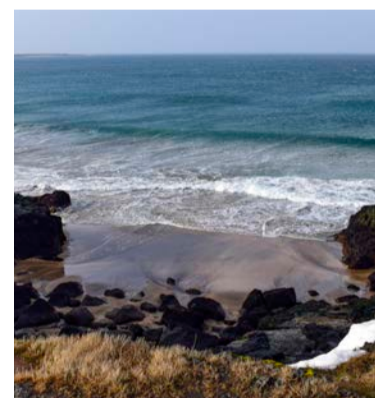
### Walk: Lava Trail

Hellissandur used to be home to a Maritime Museum, but it has closed down, the distinctive statue of a fisherman teaching a child how to gut a fish is gone from its plinth. A garden full of whale bones and two turf houses, however, still remain. There's also a wooden stairway leading over a ridge into a lava field, where you can take an engaging short hike through the rugged rocks along some easy trails.



### Eat: **Gilbakki Kaffihús**

This homely café feels like a visit to an Icelandic grandma's house with floral flatware, cosy seating areas and traditional decor. You can pick up a coffee and cake, a snack, or a lunch, and watch the world go by from the lace-curtained windows. Summer opening only.



### Visit: Skarðsvík

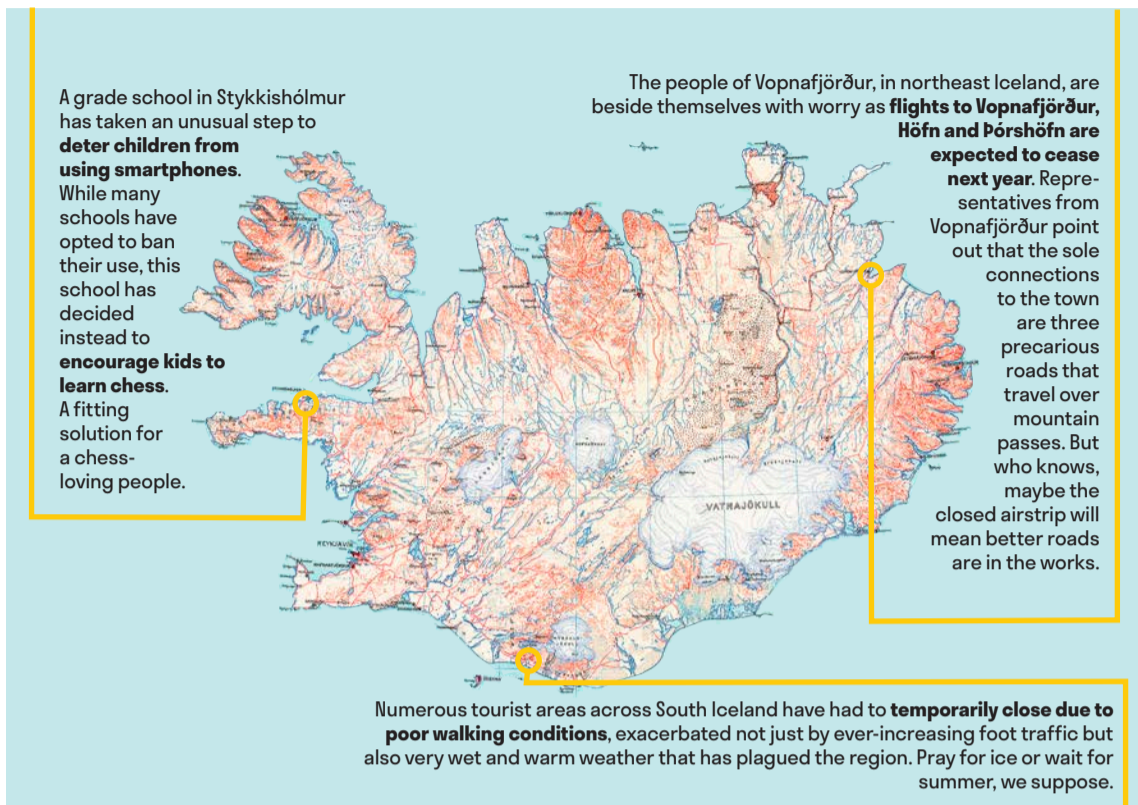
This wide cove on the very northern tip of Snæfellsnes is a truly beautiful spot. Down a windy dirt track, past a towering radio antenna—one of the tallest structures in Europe—there are several parking spots to choose from, with each one offering a walk to a rocky outcropping, or a route down onto the white sand below. The tide crashes in ferociously, and there are rock pools to explore, boulders to meander between, and a view out to sea, with nothing between you and the Arctic. 🍷



## Island Life

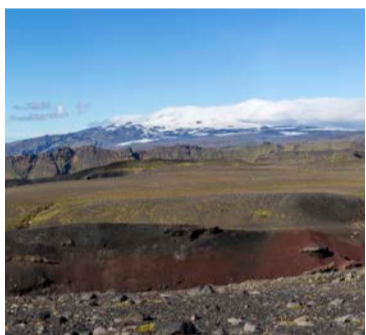
Hot news from the cold Icelandic countryside

Words: **Andie Fontaine**



## Best Of Iceland

A selection of winners from our Best Of Iceland travel magazine



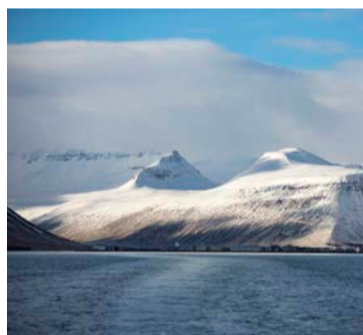
**South: Best Tour**  
**Eyjafjallajökull Summit Tour**

Whether you're travelling in a super Jeep or riding solo on a snowmobile, the experience of driving on a glacier to the top of a volcano is simply incredible. "You can get all the way onto the ice and see the glacier's absolutely vast scope first hand," said one panellist. Upon arriving to the summit, you'll be greeted with a 360-degree view over the highlands.



**West: Must See Spot**  
**Ásbyrgi**

Even better than it looks on Google Images, this horseshoe canyon at the northern end of Vatnajökull National Park was carved by glacial flooding several millennia ago. Turn off Route 85 and walk to the tip of Eyjan, the "island" of rock that was once the canyon's northern bank, to take in the vast forested gorge; or drive down to the pond tucked just beneath the sheer, 100-metre cliffs of the far side.



**East: Best Road Trip**  
**Djúpið**

Leading up to the town of Ísafjörður, the system of fjords in the central Westfjords all open into one giant fjord called Ísafjarðardjúp. Djúpið is its local nickname, meaning "The Deep." It has the best-maintained and least terrifying road in the Westfjords, and each fjord has its own hidden treasure—Arngerðareyri "castle," Reykjanes pool, Litlibær turf house, a seal colony, and Valagil canyon, to name just a few.

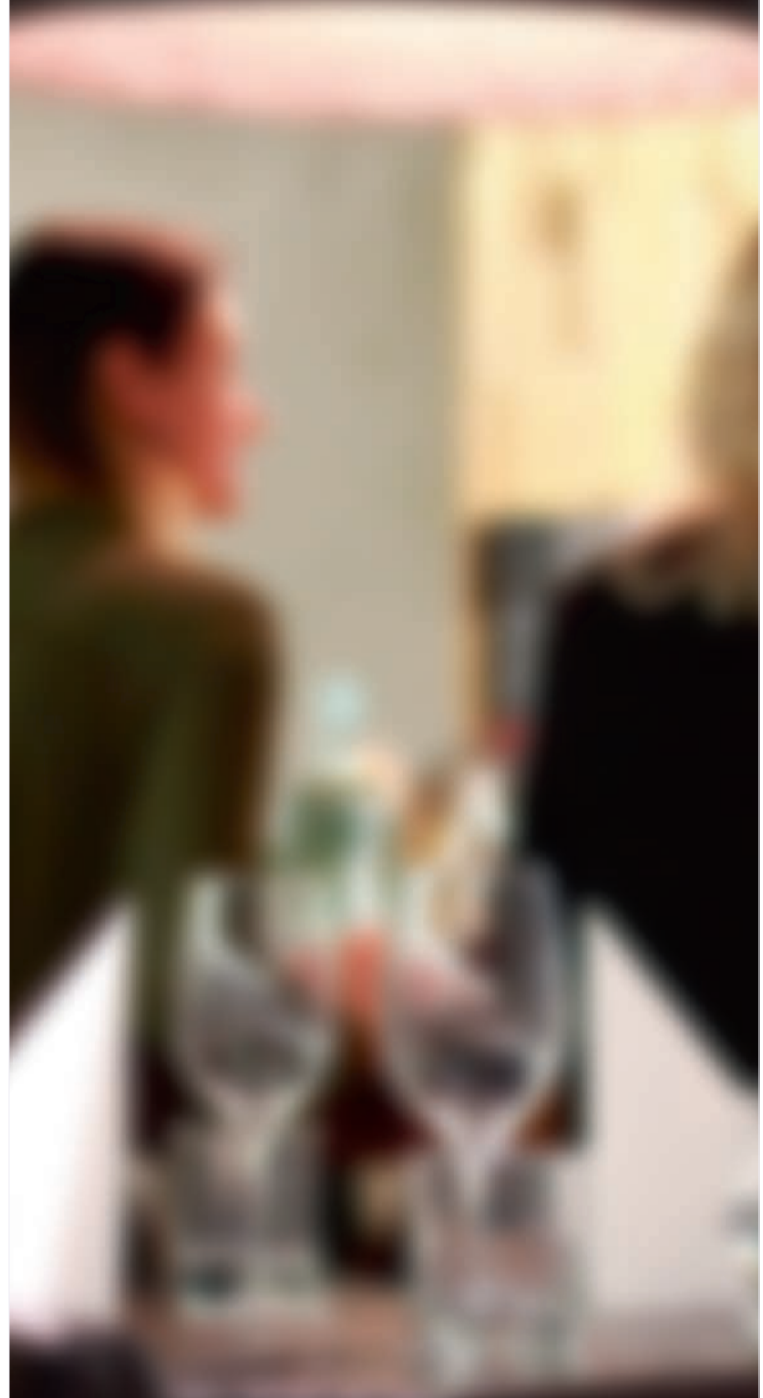


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WELL, YOU ASKED

## Your problems, our solutions

Words: **Andie Fontaine**

**Hey Grapevine, can we have a ruling here on the literal/cultural translation for “parking the bus”? Thanks, guys. Keep on #SmitingTheWorld. - Kevin Duska Jr., via Twitter.**

First, thanks, smite we will. Second, the translation would be “að leggjast í vörn.” Literally, it means “to lie in the defense.” Figuratively, it means “the greatest and most awesome football strategy of all time.” No sight inspires confidence in the Icelandic football supporter quite like seeing seven men take on a solitary striker. Works every time.

**Often times when I try speaking Icelandic with an Icelander, they will answer me in English, even if I kept speaking Icelandic to them. How can I get them to answer me in Icelandic? Should I even bother? - DN**

Getting Icelanders to accept you enough to reply to you in Icelandic is definitely the toughest part of learning the language. I personally use a three-strikes rule: I respond in Icelandic twice, but if I’m responded to back in English after that, I respond with, “Er ég ekki að tala íslensku við þig?” This usually does the trick. Just be sure the person in question is an Icelander, and not a foreigner who doesn’t even know Icelandic. Because that’s embarrassing.

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

### WAR OF THE NERDS

# Iceland Solves the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict

Boycotting Eurovision and the unexpected redemption of Hatari.

Words: **Valur Grettisson** Photo: **Hatari**

If there is something holier than Christmas in Iceland, it would probably be Eurovision. Our readers know this. Icelanders go completely berserk over the annual song contest. The whole nation literally convinces themselves—like some otherworldly collective delusion—that this year, we will conquer this odd spectacle that can only be characterized as the flashiest cultural shitshow on earth. Well, except the Oscars, perhaps.

But this year, Icelanders are facing a moral dilemma. Israel won the 2018 competition with Netta’s hilariously bad song,

“Toy”— the offspring of Japanese cultural appropriation and the sound that chickens make when a fox enters their pen. Still confused? Well, that’s Eurovision for you.

Close to 30,000 Icelanders (and some foreigners) have signed a petition urging the Icelandic National Broadcast (RÚV) to boycott the festival because of the war crimes that the Israeli government has been accused of committing against the Palestinian nation.

RÚV ignored this petition and will select Iceland’s contribution to the competition a few days af-

ter this issue goes to print. Icelanders had never seen a problem with Israel’s participation in the competition until they won. So Israel can participate, but not win, according to the logic of the protesters. Well, whatever keeps the Eurovision party going.

The Icelandic competition offers an unexpected redemption for the rest of us. Cybergoth band Hatari (‘Haters’) have swept the qualifiers and are likely to win the chance to represent Iceland in Tel Aviv. (Keep in mind, this article was written before the final competition, so who knows what’s in store.) Hatari’s hilariously nihil-

ist approach has given Icelanders an opportunity to send a subtle—well, as subtle as a song called ‘Hatred Will Prevail’ can be—political message to the competition and introduce some saucy BDSM at the same time. Sounds like a win-win for everyone. Except Palestinians, of course.

But no matter what happens, Iceland will compete in Eurovision, and we will definitely lose, and the Israeli government will keep on supporting settlements in the West Bank. Because Eurovision doesn’t achieve anything, except flooding our radio once a year with bad music.



We hope they'll tackle Trump after capitalism and Eurovision



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**LAST WORDS**

**Don't be THAT Tourist in Iceland**

Words: Jewells Chambers

While the majority of visitors to Iceland pack their common sense for their trip, there are some who seem to leave it at home.

I understand wanting to immerse yourself in Icelandic nature, but there are ways to do it responsibly. To avoid being THAT tourist who Icelandic people shake their head at because your antics are being broadcast on the evening news, here is what you need to know:

- Moss takes decades to grow back. Don't trample on it. Admire its beauty and leave it be.
- Sneaker waves on Icelandic beaches will creep up and snatch you like a hungry mythical sea creature. Keep a safe distance.
- Your poop isn't fertilizer. Need to drop a deuce and no bathroom facilities are around? Collect it in a plastic bag and dispose of it later.
- Driving off road is illegal and is a punishable offense.
- Camp in designated areas, not just anywhere that suits your fancy.
- Icebergs are not jungle gyms. Climbing on one is dangerous.
- No selfie is worth dying for. That edge of the cliff might be a lot less stable than you anticipated.
- Keep your coins in your pockets. Don't throw them into natural water sources, like hot springs.
- Hunting for the Northern Lights is fun, but don't drive with your eyes locked on the sky. If you see them, find a safe place to pull over.
- Icelandic search and rescue teams are volunteer run. You are putting others in harm's way because you underestimated the severity of a storm. Pay attention to the forecast and don't travel if you have been advised against it.
- Strip naked and wash with soap in the shower before dipping in an Icelandic pool. It's proper bathing etiquette here.
- Your 4x4 Jimny rental is no match for most rivers in Iceland. Doing a river crossing without an experienced driver and the right vehicle could set you back a hefty sum. Even worse, you could lose your life.
- If you keep these points in mind, you can safely enjoy your visit, and you won't piss off any Vikings. 🇮🇸

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