



REYKJAVÍK GRAPÉVINE



Also in this issue:

Dare To Dream
Are we about to win Eurovision?

Anna Maggý
Iceland's rising star photographer

Self Love For All
Katrín Inga takes art onto the streets

The Cod Wars
Fish 'n' chip shops, rated

Plus: all the events, music, food & more!

HATARI VS HATE

Hatari at Eurovision: Facing opposition from both pro-Israel interest groups and Palestinian groups alike, Hatari make the case for art that takes a stand.



ON THE COVER:
Hatari

PHOTO
Cover image: Baldur Kristjánsson
Assistant: Arnþór Snær Þorsteinsson
Make-Up: Perla Hafþórsdóttir

Special thanks: Claus Sterneck and Áslaug

Guðrúnardóttir at the Art Museum of Iceland.

ABOUT THE PICTURE:
The day before Hatari went to Tel Aviv to compete in Eurovision, we grabbed them for a portrait session, and their most revealing interview to date. Read it on page 14.



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Exposing Hate

EDITORIAL Here's an unpopular opinion, at least among Icelanders: I have a lot of sympathy with the Israeli nation when it comes to its conflict with Hamas. The history is complicated, but at the end of the day, Israelis are trying to ensure their country's safety. It's not easy to live with the constant threat of an air missile striking (and vice versa). We need to keep in mind that Israel has lost a lot of lives in the war against the extremists in Palestine throughout the years, and keep in mind the Palestinians are also occupied by idiotic and dangerous domestic politics. No state has endured such an attack against their citizens.

That said, I fully condemn the way Israel has treated the Palestinian nation and the thousands of lives that have been lost in this mindless war.

The Palestinian nation is not Hamas.

There haven't been democratic elections in Palestine since 2005. The Palestinian nation is occupied by one of the strongest military states in the world as well as the thug extremists of Hamas. There is no justification for bombing the Pales-

tinian nation so viciously because of the acts of an extremist party. Both nations suffer from bad politics. The Likud party's interests and those of Hamas are tied together: in war.

My sympathies lies with the people of Israel and Palestine; not with the fear mongering politics of the Likud party or the criminality of Hamas. Both are guilty of war crimes. Both are guilty of fuelling this terror, and people on both sides are paying the ultimate price.

In the midst of this clash, you have the most glitter-fuelled song contest in the world, Eurovision, taking place just 70 kilometers away from the suffering of the Palestinian nation.

Iceland's contribution is the controversial performance of the nihilistic post-apocalyptic-anti-capitalistic-BDSM band Hatari. They have been criticised for participating in the competition, while that criticism should rightly be directed at the Icelandic government, and state broadcaster RÚV.

So how do you go and perform for hundreds of millions, in these fireworks of tacky pop music, with so much suffering just an arm's length away? You raise your voice and point out that it is not

normal. In that way, Hatari is like the child in the "Emperor's New Clothes." They highlight the hypocrisy of the whole affair. The local rules are to smile and to pretend there is nothing going on. Hatari have refused to do that. And it is a noble stand in a complicated situation. It's a peaceful form of protest.

I know it's easy to say that the reality of the Middle East is far from the Icelandic one, and that it is impossible for us to understand. But we know something better than most nations in the world, and that is peace. And we know that peace is not a given. Not for a small island with no army, nor a borderline army state like Israel that have suffered from persecution throughout time. And we know that one of the most important ground rules for peace is to listen and to engage in a democratic discussion. Hatari sings about the hate that will prevail if that doesn't happen. If hate is the only thing you can hear when listening to the song, that will probably be the outcome. **VG** 🇮🇸



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



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



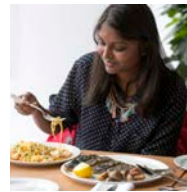
John Rogers is an Englishman who first joined Grapevine as a music writer, later graduating to Managing Editor. A constant traveller and a lover of art, culture, food & nightlife, he edits our Best of Reykjavík, Best of Iceland, and Iceland Airwaves sister publications. His first book, "Real Life", was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



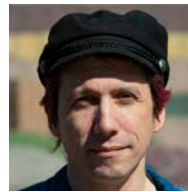
Art Bicnick is a man of mystery, moving like the wind through the parties, soirées, openings and social events of Reykjavík. Sometimes he can be seen abroad in the countryside, braving the spray of a waterfall or the frozen glacier air. Always, he will have a camera, documenting the moves of his writer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



Sveinbjörn Pálsson is 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.



Shruithi Basappa traded the warmth of Indian summers for Iceland's Arctic winds. She's a food enthusiast masquerading as an architect at Sei Studio, and loves obsessive attention to detail. When not leading our Best of Reykjavík food panel, she can be found trying to become a Michelin restaurant inspector.



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 front-woman of Icelandic electro-pop supergroup FM Belfast. Her comic strip Lóaboratorium appears every issue on page 8, and is also available as a daily dose on her Twitter.

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From Russia with love

What Are Icelanders Talking About?

Cheers and jeers at the news on social media

Words: **Andie Fontaine** Photo: **Sea Life Trust**

NEWS One of the hottest topics on Icelandic social media right now is **Hatari's arrival in Tel Aviv to compete in the Eurovision Song Contest**. There has been strong, sharply-divided opinion about their participation, at home and abroad, and that continues now as the band meet with reporters and begins rehearsal. The timing of their arrival in Israel coincided with further bombardment of Gaza, resulting in dozens of deaths and many more injuries, enthusiastically pointed out by those who wanted to see Hatari boycott the song contest altogether. At the same time, their declaration at their first press conference in Israel that they "hope to see an end to the occupation" was praised by those supportive of their stated goal to stand up for the Palestinian cause while at Eurovision. Calls for Hatari to be banned altogether on the grounds that they are "politicising" the contest have not abated, either, although with the main event coming up on May 18th, that seems increasingly unlikely to happen.

Meanwhile, closer to home, Parliament has advanced progress on a bill that would **permit the termination of pregnancies until the end of the 22nd week** regardless of circumstances. This bill has been hotly contested in Parliament, with objections being raised almost entirely by men—and all five members of the Centre Party. Notable abstentions from voting on the bill included seven men from the Independence Party and Minis-

ter of Culture and Education Lilja Alfreðsdóttir. All that being the case, the bill has passed through two rounds of debate and committee. The bill will be put up for a final vote soon, when it is very likely to pass.

In lighter news, it appears increasingly **unlikely that Iceland will adopt the "spy beluga whale"** that was first spotted in Norwe-

gian waters and suspected of being trained by Russia. As the Grapevine reported, there are already two beluga whales—Little Grey and Little White—on their way from China to Iceland, to be settled in the Westman Islands. While Norwegian marine life expert Jørgen Ree Wiig told the Washington Post that the spy beluga whale could join Little Grey and Little White, the company Sea Life Trust, which is overseeing the relocation of the Chinese beluga whales to Iceland, does not think this is a good idea. They contend that when Little Grey and Little White arrive, their health will be in a very delicate position, where adapting to their new surroundings will be crucial. Plus, it turned out it wasn't a spy whale after all, but merely a beluga whale trained to help developmentally disabled kids. A heartwarming twist. ♡



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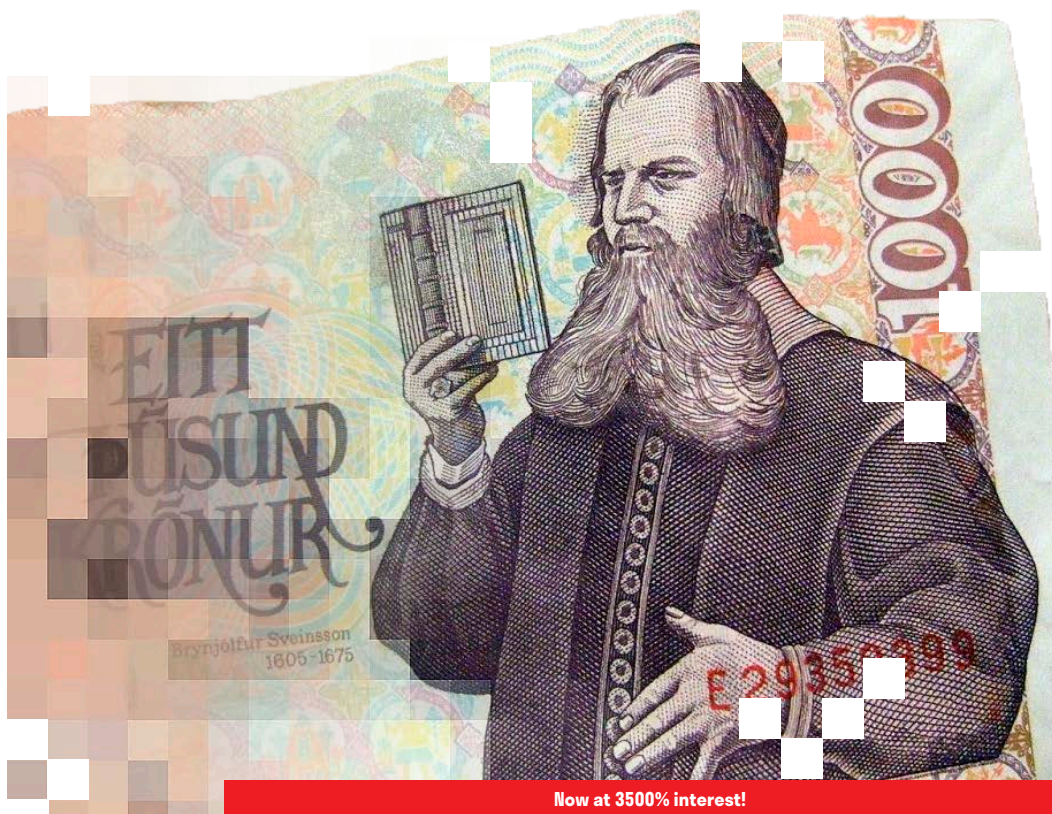
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On The Blacklist

Illegal microloan companies destroying credit ratings

NEWS

Kveikur, an investigative news show from Icelandic public broadcaster RÚV, recently did an in-depth report on microloan companies operating in Iceland. These are companies who advance quick, small-sum loans in the tens of thousands, usually with an exorbitant compound interest rate attached. If these debts are not paid off fast, they can quickly balloon to amounts that the typical microloan

borrower is unlikely to be able to pay back.

In the course of the investigation, reporters discovered that these companies are actually operating illegally; their terms of service and interest rates exceed maximums established by Icelandic law, which is why they are usually based in Denmark, where the practice is still legal. However, putting an end to the business—and the debts

they incur—has been proving to be no simple matter.

Take me to court, I dare you

The compound interest rates are extraordinary. By Kveikur's calculations, these rates can quickly inflate the money owed to a microloan company by as much as 3,500%. Apart from the cost, there is also the question of what it does to a person's credit rating; being behind on these payments can put a person on a credit rating blacklist, thereby barring one from being able to take out a loan of any kind, even overdrafts as low as 5,000 ISK.

Hákon Stefánsson, of Creditinfo, Iceland's premiere credit rating company, told reporters that, in his estimation, the simplest way to stop these companies would be to contest the debt in court. As these companies are operating illegally, he reasoned, it is highly unlikely that any of them would attempt to collect on their debts through the justice system. He also recommended paying only the principle (the size of the initial loan) and ignoring the rest of the debt.

Paying off an illegal debt

However, Breki Karlsson, the director of the consumer advocacy group Neytendasamtökin, pointed out the obvious: if these microloans are in fact illegal, what are they doing on anyone's credit rating in the first place? The group has communicated directly with Creditinfo on the matter.

For their part, Creditinfo says it is possible to get these microloans stricken from your record, even if you haven't paid off all or even most of the debt.

Which is a relief, of course. All that remains is the question of whether the government will take broader steps to shut these companies down.

Words: **Andie Fontaine**

Photo: **Wikimedia**

FOOD OF ICELAND

Shark and Brennivín



Scared of sharks? Well, Icelanders eat them for breakfast, and what's more, we drink Brennivín

to cleanse the palate afterwards. Ok, to be fair, most of us don't eat shark for break-

The Greenland shark that Icelanders eat is a nasty bugger—the big-

gest—that's a delicacy traditionally reserved for feasts during the month of Porri—and the Brennivín is just to keep our minds off the bleak and pointless existential repetition of life.

gest can measure around 7 meters long, and they live deep in the Atlantic ocean throughout the winter (they're the only shark species in the world to live so deep). We really don't know that much more about these em-sharks that love the darkness like a dramatic teen, other than that they can also live to be around 150-years-old. That's why we drink shark liver oil to stay young.

Back to eating

these mysterious sea beasts: Sharks don't urinate. Instead, they break down ammonia within their body, making their meat incredibly poisonous, sure to kill anybody who dares to eat it fresh from the sea.

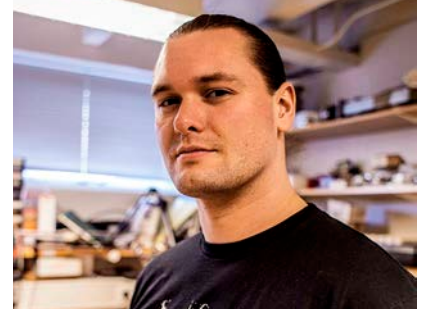
So what do Icelanders do? Well, we bury the meat in the ground and wait one to three months. Then we hang up the meat for it to ferment. Finally, you have this bitter, strong taste

akin to a punch in the face that forces the consumer to scream in anguish: "Oh, my f&ing god!"

The only way to force this down this fermented piss-bomb—hey, at least it's not poisonous!—is to drink Brennivín, which is even more diabolical than the shark meat. Go easy on the Brennivín, though, it's known for robbing people of their sanity. **VG**

ASK A Chemist

Q: Will Long-Term Climate Change Affect The Northern Lights?



Words: **Hannah Jane Cohen & Helgi Rafn Hróðmarsson**
Photo: **Helgi Rafn Hróðmarsson**

We went straight to Dr. Helgi Rafn Hróðmarsson, a.k.a. The Cosmic Chemist, to find out.

Short answer: "No...Wait! Maybe."

Long answer: this will depend on what we call "long-term." Humanity might not be around in a couple of hundred years because we treat our planet like a malformed baby wipe, but let's consider that time period.

Man-made climate change pertains to greenhouse gas emissions, which change our atmosphere's chemical composition, but not to the extent that changes in oxygen and nitrogen (99% of our atmosphere) would. These are the principal originators of the Northern Lights, so we need not worry about man-made climate change affecting the Northern Lights themselves.

Now, there is an established correlation between the Northern Lights and sunspots on the Sun's surface. Sunspot activity follows an 11-year cycle, where the number fluctuates from just a few up to as high as 250 per annum. Axiomatically, Northern Light profusion is wholly dependent on the Sun cycle.

Sunspot occurrence is tentatively linked with climate, as there have been several periods in history where minima in sunspots were observed and the average temperatures on Earth were unquestionably lower. These minima, however, coincided with large volcanic eruptions which spouted out gases that reflected sunlight and cooled our climate.

In summary, man-made climate change will not affect the Northern Lights themselves. However, climate change in terms of cloud formation can easily block out the sky and make Northern Light hunts more scarce. Less frequent Northern Lights are indeed observed during minima in the solar cycle, but whether that will be the case when the minima accompanies climate change is still up for debate.

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Panama Papers, with 170 individuals getting busted by the report. It was a proud achievement for the county, second only to the numerous times they've been named the country with the most gender equality. Yes, welcome to Iceland, the place where people think not of your genitals while they rob you blind. Truly a utopia.

Those outed by the International Consortium of Investigative Journalists (ICIJ) database included, "investors, CEOs and company board members, merchants, wholesalers, attorneys, and fishing industry leaders," according to RÚV's coverage from 2016.

Paradise lost

Iceland's citizens, though, were not as fond of this win as you'd expect. In fact, they reacted with protests, which included about 7% of the country, demanding that then prime minister Sigmundur Davíð—who was also named in the papers—resign. These protests were so lively that they even included throwing skyr at the Parliament building. While Sigmundur originally said he would not resign, he eventually did. See? Peer pressure does work.

Unfortunately, Iceland learned its lesson and years later, when the Paradise Papers were released, Iceland lost its spot as the number one country. It was a stunning defeat for the country, second only to when Björk lost Best Music Video at the Grammy's to Korn's 'Freak On A Leash.' That was certainly a doozy. 🍷

WHAT HAVE WE WON?

Words: Hannah Jane Cohen

Photo: Art Bicnick

Smiting The Panama Papers!

Socialists HATE them! You'll never guess what happened next!

Ever seen 'Scarface'? Fantastic film, right? Well, imagine that for every minute of that 170-minute movie featuring guns, mountains of cocaine, and greed, a real life greedy Icelander was there, making bank, stacking it up and burying their face in it, before

promptly dumping it abroad in offshore accounts.

A true utopia

Yes, Iceland was blessed with the highest number of people per capita in the

JUST SAYINGS



Með illu skal illt út reka

We ask: Is it justifiable to use evil to cast away evil? Well Icelanders have a saying about that, 'Með illu skal illt út reka,' and the answer is yes, you can. In English, the idiom goes like this: Cast away evil with evil. That is, of course, the main plot summary of all of the 80s and 90s action movies, meaning that shit is gonna go down and nobody is going to turn the other cheek. That said, the philosophy is flawed. Evil vs. Evil just makes more evil. But, we must add, if some family member is suddenly possessed by a demon, that would be the time to use this idiom: Cast away evil with evil! 🍷 VG

LÓABORATORIUM

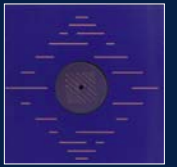


THE GRAPEVINE PLAYLIST

The must-hear tracks of the issue



Hildur - Woman At War
How do you like emotional ballads? What about Robyn? Well, mash 'em both together and you get "Woman At War," the newest effort from pop princess Hildur. Her stunning voice is put front and centre here, and we're grateful for it. **HJC**



Shelter On Wax & Jónbjörn - Statues
Lagaffe Tales label head Jónbjörn is taking off lately, quite literally: his 2019 live dates have included slots in Helsinki, Vienna and Tbilisi. The claustrophobic flatline of this techno collaboration strikingly spikes around the four minute mark. **JR**



Of Monsters & Men - Alligator
The first Icelandic act to reach a billion plays on Spotify are back. "Alligator" is a standard-issue pop/rock single that strains to be anthemic, and while the crunchy guitars are slightly too hard for it to be momcore, the trite lyrics definitely aren't. **JR**



Countess Malaise - KASH
A bright star in the Reykjavik rap scene, Countess Malaise has charisma to spare. The languid, bassy thrust of this new track, produced by Lord Pusswhip, hints at great things from her forthcoming solo album. It's coming soon: keep refreshing Soundcloud. **JR**



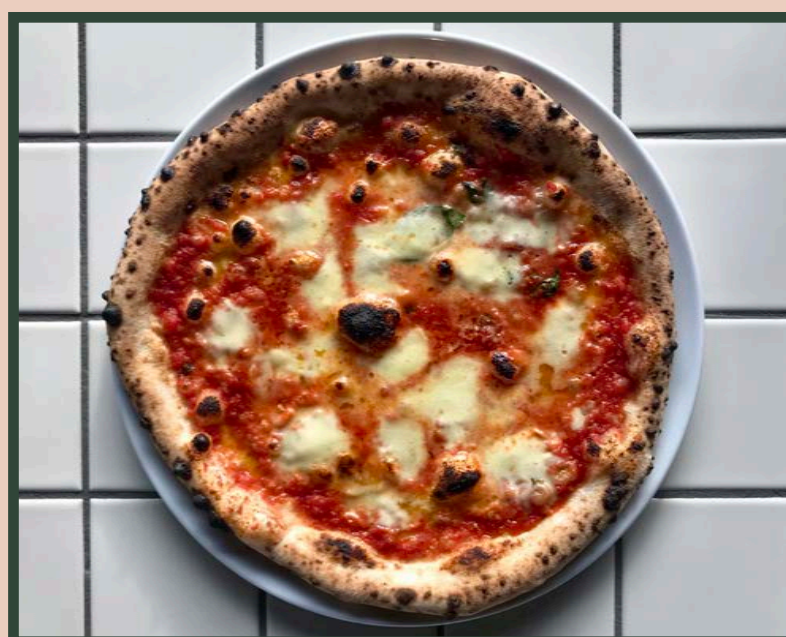
Vintage Caravan - On The Run
The Vintage Caravan might be known for their psychedelic '60s-retro sound, but "On The Run" proves the band can easily take on the '80s as well. With an old school Americana-metal sound, it personifies the sentence "Are you ready to rock?!" Think Whitesnake. **HJC**



KARITAS - Wear Somebody Else
Trap intersects with delicate pop on KARITAS' debut single "Wear Somebody Else." With a light touch, she muses about her desire to be somebody else, all while the quiet harmonies surround the listener, enveloping them in the sensation of wanting. We want more. **JR**

Listen, watch & hear more tracks: gpv.is/play

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Now the Welsh are left with Tom Jones and Goldie Lookin' Chain

Full of ire and bursting with a will to smite the country's top teams, Aron took out his frustration on the hapless Manchester City in their first match of their 2013-14 Premier League season. He smited in the club's first goal of the season in a notable 3-2 victory over the eventual winners. He would end up with a total tally of 25 goals for Cardiff—not bad for a defensive midfielder mostly charged with scything through opposition attacks like a hot battleaxe through skyr.

Player of the year

After spending an inhuman amount of his volcanic energy on Iceland's famous Euro 2016 run, a stop-start period of injuries that followed would mar much of his remaining time at Cardiff. Nevertheless, when he did feature, his assured presence always steadied the team's longboat. He won the supporter's Player of the Year award in 2017, also winning the Outstanding Contribution Award in 2019.

"We've been through a lot, me and the fans," said Aron, in his emotional leaving statement. "We've had ups and downs, good times, happy times, and tough times—as you get in football. We've had every bit of emotion together. I've been here for eight years and both of my sons were born here. I'll be a Bluebird forever, I know that for sure. I'll be looking out for the results for years to come, and the first will always be Cardiff. With the boys growing up here, they're going to know about it too. I've got a special bond with this club that I will treasure forever and, looking back on my time here, I wouldn't change it for the world."

At Al-Arabi, Aron will be reunited with Iceland's former smiter-in-chief—Heimir "The Dentist" Hallgrímsson. Rumours are being whispered that the two are on a long-term mission to loot the country's considerable resource reserves. Qatar: be afraid. The smitelords are coming.

“Little did Cardiff know that within this baby-faced Akureyri lad lay the bald-headed, long-bearded, hot-blooded Ragnar Lothbrok of world football.”

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

The Wales Is Not Enough

Aron The Annihilator sets sail from Cardiff to Qatar

Words: John Rogers Illustration: Lóa Hlín Hjálmtýsdóttir

FOOTBALL

For many people in football, the screaming, battle-hardened face of Iceland's captain and midfield destroyer Aron "The Annihilator" Gunnarsson is merely a terrifying vision that haunts their every waking and sleeping moment.

However, for the people of Cardiff, Aron has been a stoic and steadfast defender of the realm since 2011. As the sun set on their 2018-19 season, Aron announced he'd be leaving the club for Al-Arabi in Qatar this summer, finally departing the Welsh capital a firm fan favourite after an eventful eight-year spell.

His stay has seen many ups and downs, from scorching goals to unfortunate injuries. It included two successful Premier League promotion campaigns—and the two relegations that followed. Here's a recap of Aron's eventful journey into the hearts and minds of the Welsh massive.

Man of the match

Aron arrived at Cardiff City in 2011, a bright-eyed and bald-faced buck with an André Arshavin-esque brush of hair. A hot property after a successful stint at

his previous club, Coventry City, he was immediately one of the first names on the team sheet. His physical, robust style and never-say-die attitude quickly started having an impact, and he won over the Cardiff crowd in no time.

He made his mark on October 22nd of his first season, scoring two goals against Barnsley and receiving the Man of the Match award. But little did Cardiff know that deep within this baby-faced Akureyri lad lay the bald-headed, long-bearded, hot-blooded Ragnar Lothbrok of world football.

Mauling Man City

Cardiff were soon elevated to new heights, reaching the League Cup final against a resurgent Liverpool. Despite Aron playing the full 90 minutes, they ultimately lost on penalties.



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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 hazy, mountainous landscape under a soft, overcast sky. The word "Welcome" is written in a large, white, brushstroke-style font across the upper portion of the image.

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Where are we even going to put all these people?

Daring to Dream

Iceland's Quest to Host Eurovision

Words: Icelanders love the Eurovision Song Contest. Shamelessly, ironically, and sometimes secretly. Eurovision's share of Iceland's television viewers approaches 100% every year, even though Icelandic entries have not made it to the finals since 2014, when children's band Pollapönk performed "No Prejudice."

Photos: Art Bicnick
This year's entry is decidedly darker and more divisive. The anti-capitalist, BDSM, industrial electronic group

Hatari's song "Hatrið mun sigra" (Hate Will Prevail) has been generating a lot of buzz from international Eurovision watchers and betting houses are currently predicting a sixth place finish for the band.

In the spirit of this year's cheesy contest theme, "Dare to Dream," Icelanders are imagining Hatari's all-but-certain victory on the horizon.

This raises the question of whether Reykjavik could manage hosting such a

large, prominent international event. The contest is often dismissed as silly, but to play host would be a uniquely sophisticated and expensive undertaking for Iceland.

Hosting Requirements

Eurovision's organisers, the European Broadcasting Union (EBU), have three basic requirements for the contest's host: easy access to an international airport, an indoor venue that can seat about 10,000 people, and sufficient hotel space.

Despite WOW Air's recent collapse, Iceland remains very well connected to Europe and beyond. Keflavik International Airport is a 45-minute bus ride from downtown Reykjavik. The city also has a small airport right in the city

centre that can service small international flights. So that's the first requirement done and dusted.

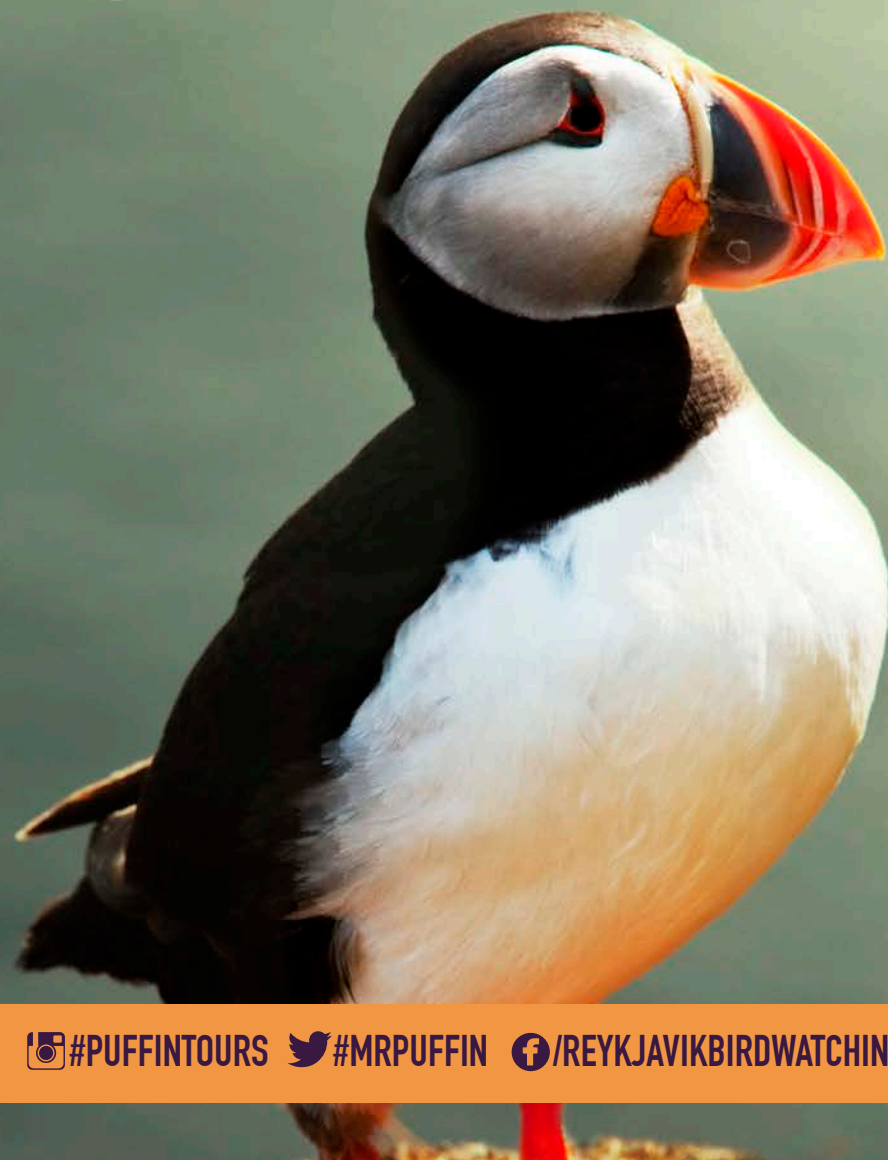
We hit a speed-bump when it comes to the venue, however. Reykjavik's signature glass oddity, the Harpa Concert Hall, while appropriately dramatic, is too small for Eurovision standards. Its largest hall can seat just 1,800 people, making it 8,200 seats shy of being a contender.

"We have done the research and we believe that there are at two venues that could host Eurovision in Iceland," said Felix Bergson, head of Iceland's Eurovision delegation at RÚV.

Those two potential venues are likely Laugardalshöll, which hosts Iceland's nominating contest, and Kórinn, a newer indoor sports arena in neighbouring Kópavogur, which hosted



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famed Justins (Bieber and Timberlake) when they performed (separately) in Iceland.

Anybody who has been watching Iceland's development over the past decade knows that we have hotel rooms to spare. Thousands of hotel rooms have been built over the last 10 years and hundreds more are expected to come online by May 2020. This includes the city's first five-star hotel next to the aforementioned Harpa, perfect for the Eurovision prima donnas.

Let's talk money

This year's contest is reported to be costing Israel's state broadcaster 28 million euro. RÚV's annual revenue in 2018 was shy of 50 million euro. Felix acknowledges the financial difficulties that would arise from Iceland hosting Eurovision.

"Eurovision will cost a lot of money and RÚV does not have a very big budget. But when we are faced with it, we will go into discussion with all the parties involved, the state, municipalities, the tourism lobby, etc. I am confident we will find the money to do it." A fine example of the Icelandic "þetta reddast" attitude.

RÚV would not be the only institution to face challenges if Eurovision were to make its way to the North Atlantic. Last autumn, Iceland hosted major NATO war games. This was controversial in itself, but to top it off, the visiting military personnel drank all of the city's beer. Eurovision fans would invade like an army of party people. Hopefully



Hatari's audience, ready for their BDSM awakening

the lesson has been learned and the city's bars will be ready their war chests.

Eurovision typically sees forty countries participating over the course of a three night, live, interactive show with close to 200 million viewers and voters. Each country's official delegation consists of its act, managers, journalists, and other support staff.

"The biggest challenge is the money and hosting an event of such a scale."

The stage show itself uses the most modern technology and must stay on an extremely tight schedule. On the night of the final, 26 wildly different acts will perform elaborate numbers for three minutes each, with only minutes to clear and reset the stage.

Though RÚV would have the

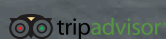
support of the EBU, nothing on the scale of Eurovision has ever been attempted on Icelandic television. The most expensive production was 2015's "Trapped," which was a crime-drama costing about a third of Eurovision, without the pressure of a live broadcast.

"The biggest challenge is the money and, of course, hosting an event of such a scale," said Felix. "This is a huge TV show that we would be leading and that would be a new experience for us. But we are willing and able."

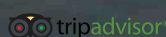
Despite the enormous challenges, Felix is eager for Iceland to host the extravaganza. "Yes, I would very much like to host the thousands of people from all over the world that would come to Iceland to enjoy this amazing party." It's all up to Hatari. 🇮🇸



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EURO VISIONS

Hatari, Israel and Allyship – when art takes a stand on a flashpoint

Words: **Andie Fontaine** Photos: **Baldur Kristjánsson** Hatari graphics courtesy of: **Ingi Kristján**

Since their formation in 2015, Hatari—an anti-capitalist synth-techno band comprising core members Matthías Trygvi Haraldsson, Klemens Hannigan and Einar Hrafn Stefánsson, alongside numerous contributors—have provoked, excited, and defied expectations.

Their live shows come replete with theatrical staging, gothic-industrial aesthetics and BDSM overtones, and their lyrical content is socially and politically critical. Their shrewd interactions with the media have been works of performance art in and of themselves. Receiving wide acclaim and playing on big stages to growing crowds, Hatari have established a popular and fascinating presence in the Icelandic music scene.

Their story took a new twist last January when Hatari threw a new curveball—they entered *Söngvakeppnin*, the preliminary competition to represent Iceland at the 2019 Eurovision Song Contest in Tel Aviv. Their entry was “*Hatrið Mun Sigra*” (“Hate Will Prevail”)—a dark, pulsing track that was a stark departure from typical Eurovision fare. Whether by the merit of the song, their arresting stage show, or their stated intent to voice support for Palestinian liberation as Iceland’s representative at the contest, the band quickly went from long-shot spoiler to odds-on favourite.

Their performance was aired on the Icelandic national broadcasting service RÚV, and Hatari—complete with a dance troupe, and dressed in leather harnesses, blank contacts, extravagant makeup, and tall platform boots—blasted through the heats, easily winning the final public vote. They’d succeeded where other outsider *Söngvakeppnin* contestants had failed, and won over the citizens of Iceland. The die was cast: Hatari would represent Iceland in Tel Aviv.

ONWARD TO ISRAEL

Three months later, on the third of May, the band’s 19-strong party departed for Israel. That same day, Israel began shelling Gaza again. The next day, Gaza responded by firing makeshift Qassam rockets into Israel, claiming one life—their first Israeli casualty by rocket since 2014; the Israeli government responded with airstrikes and heavy shelling, killing seven and wounding dozens of others, including a pregnant woman and an infant. At the time of writing, the Israeli army is poised for a ground invasion of Gaza.

The conflict between Israel and Palestine is one of the most intractable in the world. It has drawn in the involvement, whether militarily or diplomatically, of dozens of countries, many of them in Europe. Amongst people who have an opinion on the conflict, you are unlikely to find anyone with lukewarm feelings. For these reasons, the decision taken by Hatari—a band who normally embrace their ambiguousness of intent—to announce that they intend to use Eurovision as a platform to stick up for Palestine has drawn both strong praise and fierce criticism, from both sides of the conflict, at home and abroad.

The situation has put Hatari in the position of treading into unknown territory for Iceland. While most Icelanders support the liberation of Palestine, no Icelanders have ever publicly voiced unequivocal support for Palestine in

Israel and with such a global audience as Eurovision guarantees. The band admits that they are walking into the unknown, and have met with criticism from all sides, recognising the merits of much of it.

There's a lot to unpack here, but in a frank and lengthy interview on the day before departing for Israel, the Grapevine met with Matthías and Klemens, the band's two vocalists, to explore Hatari's current situation and the criticism against them, the role of art in politics, and why Eurovision matters as a platform for raising awareness about the Palestinian cause.

THE CATALYST

Until earlier this year, Hatari were an up-and-coming industrial techno art band in Iceland. They attracted attention not only for the expressly anti-capitalist messages in their songs, but also for the provocative performance art of their PR.

Most notably, in February 2018 they sent out a press release stating that they had signed a deal with Landsbanki, one of Iceland's largest banks. The statement was completely false, but the intent of the statement was, as Matthías put it, "to take people down to our level."

"We totally lied and put words in their mouth," he says. "If they responded, and quite correctly replied 'that's not what we said,' we'd succeed either way. They're forced to let it stand or respond. And that's a win-win for Hatari."

Such provocations set the scene for

their performance at Söngvakeppnin, which—with the band's distant, robotic interview style and sarcastic product placements—had an air of another prank. Their winning track is a dystopian vision of a possible future Europe, divided and destroyed by hate.

"The song is a reflection of power and powerlessness; hope and hopelessness," says Klemens. "That if people don't unite, or don't love, then hate will prevail. It's a state that's developing around the whole world, and maybe has been brewing for 70 years in Palestine and Israel. So we feel this message speaks strongly on an international scale, but also especially because the competition is held in Israel."

"We felt that many of the contradictions that Hatari deals with are reflected by Eurovision being hosted in Israel," adds Matthías. "We talk about living within a system and opposing it at the same time. On a very broad scale, that's capitalism for us. In this particular field, it's the Eurovision Song Contest—which is about peace and unity—being held in a country that is marked by conflict and disunity. For us, it's a paradox that it's supposed to be an apolitical contest, because it is so politically loaded to host it there. And that's where we see our voice coming through."

ZERO POINTS

But there was disunity of opinion in Iceland as well. This came not only from pro-Israeli Icelanders, most of them fundamentalist Christians; it also came from Icelanders who

believed Iceland should not participate in Eurovision at all, and ought to boycott the event. The hashtag #ostig ("zero points") began trending heavily on Twitter within minutes of Hatari's qualification success.

To this criticism, the band are philosophical. "For us, the question of boycotting was answered when RÚV decided that someone would indeed be sent," Matthías points out. "Because of

traditional Icelandic wrestling.

In characteristic style, the statement offered high stakes: if the band were to win, "Hatari reserve the right to settle within your borders establishing the first ever Hatari-sponsored liberal BDSM colony on the Mediterranean coast." If Netanyahu were to win, "the Israeli government will be given full political and economic control of South-Icelandic Island municipi-

"If we manage to overthrow capitalism, that would be a measure of success. Preferably selling some branded merchandise along the way."

Eurovision and the way it's organised, someone was being sent from Iceland, and if we were going to sign up and sign out, it just feels like we shouldn't have signed up in the first place. That would have been a very clear boycott on our behalf, and [pop singer and Söngvakeppnin runner-up] Friðrik Ómar would have gone, and it would have been business as usual. We believe that by using our agenda-setting power to politicise the event, at least we would have made some use of Iceland's entry. We've already been quite successful in politicising the event, and we want to step it up a notch and speak our minds more freely."

ality Vestmannaeyjar [The Westman Islands]. Members of Hatari will ensure the successful removal of the island's current inhabitants."

"He hasn't accepted," Matthías confirms. "But that's another example of if he responds, we succeed; if he doesn't, we let it stand."

"He's a bit smarter than Landsbankinn," adds Klemens.

"I thought about it, too," adds Matthías. "I thought, 'God, I hope he responds and actually wrestles us.' He would beat us easily. But that would still mean that the Prime Minister of the country was 'rassling' two Icelandic boys."

"For us it's a paradox that it's supposed to be an apolitical contest, because it's so politically loaded to host it in Tel Aviv. And that's where we see our voice coming through."

THE JEWISH RESPONSE

Initially, Hatari hoping to represent Iceland at Eurovision went largely ignored by the rest of the world. All that changed when in February the band issued a statement, in English, in which they challenged Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to a bout of glíma—that is, a form of

WILDFIRE BREAKS OUT

The band's challenge made its way to Israeli media, who had a field day with it. Some media outlets in the country incorrectly reported that Hatari's song was anti-Israel and supported hate. Unsurprisingly, that misunderstanding spread like wildfire; it is, after all, far easier to spread misinformation than it is to correct it.

Rabbi Avi Feldman, Iceland's first rabbi, was reluctant to comment at length, but told the Grapevine, "The Eurovision Song Contest was created shortly after the second World War, when Europe was rebuilding itself, with the goal of bringing countries and peoples together in unity and peace. We are very proud of Iceland's famous music scene and incredible amount of talented musicians. It would be very unfortunate to use a platform of unity and togetherness to



promote hate. Now more than ever we need to promote more love and kindness.”

Less measured responses from pro-Israeli voices have been prominent in the ongoing public discussion. The band have received threats and hate mail. In fact, Klemens says, “Eurovision’s organisers had police look into whether there was a higher level of risk regarding our participation than others.”

“One thing they did do was ask us to collect all the threats that have been issued to us,” adds Matthías. “So we went through some disturbing comments under pieces about us in the Israeli media. The Jerusalem Post—that’s where it gets disturbing. I love Haaretz, though. I bought a subscription from them last month.”

The most notable Jewish response came from the Simon Wiesenthal Centre and UK Lawyers for Israel, who issued a statement saying Hatari ought to be banned outright from participating, on the grounds that Rule 2.6 of the Eurovision Song Contest expressly forbids politicising the event. The statement was curious, giving how often Eurovision acts have expressed overtly political themes in their songs

without objection; Pollapönk, Iceland’s Eurovision representatives in 2014, performed an expressly anti-racist song, to little objection from anyone.

“We can easily dismiss that criticism, because it’s their views that we want to be criticising and strongly oppose, because they would seek to justify the occupation,” Matthías says.

THE PALESTINIAN RESPONSE

If the Jewish response to Hatari’s participation has been mixed, albeit with a much stronger response coming from those calling for them to be banned than from those voicing support, matters were further complicated by responses from Palestinians. Late last month, the Palestinian Campaign for the Academic and Cultural Boycott of Israel, one of the founding members of the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) Movement, issued a statement urging Hatari to voluntarily withdraw.

“Artists who insist on crossing the Palestinian boycott picket line, playing Tel Aviv in defiance of our calls, cannot

be going to step aside, we wouldn’t have signed up in the first place.”

Like the Jewish response, reaction from Palestinians has been mixed, with many expressing support and gratitude for what Hatari wants to do at Eurovision. “We have been talking to Palestinian artists about collaborations,” Matthías says. “But we’re not saying their names in this interview, and we’re not going to publish anything that they don’t want to publish, because of the call from the BDS movement. It’s definitely a complicated situation and we understand the tension people might feel in talking to us and working with us.”

“And there are plenty of Palestinian people who just don’t give a fuck about Eurovision,” Klemens adds.

“Maybe it’s a Eurocentric notion that the song contest is a huge deal,” Matthías admits. “Because to them it’s not.”

A THIN LINE TO WALK

Part of Hatari’s motivation for being as emphatic and as clear as possible about their specific criticism of Israel is that there’s a thin line between being critical of the Israeli government and being anti-Semitic. This is especially relevant today, as there has been a recent spate of deadly attacks on synagogues in the United States. In addition, a recent feature piece in OZY detailed that many of Iceland’s Jews have been reluctant to openly identify as Jewish, due to anti-Semitism in this country. For proof of this, a quick scroll through the comments on Icelandic articles on this topic will remove any doubt.

It’s something Hatari is keenly aware of, and they have taken steps to avoid being lumped in with Iceland’s bigots. “It’s a very thin line to tread, and you can’t reiterate it often enough that we are opposed to all forms of bigotry, whether Islamophobia, anti-Semitism or anti-Arab racism,” Matthías says. “We support everyone’s human rights. I don’t find it frustrating to have to emphasise this. There are fucking racists out there. On this point, it’s easy to be clear and explain your art: ‘Don’t use it to empower your racist views.’ So I’m happy to reiterate that. The question of not just anti-Semitism but racism in general in Iceland is a difficult one. As a society, we are in many ways naive to the complexities of racial politics.”

“Icelandic racism is subtle,” says Klemens. “It’s under the surface. The racism that is surfacing here in Iceland is something that I’m not very connected to, because it’s not around me in my kind of echo chamber—but you can see it with the refugee crisis that’s happening now, and how that is being dealt with. It’s absurd and brutal how the police reacted to refugee protesters here.”

THE VENUE IS ITSELF POLITICAL

The overarching question in this entire affair, apart from the varied responses from Jewish and Palestinian voices alike, can be condensed simply: why did Hatari choose Eurovision—a cheesy song contest best known for over-the-top glitz and glamour—as a platform for voicing support for Palestine?

To Klemens’ mind, this year’s Eurovision is already a political event by virtue of the venue itself.

“The competition becomes political by the location where it’s held,” he says, “and all artists and performers that come to compete are making a political

statement whether they’re aware of it or not.”

Furthermore, they believe that being able to reach so many people around the world—an audience who are perhaps usually apolitical—also makes Eurovision a useful platform.

“Bringing the media attention that would otherwise be focused on fluff to pressing concerns would also be a measure of success,” says Matthías. “If anyone reads this interview and then Googles ‘the right to return’ and ‘ending the occupation’ and the demand for equal citizenship in their own country—which are the three pillars of the Palestinian struggle—that’s a measure of success. Because these are such obvious demands, and we want to discuss them.”

“We’re getting an important message to the 200- or 300-million viewers that decide to sit down on a Saturday night to watch an entertainment show,” Klemens adds. “If we manage to get them to think about our message, that would be a huge achievement.”

WHAT WOULD SUCCESS MEAN?

No one operates under the delusion that Hatari could single-handedly “solve” the Israel-Palestine conflict with their Eurovision performance, and many have speculated whether it would make any material difference one way or the other. For Hatari, there are other parameters for what would constitute a success. Victory at Eurovision, they agree, would be an obvious indication of success, but there are other factors to consider as well.

“It’s hard to say what would count as ‘success’ in our Eurovision performance, because we’re stepping into the abyss,” Klemens tells the Grapevine. “We have no clue what is going to happen.”

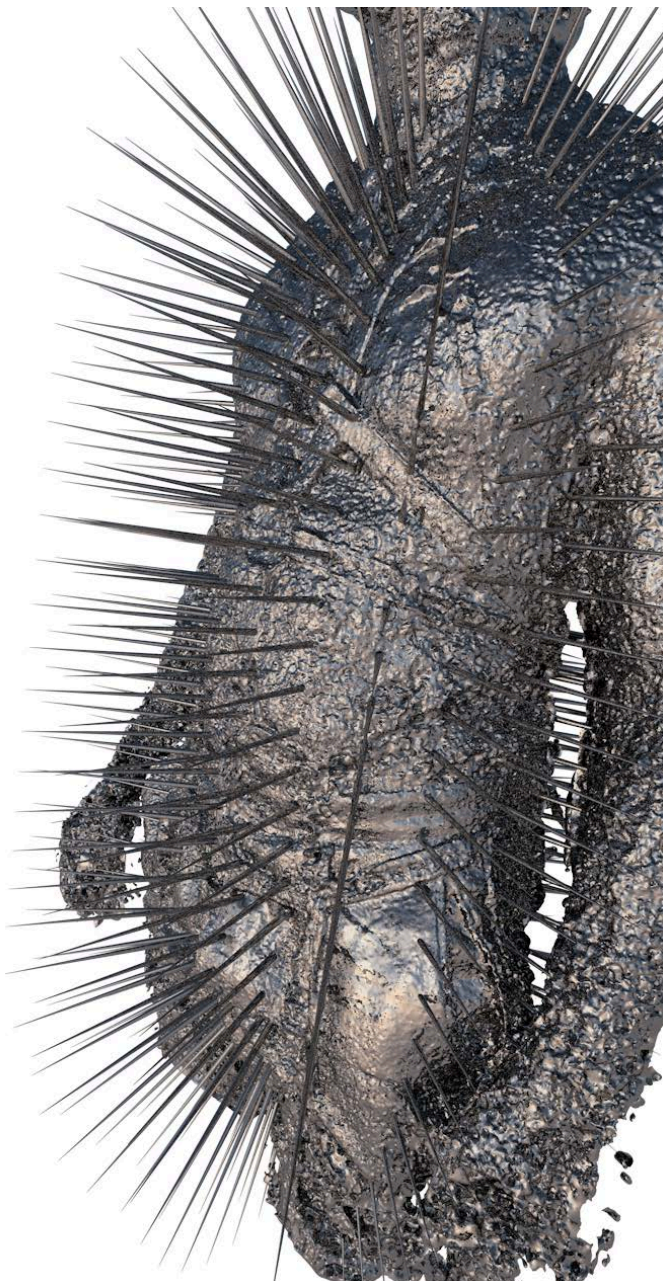
“Will we be banned from performing? Will we get through the final? How will we be received by Israelis and other contestants? How will our politics play out in the media?” Matthías wonders. “There are so many unknown unknowns. But what we said about getting uncomfortable, difficult questions into the heads of people who wouldn’t otherwise be inclined to tackle them—that’s a measure of success.”

“A change of mindset is what we need to end conflicts in the Middle East, Europe and the world—to survive as a species,” Klemens adds.

“If we manage to overthrow capitalism, that would also be a measure of success. Preferably selling some branded merchandise along the way,” says Matthías. “So that’s a few things: victory at Eurovision, politicising the masses, discussing the demands of the Palestinian people. To use the scale of popularity of the Eurovision Song Contest to draw attention to the oppression of the Palestinian people, and also to shed light on the abundance of contemporary Palestinian art and music.”

The Eurovision final will be broadcast live on May 19th, and some of these unknown unknowns may have been answered by the time you read this. Whatever happened before, during or after the song contest, Hatari have undoubtedly added to the many voices drawing attention to the Palestinian cause. They have forced us to consider not only the role of Eurovision, but also to question what it means when artists willingly perform in Israel in the midst of this brutal conflict. How they will fare at Eurovision remains to be seen, but in these senses, Hatari have already won. 🍷

“‘Hatarið Mun Sígna’ is a reflection of power and powerlessness; hope and hopelessness. That if people don’t unite, or don’t love, then hate will prevail.”



offset the harm they do to our human rights struggle by ‘balancing’ their complicit act with some project with Palestinians,” their statement read, in part. “Palestinian civil society overwhelmingly rejects this fig-leaving, having learnt from the fight against apartheid in South Africa. While we appreciate gestures of solidarity, we cannot accept them when they come with an act that clearly undermines our nonviolent human rights movement. The most meaningful expression of solidarity is to cancel performances in apartheid Israel.”

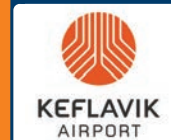
Here at home, Salmann Tamimi, a founding member of the Iceland-Palestine Association, echoed similar sentiments, telling the Grapevine, “Of course no country should give Israel a reward for occupying Palestine. When you take part in their party, you help them to keep oppressing the Palestinians.”

The Eurovision boycott campaign has been gaining ground, with Palestinians and Israeli voices urging artists to withdraw, in addition to hundreds of queer rights groups, former Eurovision artists and thousands of ordinary people. This response, Matthías says, is “worth meditating on and listening to.”

“This criticism, of course, comes from people who are right—they are fighting for a noble cause, speaking on behalf of an oppressed people,” he adds. “So of course this criticism touches us. There’s an obvious difference of approach. Even though the BDS movement would prefer that we don’t attend at all, we still support them and their cause and tactics. They’re a non-violent organisation fighting on behalf of an oppressed nation. For us, if we

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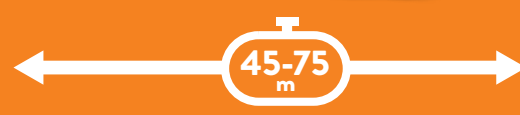
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CULTURE NEWS

Festival

Reykjavík Metalfest 2019 is from May 16th to 18th at Gaukurinn. Tickets are 13,000 ISK.



The organisers, fresh from burning down a church

Throw Those Horns Up!

Reykjavík Metalfest is back and bigger than ever

Words: Hannah Jane Cohen

Photo: Art Bicnick

"It'll be one hell of a time," Ingólfur Ólafsson says with a grin. One of the creators of Reykjavík Metalfest, he's seen the festival evolve from a small one-day affair at Gaukurinn to the three-day extravaganza it is now. This year features a world-class lineup of local and international heavy hitters and Ingólfur beams with pride as he talks about what has become one of the highlights on the Icelandic metal calendar.

"It's never been this big before," fellow organiser Unnar Sigurðsson adds. He joined Metalfest after its first year in 2016. Co-organiser Gerður Sif Ingólfssdóttir nods. "I'm so excited for this," she adds.

Heavy rebranding

For the first three years of the festival, you might have heard it called Reykjavík Deathfest, but this year, the team made the executive decision to pivot to Reykjavík Metalfest. "We felt that the lineup wasn't really all death metal anymore, so it was time to rebrand. The name Deathfest just didn't apply anymore," says Ingólfur. "We wanted to bring in more black metal and grindcore and other kinds of heavy music. Metalfest is a more fitting name."

And he's not exaggerating—this year's lineup is truly diverse. From Auðn's atmospheric black metal to

the unrelenting extremity of Napalm Death, most metal forms will have a representative—a point the organizers are particularly proud of. Getting Napalm Death to come to Iceland was a particular achievement, they emphasize. Anybody familiar with the genre will agree that the very idea of seeing Napalm Death in as intimate a venue as Gaukurinn is pretty crazy. You really won't find that anywhere but Metalfest.

Bringing Potential back

But Metalfest won't just highlight the best of new metal, the festival also makes it a point to highlight the oldest and greatest hits of Icelandic metal. "We have this trend where we resurrect old Icelandic bands that haven't played for a long time," Ingólfur says. Last year saw the beloved black metal group Gone Postal reform, while this year's iteration will have Icelandic black metal pioneers Potential play their entire 1999 effort 'Bálsýn.'

It's a show that Gerður is particularly jazzed about. "It'll be the first time they play the entire record, start to finish," she explains excitedly. "It's the 20th anniversary of the album this year."

More than a show

Alongside the actual festival, Metalfest will host a screening of 'Lords of Chaos'—Vice's black metal biopic detailing the feats of Mayhem, Burzum and more—and the grindcore documentary 'Slave To The Grind,' after which there will be a Q&A with Napalm Death bassist Shane Embury. The festival will also be hosting panels with metal industry representatives and journalists at IDNÓ.

"I'm just excited to stand here and experience it," Unnar says. "To see it happen finally." Ingólfur nods. "When we started, we basically wanted to throw a kick-ass death metal show in Reykjavík," he explains. "And it snowballed and now we're here. It's amazing." 🍷

ELECTRIC DREAMS

Music

Listen to NonYoBiz Records at nonyobizrecords.bandcamp.com and buy their recent compilation CD at Lucky Records



NonYoBiz Records Is Back In Business

Local electronic label NonYoBiz is back full force

NonYoBiz is an Icelandic electronic music label run by one Kári Guðmundsson—formerly known as Kári Hypno and currently part of the Hidden People music project—and DJ Dolphin, who manages the label's look and design. It started a few years ago as an outlet for music and other experiments. The label has been laying low for a little while now but have in recent months decided to go full

force into releasing new music for the masses.

NonYoBiz representatives told Electric Dreams their goal is "to release mind-blowing music while not taking things too seriously." Kári, for one, releases music under a few different aliases. "Hidden People is a techno-collective consisting of me and my partner in crime Siggí a.k.a. Sonny Crockett," he explains. "For my

breakbeat-jungle-electro productions I go by the alias DJ Allskynz. And I use KARIG313 for my LP records."

Amongst other releases, NonYoBiz have released two compilation CDs. The first one came out on Record Store Day 2015. Meant as a gift to share with friends and industry people, it contained contributions by artists like Ohm, O.D. Wilson and Hyperboreans. The second was released on Record Store Day 2019. "It's mostly electro tracks, but there are techno, house and jungle tracks on there as well," says Kári.

The second NonYoBiz compilation features young and up-and-coming artists like Volruptus, Kosmodod, Tyler Stratman, Encounter, DJ Allskynz, Hidden People and Shag. "We gathered demos from our favourite Icelandic (and one American) artists and cherry-picked the greatest tracks," Kári says. "This time, the CD has the same look, but in a clear jewel case with a bunch of cool stickers."

Another recent release from the label is a limited-release cassette tape with music under Kári's KARIG313 moniker called 'Dream Haze,' which is still available for purchase at Lucky Records and on Bandcamp. "We have a few more releases lined-up this year, which we are super excited about," he finishes. "And we might have a NonYoBiz concert night this summer, so stay tuned!" 🍷

Words: Alexander Jean Le Sage de Fontenay

Photo: Tammy Olson / NYB Marketing Dept



“I keep an open mind to be full of desire for ideas, and to be ready to catch them.”

Photographer Anna Maggý has an excellent eye

Photographing The Unseen

Anna Maggý aims for the top, creatively and professionally

Words: Anna Margrét Björnsson Photos: Anna Maggý & Dóra Dúna

Photographer

Anna Maggý is a photographer, videographer and artist. Follow her on Instagram at [@not_annamaggy](#)

Anna Maggý is a rising star in Reykjavík. The work of the 24-year-old photographer, videographer and artist has been featured in many exhibitions, magazines and advertising campaigns. With a striking style that effortlessly captures the zeitgeist, she has recently moved into directing music videos. Describing herself as chaotic, extreme, individual and unstoppable, she's thought of as one of the best Icelandic photographers of her generation.

Having grown up in the West of Iceland, Anna Maggý moved to Reykjavík when she was eight years old. Her childhood was defined by freedom—something that she believes shaped her in many ways. “I’m definitely a very free spirit,” she says. “I really liked spending time on my own when I was younger and I enjoyed making things with my hands. My grandparents sent me to art school at a young age so I studied fine arts until I began my career as a photographer.”

The career choice “just happened,” she shrugs. “I fell in love with the pro-

cess of capturing a moment into some kind of form or record. My first camera was a tiny pink Canon, which I was given as a confirmation gift. I haven’t stopped taking pictures since that moment.”

No understanding of time

Anna Maggý swapped art school for the Icelandic school of photography, Ljósmyndaskólinn, where she studied for two years. “Until I got kicked out,” she smiles. “But I really recommend that school. The set up is amazing and the teaching method is really personal.”

Nevertheless, she has developed a strong personal style. “A great image must tell a story,” she says. “But it’s also really important for me that images somehow confuse me, disturb me or grab my attention for a considerably

long time. Images that are really challenging for the eye and the mind.”

She describes her own style of photography as “Surreal and real, and maybe confusing. I forget time when I’m in action. I don’t understand time. I do—but I don’t.”

However, Anna Maggý also doesn’t stray to the other extreme. “I don’t think about timelessness when I take photos,” she says. “But I think a timeless photo

captures the moment in such a way that an audience can relate to it, even many years later, I guess. Timelessness is a big word. It is partially objective and therefore subject to bias and

opinions. You’ll see more often than not that it’s really the opinion of the viewer that makes the final call.”

“It’s really important for me that images somehow confuse me or disturb me.”

The magic of shooting on film

Anna Maggý shoots primarily on film in her personal work, but uses digital cameras for commercials. “I use digital for jobs that I have to work fast and finish quickly,” she explains. “For me, film is more magical. Sometimes it’s good to not to have too many moments, too many frames and too many options.”

For Anna Maggý, printed photography still has power in the fast moving digital world. “It’s not the same to look at pieces of art from a phone or a computer than actually seeing it in reality,” she says. “And I love the physical presence of a print. I often feel that people are now realizing that photography is also an art form. Fine art prints created by the artist because they best represent the artist’s vision. For me, a photograph simply isn’t a photograph until it’s printed.”

Just say yes

Anna Maggý made her first music video two years ago—another thing that “just happened.” She was asked by an artist, and took the opportunity. “I just said yes and decided to go ahead and do it,” she says. “I let myself develop and to constantly try out new things. I have no idea what I’ll do next.”

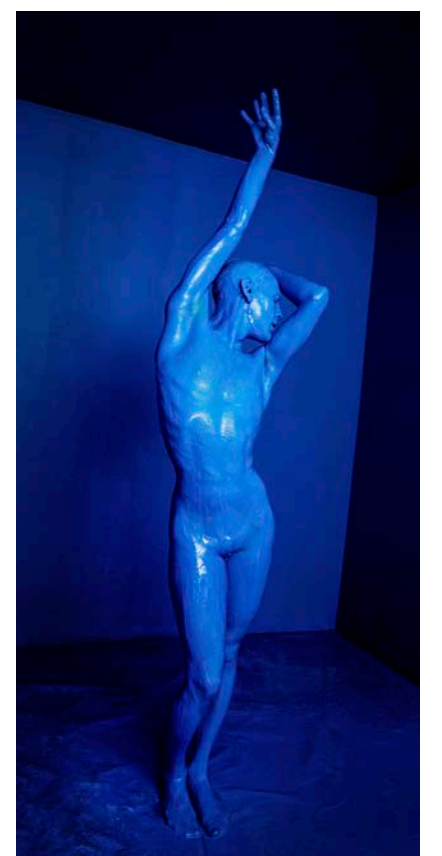
She has previously worked with artists like rappers Jóipjé + Króli, electronic artist Futuregrapher, and acclaimed singers and musicians Högni and Bríet. For the new video that she directed for Munstur she was given creative control, and shot the video at the Iceland Institute for the Arts using a blue backdrop specially made for the video. Actors and models clad in blue appear in front of the camera, creating images that are part fashion-shoot, part art installation and part surrealist fantasy.

Desire for ideas

She has a strong affinity for Icelandic music, including favourites like Gus Gus, Björk and Mr. Silla. But many of her inspirations come simply from day-dreaming. “I keep an open mind,” she says, “to be full of desire for ideas and to be ready to catch them.”

Her current workload includes three more music videos—but as always, she struggles to sit still. “I’m going to India tomorrow,” she finishes. “Hopefully I will catch some good ideas there.”

At the top of her game, Anna Maggý is still hungry for more. Perhaps the trip will give her the opportunity to finally capture her dream subject. In her own words? “I’d love to photograph the unseen.”



Anna's Munstur music video



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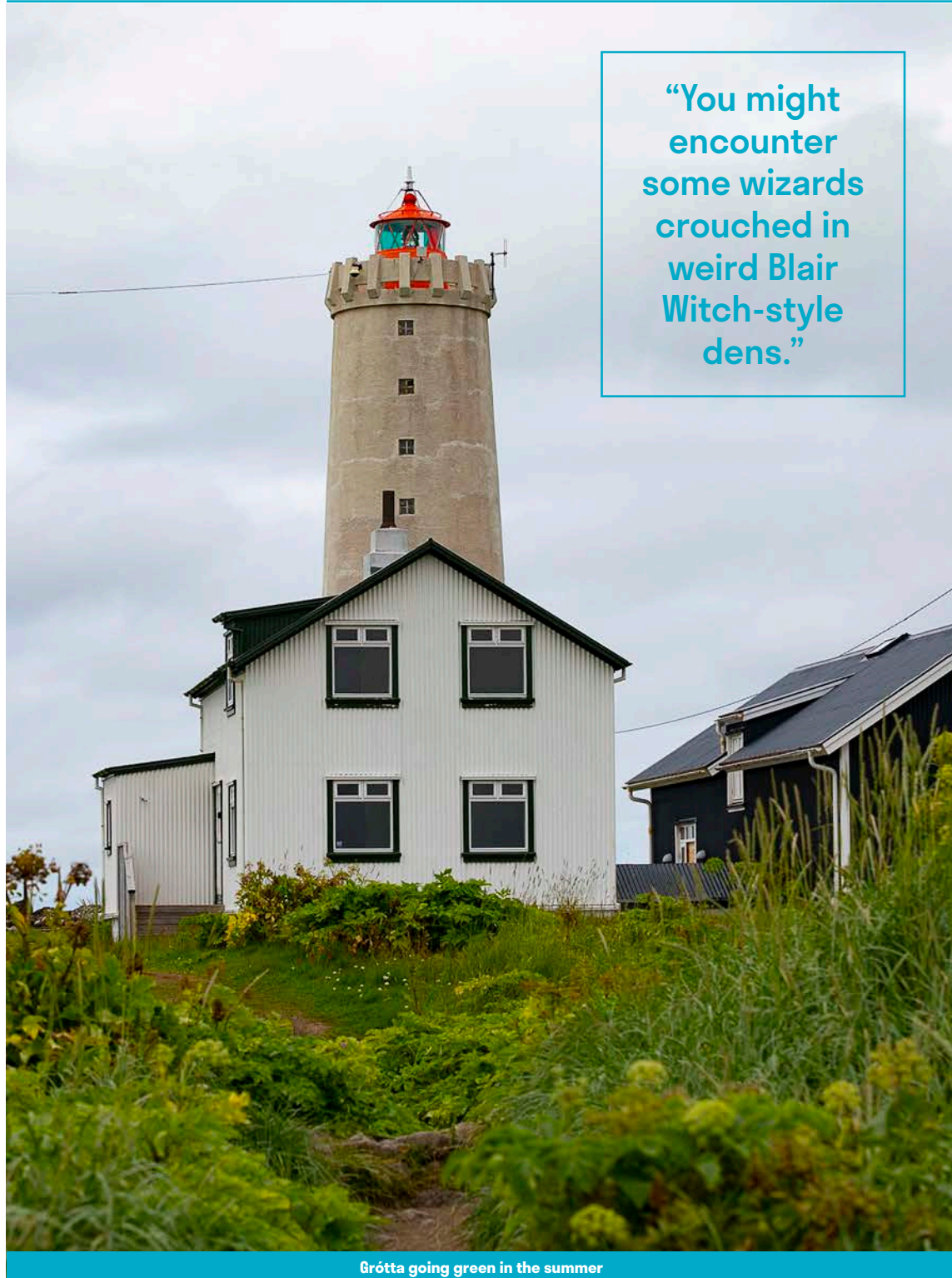
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“You might encounter some wizards crouched in weird Blair Witch-style dens.”

Gróttá going green in the summer

I'M WALKIN' HERE

Where to wander on a summer day in Reykjavík

Words: John Rogers Photos: Art Bicnick

Summer is a theoretical and occasionally occurring phenomenon here in Iceland. Even if you see blue skies through the window in the morning, you'd be wise to pack a hat for later. And maybe something waterproof. But before that rain shower, here are some places you could head to while the sun shines.

Laugardalur



This leafy leisure area is a family favourite. It contains the Laugardalslaug pool, a large park, the botanical gardens, a petting zoo, and various play areas. The Ásmundarsafn sculpture museum is a beautiful building with contemporary displays

and a sculpture garden; end up at Kaffi Lækur for lunch or coffee. In the summer, you can take a ferry to Viðey island, in the midst of the Faxaflói bay.

Öskjuhlíð



Overlooking 101 Reykjavík is Öskjuhlíð, the forested hill crowned by the Perlan visitor's centre. The hill itself has a network of trails—from gravel roads to barely-visible tracks—that wind past ruined WWII bunkers and pillboxes. The area is frequented by Reykjavík's LARPerS, so you might also encounter some wizards crouched in weird Blair Witch-style dens. At the foot of the hill, there's a rabbit-infested graveyard, and you can finish your

stroll with a dip and some lunch at the Nauthólsvík beach and café.

Vesturbær



The Vesturbær neighbourhood lies over the hill from 101, past the University of Iceland campus. Visit the relaxed Vesturbæjarlaug swimming pool, then head to Kaffihús Vesturbæjar for a sit-down lunch (or drop by the Melabuðin grocery store and deli for some picnic supplies and head down to the sun-kissed park area at Ægisiða). Pop into the Nordic House on the way home for an exhibition, or dinner at Aalto Bistro.

Downtown



If you're feeling truly lazy—well, who can blame you. It's summer. Live your

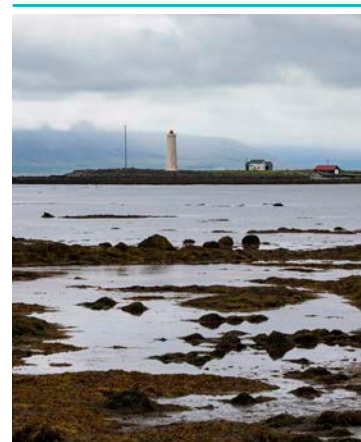
life! The Tjörnin pond is surrounded by parks, or if you're feeling social, buy some tinnies, and bask in the sun at Austurvöllur. Café Paris has a drinking terrace if you're phobic of grass, or go to Sundhöllin for a refreshing outdoor soak; the Einar Jónsson Museum's walled garden is also a quiet haven. Watch the sunset from Sky Bar.

Grandi



This ex-industrial neighbourhood might still be mostly concrete and metal, but it can make for a chilled summer day out. Get brunch at Coccoo's Nest, then meander over to the Marshall House for some contemporary art; climb the Púfa hill-sculpture for a view over to Esja and Harpa, then head to Grandi Matthöll for dinner; Bryggjan Brúgghús has a sun deck for a relaxed drink.

Gróttá



At the end of the Seltjarnarnes peninsula lies Gróttá, a picturesque seaside spot with a black sand beach and a lighthouse that's reachable by causeway at low tide. There's also a nature reserve with some walking paths and birdwatching information, a tiny hotpot to dip your feet, and the promise of a swim at Seltjarnarneslaug to round things off. It's 5km from downtown; take the bus, or do a bike ride along the coastal pathway, returning via Vesturbæjar.

Esja & Úlfarsfell



Two more ambitious hikes in the Greater Reykjavík area include conquering the mountains Úlfarsfell and Esja. Úlfarsfell is just 211 metres high, and there are steeper or more circuitous trail options leading to the summit; the Lágafellslaug pool is nearby, offering a view of the mountain you just climbed. Esja is the last stop on the city bus system, and has paths of varying difficult to the 914m summit. 🍷

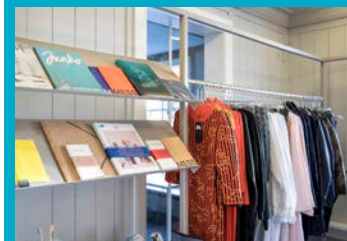


BEST OF REYKJAVÍK

Best Fashion Boutique

Winner: Yeoman
Skólavörðustigur 22

Having dressed everyone from up-and-coming artist JFDR to grand dame Björk, Hildur Yeoman is a star of the local fashion scene. Her trademarks are busy prints on fine fabrics, cut into flowing shapes; she also dabbles in extravagant evening wear, such as her striking mirror-ball effect gown. The store also spotlights interesting stuff Hildur has encountered on her travels, from jewellery to exotic tea. “You can't see an awards show without someone wearing Yeoman,” said the panel. “Her pieces are uplifting.” Influenced equally by nature and the occult, inside her patterns you'll find icons and imagery in endlessly fascinating combinations.



Runners Up:

Akkúrat
Aðalstræti 2

Alongside all the intriguing magazines, ornaments and homewares, Akkúrat also carries a strong line of streetwear, including their signature Döðlur sweatshirt range. Cosy, oversized, and bearing a unique spin on the Icelandic “D,” nobody else back home will have one of these.



Aftur

Laugavegur 39

Aftur created that distinctive 101 Reykjavík look of flowing black dresses and oversized sweaters. While it has, in recent years, kept that aesthetic up, it has since added a focus on eco-friendliness and sustainability. “It would be wrong to talk about Icelandic fashion without talking about Aftur,” one panellist said.

May 10th—May 23rd

In Your Pocket

Reykjavík Map

Places We Like

Best Of Reykjavík

Perfect Day

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



Words:
Karítas M. Bjarkadóttir
Photo:
Art Bicnick

Karítas M. Bjarkadóttir

Karítas M. Bjarkadóttir, or Karja as she is called, is one of Iceland's most intriguing young poets. At only 18-years-old, she just released her fourth poetry book, and last year she made headlines in Iceland when she read her poems on Women's Day Off in Reykjavík in front of thousands of women demanding fair pay. We sat down with the poet to hear about her perfect day in Reykjavík.

First thing in the morning

My favourite and ideal mornings are those where I have a lot of time to get ready. I maybe set the alarm clock fairly early to be able to lay in bed and watch the sun shine through my curtains for a while, before I finally get up and go to the kitchen. I love those mornings where I have time to make coffee and breakfast and take a long shower, put on some non-hurried makeup and choose my outfit without being in a rush.

Around midday

On the perfect day I wouldn't have

any classes, but I probably have some homework that I can go to Þjóðarbókhlaðan to work on, or maybe a writing project or fun book so that I can enjoy the silence and peace at Þjóðbó. Maybe I'd even meet a friend there. I find it very relaxing to isolate myself for one or two hours during the day to focus on homework or other projects. It makes me so much more ready to socialize throughout the rest of the day. As an introvert, I need it.

Around lunchtime

After charging my social batteries and getting some work done, the perfect day would continue by going to lunch with a friend, perhaps a girlfriend I haven't been able to meet for a while. We'd do some catching up over a thali at Hraðlestin, for example. A long lunch with a good friend always makes my day.

In the afternoon

On the perfect day, it would of course be sunny and warm enough for a cute dress and an afternoon walk. I love having time to walk and, as someone who takes the bus, it's

so vital to slow down your days every now and then. An afternoon walk around downtown Reykjavík with some feel-good music in my headphones often helps me get ideas for poems or writing music. I would end up at Kaffibrennslan with some good coffee and my notebook to try and get my ideas on paper.

Around dinnertime

If my day isn't too packed—and the perfect day wouldn't be—I love to go home and eat dinner with my parents and younger sister. Some quality family time, asking them about their day and telling them about mine. Cosying up with my sister while she gushes about some musical she loves at the moment always makes the night a bit better.

In the heat of the night

After dinner I love going out and meeting friends. The perfect day would probably end with me going to a concert and watching any one of my talented friends play their music, I'd dance with good friends, before taking the bus home—and not being cold walking home.



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American Bar Austurstræti 8 D3	ASÍ Art Gallery Freyjúgata 41 G6 Open Tue-Sun 13-17
Andrými Bergþórugata 20 G6	Aurora Reykjavík Grandagarður 2 B1 Open 09-21
B5 Bankastræti 5 E4	Asgrímur Jónsson Museum Bergstaðastr. 74 G4 July 8-Sep 1, Mon-Fri
Bar Ananas Klappargstígur 28 E5	Berg Contemporary Klappargstígur 16 E5 Tu-F 11-17, Sat 13-17
Bió Paradís Hverfisgata 54 E5	The Culture House Hverfisgata 15 E5 Open daily 10-17
Bjarni Fel Austurstræti 20 E4	The Einar Jónsson Museum Eiríksgata G5 Open Tue-Sun 10-17
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Boston Laugavegur 28b E5	Galleri List Skipholt 50A H10 M-F 11-18, Sat 11-16
Dillon Laugavegur 30 E5	Hafnarborg Strandgata 34, 220 D3 Open Wed-Mon 12-17
Dubliner Naustin 1-3 D3	Hitt Húsið Pósthússtræti 3-5 D4
English Pub Austurstræti 12 D3	Hverfissgalleri Hverfisgata 4 D4 Tu-Fri 13-17, Sat 14-17
Gaukurinn Tryggvagata 22 D3	i8 Gallery Tryggvagata 16 D3 Tu-Fri 11-18, Sat 13-17
Hard Rock Café Lækjargata 2a D3	
Hressó Austurstræti 20 D3	
Húrra Naustin D3	
lönó Vonarstræti 3 E3	The Penis Museum Laugavegur 116 F8 Open daily 10-18
Kex Hostel Skúlagata 28 E7	Kirsuþerjatréð Vesturgata 4 D3 M-F 10-18, Sat-Sun 10-17
Kaffibarinn Bergstaðastræti 1 E4	Kling & Bang Grandagarður 20 A4 W-Sun 14-18, Th 12-21
Kaffi Vinyl Hverfisgata 76 E6	Listastofan Hringbraut 119 A4 Open Wed-Sat 13-17
Kiki Queer Bar Laugavegur 22 E5	Living Art Museum Grandagarður 20 A4 Tu-F 11-17, Sat 13-17
Loft Bankastræti 7 E4	Mokka Kaffi Skólavörðustígur 3A E5 Open daily 9-18:30
Mengi Öðinsgata 2 F5	Museum of Design and Applied Art Garðatorg 1 E5 Open Tu-Sun 12-17
Nordic House Sturluggata 5 H2	The National Gallery of Iceland Frikirkjuvegur 7 F3 Open daily 10-17
Paloma Naustin D3	The National Museum Sudurgata 41 G2 Open daily 10-17
Prikió Bankastræti 12 E4	The Nordic House Sturluggata 5 H2 Thu-Fri 11-17, W 11-20
R6013 Ingólfsstræti 20 E4	Hafnarhús Tryggvagata 17 D3 Open 10-17, Thu 10-22
Reykjavík Roasters Kárastræti 1 F5	Kjarvalsstaðir Flókagata 24 H8 Open daily 10-17
Stofan Café Vesturgata 3 D3	
Ölsmíjan Lækjargata 10 E3	
Tívoli bar Hafnarstræti 4 D3	
Tjarnarbrío Tjarnargata 12 E3	
	Ásmundarsafn Sigtún D3 Open daily 10-17
	Reykjavík City Library Tryggvagata 15 D3 Mon-Thu 10-19, Fri 11-18, Sat-Sun 13-17
	Árbæjarsafn Kistuhyllur 4 D3 Open daily 9-18
	The Settlement Exhibition Aðalstræti 16 D3 Open daily 9-18
	Reykjavík Museum of Photography Tryggvagata 15 D3 Mon-Thu 10-18, Fri 11-18, Sat-Sun 13-18
	Saga Museum Grandagarður 2 B2 Open Mon-Fri 10-16
	Sigurjón Ólafsson Museum Leugarnestangi 70 D3 Open Tu-Sun 14-17
	SÍM Hafnarstræti 16 D3 Open Mon-Fri 10-16
	Tveir Hrafnar Baldursgata 12 G4 Open Fri-Sat 13-16
	Wind & Weather Window Gallery Hverfisgata 37 E5

Vital Info



Useful Numbers

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

Post Offices

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

Pharmacies

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

Opening Hours - Bars & Clubs

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

Opening Hours - Shops & Banks

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

Swimming Pools

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

Public Toilets

Public toilets in the centre can be found inside the green-poster covered towers located at Hlemmur, Ingólfsstorg, 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**
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A




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The Map

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

Dining

1. 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.

2. 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. Insider tip: their veggie burger (vegan optional) gives meat patties a serious run for their money.

3. Austur-Indíafjélagið

Hverfisgata 56

Still going strong twenty years on, Austur-Indíafjélagið is an institution. Make a meal of the delicate salmon pollichathu, kozhi mappas and kulchas and share it family style. Keep your eyes peeled for the vegetarian and vegan dishes as well.

4. Reykjavík Roasters

Kárástigur 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. Deig Workshop

Tryggvagata 14

Barring kleina and the odd US chain, we’ve been a doughnut starved nation. But thanks to Deig, fresh fried doughnuts are a reality. Should we gush about the custard filled creme brulee doughnut or cry for the now discontinued surmjölk and Cheerios doughnut? (Bring it back!) They make pretty good bagels too. Pst... they open at 7am.

6. Hi Noodle

Frakkastigur 9

Reykjavík’s newest ramen bar became an instant favourite for many.

With a slow-cooked, temperature controlled broth, the chef—Chen—is aiming to consistently deliver his carefully designed recipes. The portions are a little modest: best order some dumplings on the side of your Dan Dan if you’ve a big appetite. Vegan option available.

7. Apótek

Austurstræti 16

Even though Apótek is up there in price when it comes to dining, the two- and three-course lunch offer is great value for money and perfect for when you want to stretch that lunch hour to the tilt. Furthermore, with an awarded head mixologist at the counter, this place offer the best cocktails in town in their slightly Oriental lounge bar.

8. Hlemmur Mathöll

Hlemmur

Hlemmur station, at the top of Hverfisgata, has long been a dark, slightly unsavoury space where people hide from the winter elements and wait for the bus. Having undergone a thorough renovation over the last year, it recently reopened as a bright and bustling food court, offering everything from spicy Vietnamese street food to fine wines, coffee and snacks, and fresh produce.

9. Hagavagninn

Hofsvallagata 52

With one of Iceland’s most popular rappers behind the team, Hagavagninn opened shop in place of the old west side hotdog stand. Their vegan burger has a fan following thanks to the fat, juicy patty. The pickled red onions add pizzazz.

10. Pylsuhúsið

Ingólfstorg

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

Drinking

11. Ölstofan

Vegamótastigur

With low music, dim lighting, lots nooks to converse in and a big central bar, Ölstofan is a no-bullshit place. There’s an interesting older crowd, it’s always open late, and you can have a pint and chat without

anyone bothering you.

12. Bravó

Laugavegur 22

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

13. The Pedersen Suite

Ingólfstræti 7a

This rooftop bar is located on the top of the cavernous Gamla Bíó theatre. It has loads of seating with soft furniture to luxuriate on, a view across the harbour, cocktails, and all the sun you could wish for. The regular crowd is mostly loud business types, so find a good niche to escape them.

14. Kaffibarinn

Bergstaðastræti 1

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

15. Gaukurinn

Tryggvagata 22

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

16. Session Bar

Fógetagarður

Session Bar is a minimalist craft-beer-focused drinking den housed in a former hair salon in the heart of downtown. There are sixteen beers on tap, both Icelandic and international, and they have a focus on keeping the prices affordable, in contrast to Reykjavík’s generally pricey craft bar

17. VEDUR

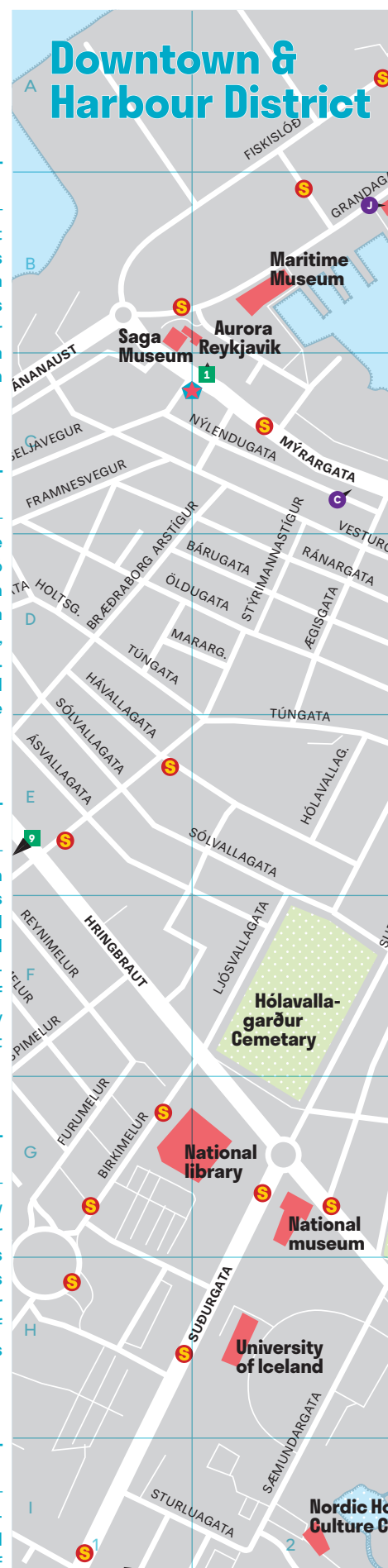
Klapparstigur 33

This charming, low key hole-in-the-wall bar is a firm favourite: with comfy seating or bar stools where you can watch the friendly bartenders get to work mixing your cocktail of choice.

18. Bastard Brew & Food

Vegamótastigur 4

This downtown bar is something of a beer palace. It’s an English pub style environment, without the sense of history—everything from the tables



to the plush leather seating are catalogue-fresh—but with eleven beers on tap, a great happy hour, a promising menu, DJs, and two beers brewed in the in-house brewery, it’s already a great drinking session spot.

Shopping

19. Kvartýra №49

Laugavegur 49

This minimalistic, Bauhaus-esque spot took the Icelandic fashion scene by storm upon opening in 2018, with its eclectic streetwear selection. They have designers that no one else has, designers that you wouldn’t know before going there.

Grandi Mathöll is Reykjavik's only street food hall

← located in an old fish factory!



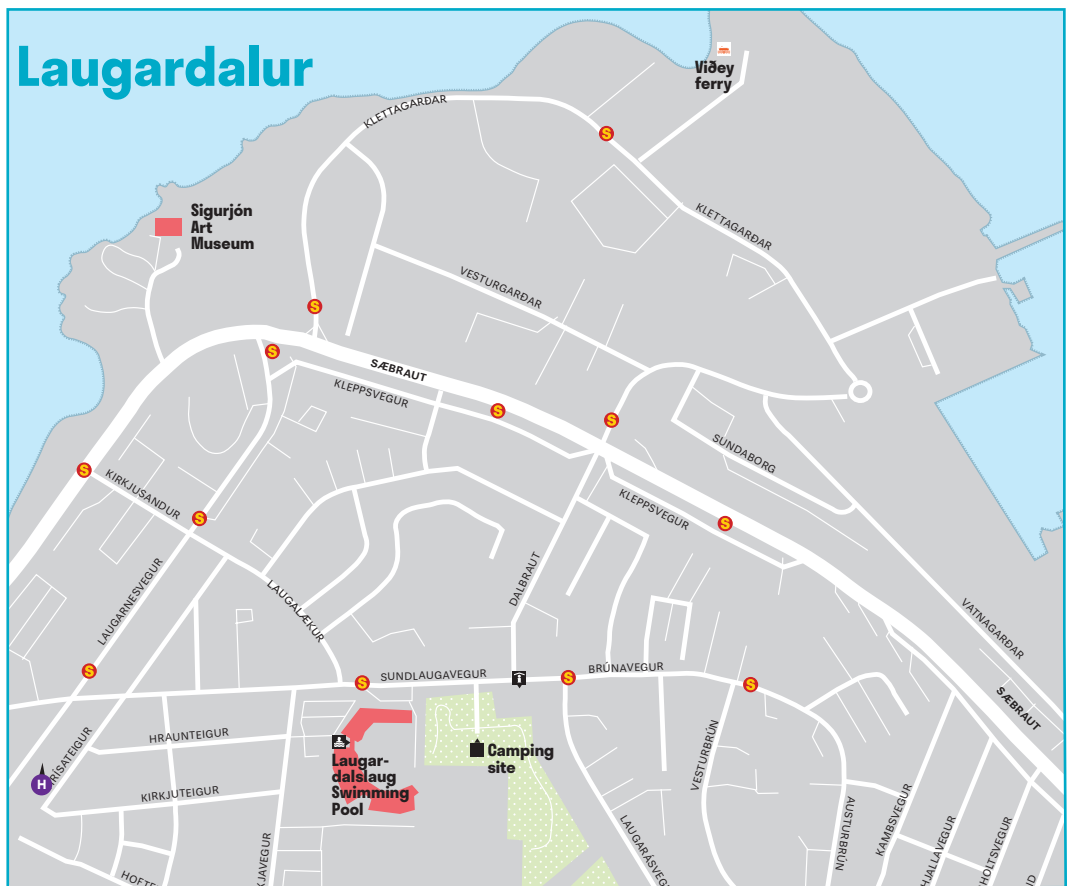
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Laugardalur

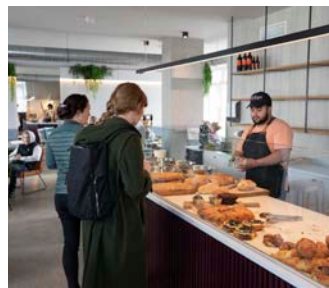


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New In Town



Brikk
Mýrargata 31, 101 Reykjavik

Baked goods in Reykjavik are a serious business. For several years, two downtown heavy-hitters, Sandholt and Brauð & Co., have been duking it out to be crowned the maker of the best cinnamon roll and sour-dough bread in town. However, whispers recently began about another challenger in the distant realm of Hafnarfjörður. Now, these newcomers have invaded 101 with a bright, airy, spacious bakery right by Grandi. Will they defeat the odds and become the city's baker champs? **JR**

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. IDA Zimsen

Vesturgata 2a

This peaceful spot is equal parts café and bookstore, so you can get a coffee and a snack while you leaf through your purchases. Everything in there is interesting, and if the

magazines fail, people-watching never does.

22. Lucky Records

Rauðarárstígur 10

Lucky Records is probably the biggest record shop in Iceland, with shelves upon shelves of new and used vinyl and CDs on offer. They have a small stage where local and visiting bands sometimes perform, and they stock classics and limited editions.

23. Farmers And Friends

Hólmaslóð 2 & Laugavegur 37

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

you with a modern take on traditional pieces.

24. CNTMP

Laugavegur 12b

This sleek and minimal streetwear boutique occupies an enviable spot on the main Laugavegur strip. An acronym for "contemporary," the shop's name describes its concept—the store will sell limited amounts of garments by local and overseas streetwear brands.

25. Hertex

Garðastræti 6

A true-blue second-hand shop, you never know what you're going to find at this Salvation Army outlet. The stark

store, covered with clothes of all shapes and colours, is a delight for all senses that'll have you alternating between, "Who would throw that away?" to "Who would buy that?"

26. Rauðhetta & Úlfurinn

Skólavörðustígur 8

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

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SÓLVEIG MATTHILDUR



Sólveig, treasuring her neck on the album cover

TRACK BY TRACK

Sólveig Matthildur -
Constantly In Love

Words: John Rogers & Sólveig Matthildur

Sólveig Matthildur is a member of *Kælan Mikla*, an acclaimed solo artist, and a Grapevine Music Awards winner. Here, she talks us through her new album, *'Constantly In Love.'*

Constantly In Love

The title track is about being constantly in love with everything around you. It's not necessarily about love between two people, but also about the trees, flowers and all the beauty around you, and living with the fear of being hurt, so you break everything around you before it breaks you.

My Desperation /
Your Desperation

These are sibling songs about two people or two things that don't fit together, but somehow always end up interacting with each other in a self-harming way. Some things in my life I just can't let go of. Without them, all days feel the same; with them, I hurt myself. So in the end I regret any decision.

Tómas

I wrote the song last year the day one of my younger brothers graduated. I am so proud of him and I feel like over the last six years he's done all the right things,

while I've made a series of bad decisions. In the lyrics I tell my brothers that I will mark all the holes and hills that I have stepped in and tripped on with a red mark, so they can avoid making those same mistakes.

My Father Taught
Me How To Cry

In this song I am walking in a forest on a dark evening, not sure if I'm dreaming. I'm walking home, but it's getting late and snow is covering the path. I see there are shadows following me—I start to run, but I fall down on my knees, hearing the voice of my father. I cry out: "Will my voice be silenced before I have said everything I wanted to say?"

Constantly Heartbroken

The sibling of 'Constantly In Love' it's about not being able to fall asleep, but not being able to wake up. The lyrics are partially from an old poem, 'Sofðu, unga ástin mín,' about when the bandit Halla sings her child to sleep before she has to drown her. I have a constant fear of not waking up if I fall asleep.

Dystopian Boy

I was sitting at a bar with a guy,

He said "I'm a dystopian guy, Sólveig." I thought it was very beautiful, as I have always seen myself as a utopian girl. This song represents my current lifestyle—I sing and dance in front of people that I have a 24-hour relationship with. Constantly meeting new people is amazing, but it gets lonely.

Utopian Girl

This one is about the limitations of your own dreams. There was a sentence that really inspired the whole concept: "Now we are happy, and then what?" I have always been a dreamer and I have these crazy surreal dreams. I get sad when I wake up and realise how limiting reality is.

I'm Ok

I made the base of this song in my bedroom in Leipzig. I had been upset all day and felt defeated. I decided to lock my sadness away and make music, and ended up with this track on repeat, dancing in my room. I sent it to my friend Dylan (Some Ember); we met up his studio in Berlin and made this song.

The End

The final song, and the most dramatic. The lyrics are partially taken from the first song I ever made solo—"Unexplained Miseries I"—which is about the end of my last relationship. Then I sing a vulnerable poem where I admit my pain and repeat the question: "If I never again lust, will I ever again hurt?" Isn't it just easier?

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Music



Some fun guys chilling, before defiling... something

Writing Death Metal In Your Underwear

Behind Devine Defilement's debut album "Obliviora"

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

Album

Obliviora is out now on **Bleeding Music Records**.

It is May 1st and I am meeting the four members of Devine Defilement in the smoking area of a bar in downtown Reykjavík. When I get there, the band are enjoying their day off with beer and cigarettes, and all of them greet me with a smile, which, admittedly, stands in contrast to the brutal music on their debut album. 'Obliviora' was released at the end of April by the Swedish label Bleeding Music Records—which is an impressive achievement, given the band only formed around two years ago.

A night to behold

"I was really drunk," drummer Stefán tells me about how the band got its start. "At the time, both me and Árni [guitarist] were in quite bad bands. I started to rant, like 'I wanna do something fast and brutal,' drunkenly—but he took me literally, and here we are."

That same night, Árni was introduced to the realm of brutal death metal via the sounds of Infant Annihilator and Ingested. "The intensity really got to me," says Árni. "So, the next morning, hungover as shit, I started writing songs in my underwear."

Thanks to that productive hangover, some songs of Devine Defilement's debut album were written even before the band existed. After going through several line-up changes, the band is now complete with bassist Snorri and vocalist Ingó. Having just joined the band earlier this year, Ingó—best known for the cult doom band Plastic Gods—is not featured on the album. "We already added a new song with my vocals and lyrics to our live set, though," he says.

Divine spelling errors

If you've read this far into the article

and haven't been able to shake the spelling of the band's name, you're not alone.

"I sent the guy who did the original logo the name and it was spelled right. I just want to put that out there," laughs Stefán. "But he was quite fucked up when he made our logo and we actually didn't catch the spelling error until a month later."

The band has now fully embraced this twist of fate and its origin story. "Our friend Krummi, from Mínus, actually thought the name was about defiling porn stars," adds Stefán. For the purposes of this article, the author did some thorough research and there is, in fact, a porn actress by the name of Ava Devine.

Sophisticated slam

However, Devine Defilement aren't about degrading adult films actors. Even though the music bears references to the subgenre of slam death metal, the band distance itself from

the genre's often misogynist lyrics. "The lyrics for the album are sort of about depression, figurative monsters in the human sense, and just evil," explains Ingó. "It's about the darker side of humanity,

I guess. There's some anti-religious stuff in there, as well."

In a way, you could call it sophisticated slam death metal. Can we make that a thing?

Death metal and porngrind

Apart from playing a few shows in Reykjavík and at Icelandic festivals like Eistnaflug and Norðanpaunk, the band was also added to the bill of the European Perversion Tour as the only Icelandic band in May with Lividity, Bastard's Asylum, Sacrificial Slaughter, and Bowel Evacuation.

"Stay tuned in June," adds Stefán. "Because we're printing some pretty T-shirts that include our dear friend Bjarni Ben." 🐾

gpv.is/music
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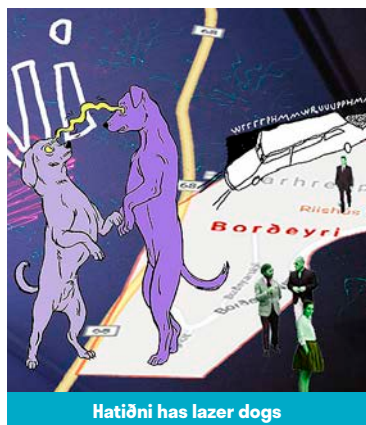
Red and black: cool forever

MUSIC NEWS Of Monsters & Men have been announced as one of the headliners of **Iceland Airwaves 2019**. A vastly popular pop/rock band, they were the first Icelandic band to pass 1 billion plays on Spotify, beating stars like Sigur Rós, Björk and Bjarki to this streaming landmark. All of which suggests that they'll be a mainstream attraction and shift some festival tickets. They're on sale now—net yours at icelandairwaves.is.



Fill your Lunga with fresh music

The 2019 **Lunga festival** is set to be a blockbuster, with some top names from the Icelandic scene joining the bill. We'll know by then (or even as you read this) whether our current cover stars **Hatari** won Eurovision; either way, they're a must-see live band. Breakout coldwave band **Kælan Mikla** join them on the bill alongside our Album of the Year music award winner **GDRN**, pop starlet **BRIET**, and DIY revolutionaries **bagdad brothers**, **Goss** and **Yung Nigo Drippin**. Five bands are yet to be announced; tickets are on sale now at lunga.is.



Hatiðni has lazer dogs

Extreme Chill turns ten this year, and they're celebrating in style with a four-venue downtown festival September 12-15th. **Tangerine Dream** will play the anniversary edition at Gamla Bíó, alongside **Eraldo Bernocchi** (IT), **Marcus Fischer** (US), **Hotel Neon** (US) and more. Get tickets at extremechill.org. The indie festival of the summer, however, is definitely **Hatiðni**, run by the exciting post-dreifing arts and music collective, which takes place in Borðeyri July 5-7th. They've announced the addition of **sideproject**, **Nornagal**, **xGADDAVÍRx**, **Spaðabani**, **IDK / IDA**, and **3eb** and **I.wa**. Get more info at post-dreifing.is. JR 🐾

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LOCAL AND INTERNATIONAL METAL BANDS
LINE-UP ON OUR WEBSITE

22/5 GRÚSKA BABÚSKA (ALBUM RELEASE)
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HAPPY HOUR
14-21

VÍKING
Létíól

Our Picks



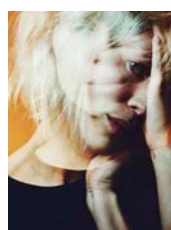
★ Hatari: Hatrið Mun Sigr Reykjavík

May 23rd - 20:00 - Gamla Bíó - 3,990-4,490 ISK

Delusional perverser mannequin trio Hatari return from Israel for a hometown headline show and a well-deserved lap of honour. Whether hate prevailed in Tel Aviv or

not, Hatari certainly will: their live show is going from strength to strength, spurred on by a Eurovision-related surge in popularity that's seen this tribe of blank-eyed vampiric

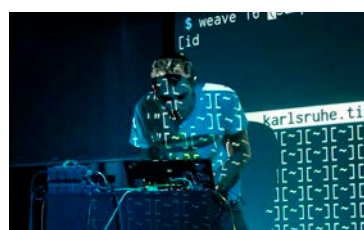
leather-clad anti-capitalist Mad Max demon-children run riot through Icelandic society, becoming a firm family favourite along the way. Expect extravagant outfits, stiff-limbed dance routines, their trademark "world-saw" logo imagery, pounding darkwave techno, grating vocals about Noam Chomsky, big choruses, and perhaps some pyrotechnics. This one will be a party worth going to. **JR**



★ Briet

May 17th - 21:00 - Flóran Café - 2,199 ISK

Smooth and breathy, sultry but dancy: Don't miss electronic pop artist Briet at this intimate show. **HJC**



★ RAFLOST Festival Opening

May 23rd - 17:00 - Mengi - Tickets TBA

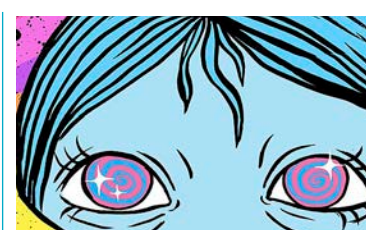
RAFLOST is Reykjavík's resident electronic/art/all around weirdness festival. If you like DIY, hackers, and fringe noise music, you should probably check it out. This opening event will feature students from the Icelandic Academy of the Arts, Kurt Uenala, and Halldór Eldjárn. **HJC**



★ Gong Bath

May 18th - 18:00 - Guðriðarkirkja - 3,500 ISK

Heal yourself in the light of the full moon at this special one night only gong bath. **HJC**



★ Music & Market: Lucy In Blue & Polytrap Super Six

May 11th - 16:30 - Loft - Free!

It's a truth universally told that people who like thrifting also like psychedelic tunes. Come celebrate that legacy at this dreamy evening featuring a crafty market and the soft tunes of Lucy In Blue and Canadian visitors Poly Trap Super Six. **HJC**

May 10th—May 23rd

Concerts & Nightlife

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

Friday May 10th

★ Pink Iceland's Queer Fridays: Ondina

21:00 Pink Iceland

★ Smá í tákna: Sideproject & Friends

21:00 Bravó

DJ Vala & Milljón

22:00 Prikíð

DJ Byssukísi

22:00 Mikkeller & Friends

DJ Bricks Hip-Hop Jam #3: Kilo /

Ruddagaddur & Gasmask Man

22:00 Boston

GG Blues

22:00 Dillon

Einar Scheving

20:00 Loft

Flaary: 8 New Ways To Play Jenga

21:00 Mengi

Krummafótur

21:00 American Bar

Vox Feminae

16:00 Háteigskirkja

Darrii

22:00 Stúdentakjallarinn

Sunday May 12th

Sunday Jazz

20:00 Bryggjan Brugghús

Classical Sundays: Magnificent

Sonatas From The 20th Century

16:00 Harpa

DJ Krummi

22:00 Bravó

Sing Together With Sigga Ása & Gauti

14:00 Hannesarholt

Terem Quartet Featuring Diddú &

Ólafur Kjartan

16:00 Harpa

MÍT's Big Band

14:00 Harpa

Troubadour Rúnar Kristinn

22:00 American Bar

Monday May 13th

Troubadour Arnar F.

22:00 American Bar

Tuesday May 14th

Karaoke Party!

21:00 Gaukurinn

Icelandic Music & Storytelling

13:00 IÐNÓ

Gunnhildur Einarsdóttir

21:00 Mengi

Troubadour Biggi

22:00 American Bar

Wednesday May 15th

Don Lockwood Band

21:00 Slippbarinn

Party Karaoke With Þórunn Antonía

21:00 Sæta Svinið

Wednesday Jazz Night

22:00 Miami

Beatmakin' Troopa

22:00 Bravó

Múlinn Jazz Club: Hugmynd

21:00 Harpa

Troubadour Alexander Aron

22:00 American Bar

DJ Aggalá

22:00 Prikíð

Thursday May 16th

Kraftgalli / Gjöll & Okuma

18:00 R6013



Grúska Babúska's new album will give you everything you need

Troubadour Hreimur & Matti

22:00 American Bar

DJ KGB

22:00 Prikíð

DJ Robodisco

22:00 Bravó

Iceland Symphony Orchestra:

Open Rehearsal

9:30 Harpa

Iceland Symphony Orchestra:

Brahms & Bjarni Frimann

19:30 Harpa

Kikióki

21:00 Kiki Queer Bar

Reykjavik Metalfest 2019

20:00 Gaukurinn

Gáur | Guðmundur Ari Arnalds,

Snorri Skúlason, Maria-Carmela,

Daniele Girolamo & Paola Fecarotta

21:00 Mengi

Katrín Arndísardóttir

21:00 Petersen svítan

Café Lingua: TakTur Performance

17:00 Grófin Culture House

Friday May 17th

★ Briet

21:00 Flóran Café

DJ Hexia De Mix

22:00 Boston

DJ KGB

22:00 Bravó

Smokie

20:30 Harpa

DJ Helgi Svavar

21:00 Mikkeller & Friends

DJ SURA B2B Karitas

22:00 Prikíð

Troubadour Rúnar Kristinn

21:00 American Bar

Reykjavik Metalfest 2019

18:30 Gaukurinn

Úlfur Eldjárn

21:00 Mengi

Saturday May 18th

★ Gong Bath

18:00 Guðriðarkirkja

DJ Spegill B2B Young Nazareth

22:00 Prikíð

DJ Berglind Festival

22:00 Mikkeller & Friends

21:00 Sæta Svinið

Wednesday Jazz Night

22:00 Miami

DJ Einar Sonic

22:00 Bravó

Troubadour Siggí Thorbergs

22:00 American Bar

Múlinn Jazz Club: Tómas R. &

Óskar Guðjónsson

21:00 Harpa

DJ Maggi Lego

22:00 Prikíð

Flamenco Dúo | Jacób De Carmen &

Reynir Hauksson

21:00 Mengi

Grúska Babúska Album Release

Concert

21:00 Gaukurinn

Thursday May 23rd

★ Hatari: Hatrið Mun Sigr Reykjavík

20:00 Gamla Bíó

★ RAFLOST Festival Opening

17:00 Mengi

Iceland Symphony Orchestra:

Open Rehearsal

9:30 Harpa

Kikióki

21:00 Kiki Queer Bar

Iceland Symphony Orchestra:

Thibaudet & Beethoven

19:30 Harpa

Nostalgia With Þórunn Clausen &

Soffi Karls

21:00 Petersen svítan

Petersen Special

22:00 Bravó

Troubadours Hreimur & Matti

22:00 American Bar

Reg & Andreas

20:00 Hannesarholt



DJ Young Nazareth rises again



Kraftgalli: loves music & trees

Saturday May 11th

★ Wacken Metal Battle 2019

19:00 Húrra

★ Music & Market: Lucy In Blue &

Polytrap Super Six

16:30 Loft

101 Savage & BNGRBOY

22:00 Prikíð

Troubadours Alexander & Ingunn

21:00 American Bar

DJ Silja Glommi

22:00 Mikkeller & Friends

Kraftgalli

22:00 Bravó

DJ Mosi

22:00 Boston

Godchilla / Mælginn Big Band /

Óregla / X Heart & More

21:00 Gaukurinn



★ For music listings from May 24th on, check out happening.grapevine.is or our app Appening, available on iOS and Android

Monday May 20th

Troubadour Addi F

22:00 American Bar

Tuesday May 21st

Karaoke Party!

21:00 Gaukurinn

Icelandic Music & Storytelling

13:00 IÐNÓ

Ichiko Aoba

21:00 Mengi

Troubadour Biggi

22:00 American Bar

Wednesday May 22nd

Don Lockwood Band

21:00 Slippbarinn

Party Karaoke With Þórunn Antonía

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Music

The Reykjavik Grapevine 30
Issue 07—2019



Marteinn is mellow yellow

Weightless World

Marteinn Sindri's light work of many hands

Words: Rex Beckett Photo: Jenny Hviding

Album

Marteinn Sindri's debut album 'Atlas' comes out digitally on May 16th and on physical formats in September

In Greek mythology, the god Atlas carries the weight of the world on his shoulders. For Marteinn Sindri's debut album 'Atlas', the creation involved lifting the weight away and engaging in a deeply collaborative process.

With a 20-year background playing classical piano, singing in choirs and a career in radio, the singer-songwriter and composer came to find his own voice and write his first album thanks to those who lifted him up.

Small steps to comfort

The result is a low key but beguiling album of gentle, lyrical indie pop. The journey began when Marteinn was living in Berlin four years ago. He found himself with a guitar, rather than his default piano, and it became his primary tool for composition.

Early in this process, his friend Daniél Friðrik Bóðvarsson stepped in to encourage him to make an album. "I visited him where he was living in Berlin and we made some demos," Marteinn says. "I was also working with a local producer, Bergur Þórisson, who said, 'the best

thing you can do to make an album is to perform as much as you can.' Which is what I did. I've tried to play a lot, locally and abroad. Every time is a small step towards getting a little more comfortable."

Quality, texture, style

As his confidence in his own voice grew and with the coaching of his friends, they began to translate the songs back to piano. Two years later, Marteinn and Daniel moved into a studio setting with producer Albert Finnbogason and brought in a new wave of collaborative musicians.

"We were really navigating our different approaches and points of view and trying to find something that worked for us both in terms of quality and texture and style," he says. "It happened quite fast there and we just had this plethora of material left afterwards. We were quite pragmatic about it as well, trusting that what's there is good."

Every single voice

The songs themselves began to take on new forms throughout the process as Marteinn performed as much as he could with a variety of artists. "I don't have very fixed

notions about how it's supposed to sound live, it really depends on who's with me," he says. "That's the beautiful thing about playing with others is that there's so much potential in every single voice that steps in. The music is really performed for the first time every time it's performed."

As the songs took on their recorded shape, they became their own kind of world. "The songs are maps, they aren't landscapes, so these maps take you through different landscapes every time you use them," he says.

"We shouldn't strive towards isolating ourselves."

"The album is anchored in a similar degree of composing music and composing texts, but they are rendered every time anew."

This continuous process of renewal aided by strong collaborations lifted a certain burden for him and allowed him to just let things happen. "I'm conscious of my own limitations, I have my strengths and my weaknesses," he says. "That comes back to this myth of Atlas who's alone with the weight of the world on his shoulders. I would very starkly want to oppose that line of thought. That's not my experience of how things should be. We shouldn't strive towards isolating ourselves." 🍷

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We killed our parents and hit the road

Grapevine's Ultimate Summer Road Trip Playlist

An Icelandic playlist to accompany you around the Ring Road this summer

Words: The Grapevine Music Dpt. Photo: Timothée Lambrecq

Playlist

Find the playlist on Spotify at [gpv.is/roadtrip19](https://open.spotify.com/playlist/roadtrip19).

Summer is here, and with it comes road trip season. Here's our essential Icelandic playlist. Roll down the windows, turn up the volume, and off you go.

Buddies and beats

There's nothing like cruisin' in the sun with your buddies and some beats. On those days, you gotta set the vibe with **Joey Christ's** legendary track "Joey Cypher." It's basically a time capsule of Iceland's legendary 2017 summer, back when times were simpler, Costco was just opening, and Iceland's rap explosion was in full flow. In three short minutes, Joey cemented himself into the zeitgeist of Icelandic pop history with a chorus that fans and haters alike can recall at a moment's notice. Warning: this is a serious earworm. If that track wets your whistle, throw on "Tarantúlar" by **Úlfur Úlfur** to follow. **HJC**

Sofia Coppola road-movie

There are few Icelandic songs more summery in this life than **Prins Póló's** instant classic "Lifið, Ertu að Grínast?" ("Life, Are You Kidding Me?" in English). Never mind sunny—it's positively tropical. In fact, despite their kind of world-wise-and-weary quality, there are a bunch of Prins Póló songs that belong on your road trip list—"Paris

Norðursins" for the open road, and "Niðra Strönd" for that riverside barbecue. You'll want to learn Icelandic just to sing along. I'd also throw in the euphoric, dreamy shoegaze of **Oyama's** "The Right Amount" for that Sofia Coppola road-movie quality, and a couple of tracks by **Samaris, Sykur, Gus-Gus, Hermigervill, Berndsen** and **M-Band** will keep the mood high. **JR**

Hay on a tractor

If you ever wanted to hear literally the most Icelandic song ever written, a strong contender for that spot would be **Bubbi Morthens'** 1983 ballad "Afgan". Driven by acoustic guitar, harmonica and voice, the relaxed waltz rhythm of this tune may evoke imagery of being out to sea, or bringing in the hay on the back of a tractor under the summer sun. The lyrics are a bleak portrait of love lost and heartbreak, but the tune is undeniably Icelandic. On a more upbeat note, there's **200.000 naglbítar** ("200,000 pliers"), who—as the name might suggest—are a rock band. While "Vögguvísur fyrir skuggaprins" ("Lullabies for the Prince of Darkness") is their second album, it vastly overshadows the first, including the quintessentially summery "Stopp NR. 7". **AF**

Fights, crying and '80s vampires

If you're going with your friends to Flúðir or wherever Icelanders meet to get overly drunk and beat each other up, you need to go native. The first track on the trip has to be "Ísbjarnarblús" by the legendary Icelandic singer **Bubbi Morthens**. It's mandatory to scream your lungs out to the line about a thousand cod on the conveyor belt while you burn through the raining heath. After you arrive in Flúðir, you'll get into your first fight, and you'll play "Rómeó og Júlía," also by **Bubbi Morthens**, then everybody will be friends again and cry in each other's arms. When it rains—it always does—you need to play "Mér Finnst Rigningin Góð" ("I Love The Rain!"), from **SSSól**. But to really get into it, play "Hey Kanína," by **Sálin Hans Jóns Míns**. When you play this song on a campsite there's a 50/50 chance that you'll either attract some aggressive tweakers—there's always one group roaming around like a band of '80s vampires—or you'll meet your future spouse. Either way, drink some **Gull**, and leave your tent behind. Who needs it anyway? **VG**

"When you play this song on a campsite there's a 50/50 chance that you'll either attract some aggressive tweakers or meet your future spouse."

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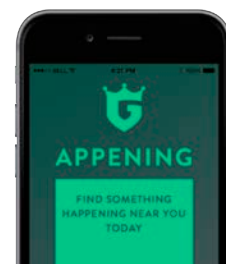
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Expect Katrin soon, making art at a mall near you

I Promise To Love Myself Always

Katrín I. Jónsdóttir Hjördísardóttir makes a contract with the people

Words & Photos: **John Rogers**

Exhibition

Katrín's "Sjálfast" will be part of the 'Úthverfi' group exhibition. It opens at Mjódd on May 17th.

A loud clanking sound echoes ominously from behind the large metal doors of Iceland's Sculpture Association building. As I ring the bell, I wonder what could be happening inside. Chains rattle, and tools roar. Eventually the door opens, and the smiling, paint-splattered face of Katrín I. Jónsdóttir Hjördísardóttir appears, under the brim of a bright red hat. "Come in," she smiles. "Welcome!"

The space is littered with large letters made from what appears to be scrap metal of various types. Katrín walks around the space, gathering them together and laying them out on the ground. As she adds new letters, "Sjá" becomes "Sjálf," then "Sjálfa," and, eventually "Sjálfast"—or "self love," in English.

The piece will be hung outdoors at Mjódd, a somewhat charmless bus interchange and shopping area in the Reykjavík suburbs, as part of a group exhibition called 'Úthverfi,' or 'Suburbs.' "What makes me so excited about this

is to try and integrate art into places where there isn't much to find," says Katrín. "You blur the line between art and everyday life. Shopping malls should be places to put artwork."

A contract with yourself

Katrín is fully engaged with the idea of artistic outreach. Like many artists, she seems slightly frustrated by confining her work to objects in museums as the wider world passes by in the street outside. So, as part of the project, she will be present at Mjódd, standing beneath her sign and offering passers-by a contract to sign.

"It would be so easy to turn urban places into beautiful situations, if we put our minds to it."



However, rather than a new home insurance or phone agreement, this contract is one that people sign only with themselves. "It will have the date, and the Sculpture Association logo," says Katrín. "It says 'I, (then their name), promise to love myself always.' I find this line between life and art so fascinating. When I stand there asking people to sign a contract

with themselves about self love, I'll seem like anyone else who'd be there trying to sell them something. It's hilarious, in a way, and wonderful... but I'm not selling them anything. It's just encouraging self love. It's something for them."

Sentimental and rough

Aside from the performances and the opening night, the sign itself will stand alone for the duration of the exhibition.

"The concept is sentimental, but the materials are rough," says Katrín. "Those two elements merge together, like reality and unreality. It's a sign, like propaganda in a way—but instead of being negative, or a warning sign, it's trying to integrate positivity into this language."

Something odd

One of many possible outcomes is that the artwork will act as a distortion in the neighbourhood, turning peoples' minds away from day-to-day matters and towards useful introspection, or bigger questions about life.

"If we had interesting or exciting or beautiful art happening along with architecture, the landscape would bring us more fulfillment," says Katrín. "It would be so easy to turn urban places into beautiful situations, if we put our minds to it—and funded it. We have the talented people to make it happen. It would be cool to see. Be-

cause art is challenging—you're dealing with something odd in the surroundings."

Katrín is excited and intrigued by whether it will stand out from, or merge into the urban environment. "Maybe people will see the sign and think it's going to be a sex shop," she laughs. "I really don't know what will happen! And I like that." 🐦

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Our Picks



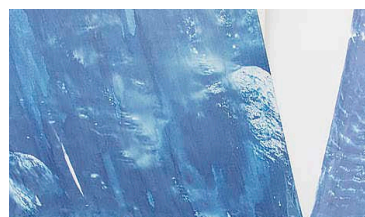
It's Oh So Quiet...

★ Louder Than Bombs

Until June 15th - BERG Contemporary

Silence both opens and closes a conversation. It creates lightness and darkness, envelopes and releases, leaving a path in its wake

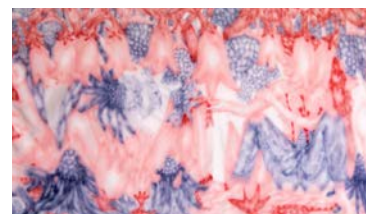
that irrepreteley change those involved. In 'Louder Than Bombs' three artists—Birgir Snæbjörn Birgisson, Heidi Lampenius, and Miikka Vaskola—engage with the theme of silence, tearing it down to its artistic core, exploring the nothingness and somethingness while all the works within the exhibition relate to each other, each was created individually, the effect being a conversation in which all three painters' sentiments and beliefs exist in dialogue with the rest. In the end, they discovered a silence that is active, that is caring, that doesn't suffocate, but embraces. **HJC**



★ Hover, float

May 12th-26th - Íslenskt GráfiK

Helsinki-based Anna Niskanen is here with a series of cyanotype works on paper and silk. They depict the flowing tides of the world, and the magnetic pushes and pulls which drive them. **HJC**



★ Old Orchard

May 17th-May 31st - Listastofan

In this collection of abstract silken air-brushed paintings, Miranda Crabtree invites us into

an ambiguous landscape where women gather fruit from a barren orchard. Come fantasise and wander into the spiritual idyllic. **HJC**



★ Hnallþóran

Until May 26th - Midpunkt

Sigurros Guðbjörg Björnsdóttir og Berglind Erna Tryggvadóttir take Icelandic food, baking, and tradition and turn it into pop photography and bright art. Note: The exhibit is only open on weekends from 14:00 to 17:00. **HJC**

May 10th—May 23rd

Art Listings

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

Send your listings to: listings@grapevine.is

Opening

REYKJAVÍK ART MUSEUM - HAFNARHÚS D37 Gunnar Jónsson - Gröt

The D-Gallery exhibitions show up-and-coming artists in their first solo exhibition. This iteration features video, sounds, and photographs by Gunnar Jónsson.

- Opens on May 4th, 2019
- Runs until May 12th, 2019



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
- #### Brynhildur Þorgeirsdóttir: Natural Elements
- Beloved Icelandic sculptor Brynhildur Þorgeirsdóttir presents a new exhibit of her pivotal work.
- Runs until June 10th, 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 May 12th, 2019
- #### Sonja Margrét Ólafsdóttir - Roots
- Sonja Margrét Ólafsdóttir's photographs show everyday scenes and places but also have an air of mystery: Where are these places? Who are these people and what connects these images?
- Runs until June 10th, 2019

NATIONAL MUSEUM OF ICELAND

Discovering Iceland's Monasteries

Are you fascinated by really old things? God? This exhibit combines both, based on research by archaeologist Steinunn Kristjánsdóttir.

- Runs until May 26th, 2019
- ##### Artists' Books
- Familiarise yourself with the books of Icelandic artists. You'll find examples of printmaking dating all the way back to the latter part of the 19th century.
- Runs until June 2nd, 2019

Myth Of A Woman

Agnieszka Sosnowska immigrated to Iceland 13 years. With her photographs, she documents herself, her students, new family members, and friends. Her inspiration is the

strength of the female spirit.

- Runs until September 1st, 2019

Life, as it is lived, before the transformation

In stark black and white, Yrsa Roca Fannberg captured life in Árneshreppur, the smallest parish in Iceland. Crisp and unrelenting, the photos capture the symbiotic relationship between man, animal and dirt.

- Runs until September 1st, 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.

REYKJAVÍK ART MUSEUM - HAFNARHÚS

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

Erró: Mao's World Tour

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

- Runs until January 5th, 2020
- #### Now Nordic
- The international design platform Adorno presents a landmark exhibition of contemporary design from the five Nordic countries, aiming to showcase the commonalities and contrasts between the modern design cultures of Norway, Finland, Sweden, Denmark and Iceland.
- Runs until May 26th, 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

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.

- Runs until May 19th, 2019
- ##### Drawings/Sketches In Clay & Textiles

Ceramic artist and designer Kristín Garðarsdóttir journeys between the clear and the obscure in this simple,

primitive, but still beautiful exhibit.

- Runs until May 26th, 2019

LIVING ART MUSEUM

Soft Landing

The MA students in Fine Art at the Icelandic Academy Of The Arts present their final projects. Here, you'll find the freshest artists before they become famous.

- Runs until May 26th, 2019

MUSEUM OF DESIGN AND APPLIED ART

Weather Workshop

Artist Shu Yi opens up a conversation on Iceland's ever-changing weather by transforming weather data into visual forms in the entrance of the Design Museum.

- Runs until June 2nd, 2019

URBAN SHAPE

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

- Runs until September 8th, 2019

KLING OG BANG

Sensible Structures

This exhibition explores the conceptual relationships that occur in the parenthesis between the visual and the verbal through the work of Kristinn Már Pálmason, Bryndís Hrönn Ragnarsdóttir and the late Fluxus artist Ludwig Gosewitz.

- Runs until May 26th, 2019

IB

Janice Kerbel

Kerbel's large silkscreen prints put verbs and nouns into the focus of the piece like it's a portrait. These aren't your average words though, Janice's picks are pretty brutal—think jab, grab, head butt, barge, straddle, and more.

- Runs until May 25th, 2019

HARBINGER

Networking & Chilling

Until May 19th, 12 artists will take over Harbinger for one day each. Some will turn the space into a temporary waiting room, some will tattoo their mother, while one will make sculptures from green beans.

- Runs until May 19th, 2019

ÁSMUNDARSALUR

OMEN

Graduates of the MA Design, Explorations, and Translations programme at the Icelandic University Of The Arts present their final works. Come for tech, food science, and fun.

- Runs until May 19th, 2019

LISTASALUR MOSFELLSBÆJAR

Atli Már

Bright colours, cartoonish figures, and movie references are what you can expect at Atli's exhibit of sketches and paintings.

- Runs until May 31st, 2019

NORDIC HOUSE

Porcelain Souls

Photographer Inuuteq Storch went through his parents' archives and found photos and letters from their lives in Greenland and Denmark in the 1960s and 80s. Explore them here.

- Runs until September 26th, 2019

WIND & WEATHER WINDOW GALLERY

Matrix, or Genesis of Private Property

This site specific installation uses word, printed images, and chromed metal to make an overwhelming image that questions your very reality.

- Runs until June 26th, 2019

MUSEUM OF DESIGN AND APPLIED ART HÖNNUNARSAFN ÍSLANDS

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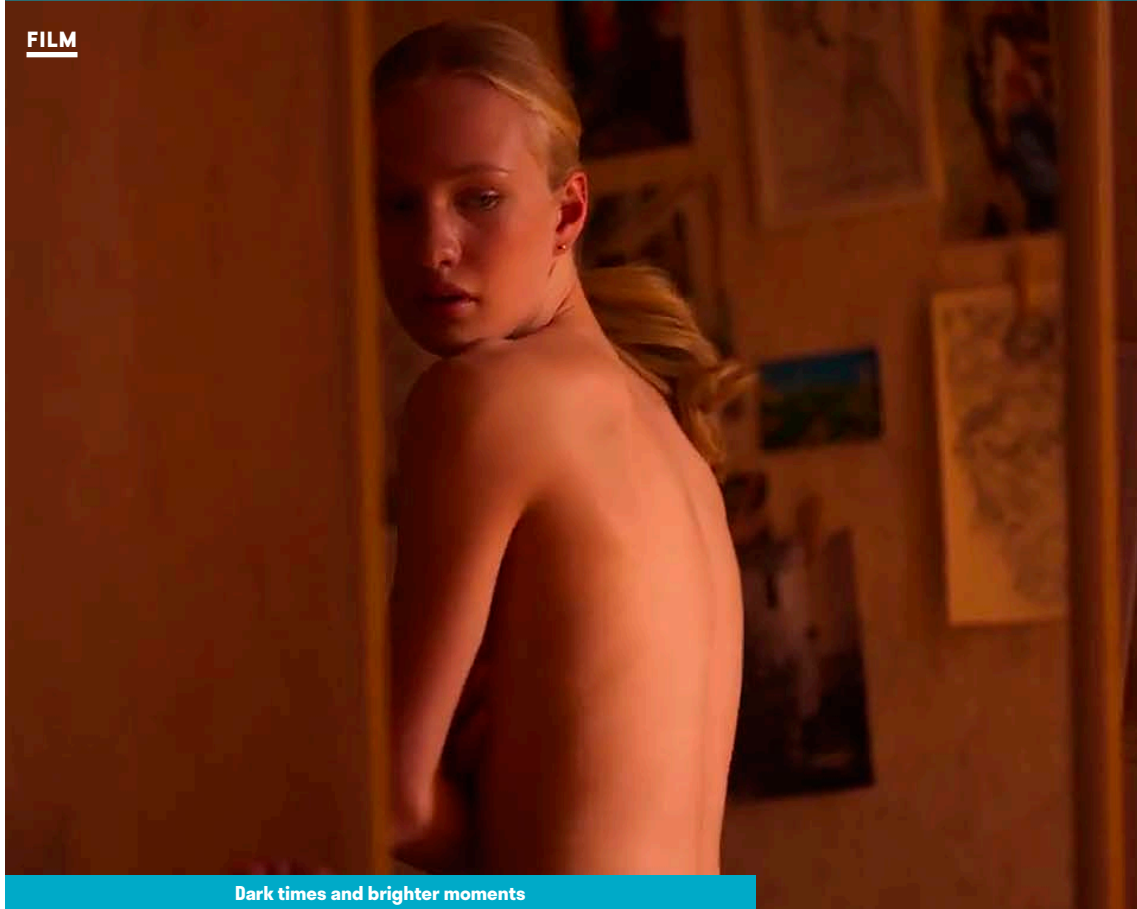


Film

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FILM



Dark times and brighter moments

Girl

An exploration of longing and pain

Words: **Andie Fontaine** Photos: **Film stills**

Movie

'Girl' is screening with English subtitles at [Bío Paradís](#). Find showtimes and tickets online.

'Girl', a film by Lukas Dhont and written by Dhont and Angelo Tijssens, tells in many ways two stories. The first story is that of Lara, a 15-year-old transgender girl with aspirations—to become a professional ballet dancer, to receive hormone replacement therapy and bottom surgery, and to be loved and accepted. The second story is that of gender dysphoria, an experience that many, but not all, trans people frequently experience: generally speaking, it's a feeling of distress and anxiety stemming from one's birth-assigned sex not aligning with one's gender. In fact, violence against the human body is a recurring element in this film, at times to a degree that is painful to watch.

It is important here to point out that Dhont is not trans, and that neither is the actor who plays Lara, Victor Polster. This and other details of the film have raised criticism from trans and queer people. At the same time, it's also important to point out that Nora Monsecour, a trans woman on whose life the film is fictionally depicted, consulted with the filmmakers throughout its development and has repeatedly defended the director's choices, both in terms of casting and directorial choices, telling the *Hollywood Reporter* last December that the film "tells my story in a way that doesn't lie, doesn't hide. To argue that Lara's experience as trans is not valid because Lukas is cis or because we have a cis lead actor offends me".

As a trans person myself, I'm not about to tell another trans person that they are wrong for being

satisfied with how their story is told. To experience that kind of satisfaction is rare, and we alone have the final say in how our lived experiences are represented. At the same time, Monsecour rightly points out in the same interview that 'Girl' is not a representation of all transgender experiences, and this is important to bear in mind when watching the film.

Hope and violence

The common thread in 'Girl' is a wave of optimism and violence against the human body. These forms of violence oscillate between those exclusive to Lara's trans journey, and harm that stems from her other aspirations. Acceptance and love from her peers is fraught by a cruel slapping game between her and more popular girls and a humiliating attempt at closeness with a boy. Adults around her express worry about the harm she may end up inflicting on her body in trying to learn to go en pointe in ballet a few years later than most girls.

But it is the spectre of harm towards her own body as a part of her trans experience that is especially painful to watch, probably most of all if you are a trans person who experiences dysphoria. She tapes down her genitals, causing a nasty infection. She is warned in graphic detail everything that could go wrong during and after bottom surgery. And the film's climactic act of self-harm, towards the end of the story, is positively horrifying.

Where the camera stops

Throughout all this, there are brighter moments. The relationship between Lara and her father is tender and supportive. There are also more subtle moments, such as when a couple expecting a child blithely declare the child's gender, the camera lingering on Lara as we watch her consider these two parents already assigning gender to a child not yet born. Much of the telling of the story rests upon where Dhont lets his camera lie the longest: a steady focus of what feels like an eternity on Lara's face immediately after she is deliberately misgendered by her younger brother speaks volumes about the hurt and anger that can evoke. There is frequently intense focus on Lara's body that at times borders on voyeuristic, when it is clear the director wants the viewer to take this moment in and not look away, no matter how painful it is to watch.

These directorial choices are very familiar. Trans stories told in film are often stories of pain, physical and emotional. Undoubtedly,

"The common thread in 'Girl' is a wave of optimism and violence against the human body."

the trans experience itself can be painful. But it can also be an experience of euphoria, joy, hope, optimism and love. Unfortunately, such stories in film are few and far between, and trans people who

watch this film are very likely to be reminded of this fact every time harm comes to Lara, just as they are likely to recall each time a cis actor was cast to play a trans person on screen. Cisgender viewers of 'Girl' would also do well to remember that, although Monsecour herself is satisfied with how her story is told, her story is not the story of all trans people, as she herself emphasises. ♥

gpv.is/film
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Various Events



If you don't know Aberforth's patronus, don't even show up!

Friday May 10th

Drag-Súgur: 2000's Drag Show
21:00 Gaukurinn
Friday Party!: 'The Devil Wears Prada' Screening
20:00 Bíó Paradís

Saturday May 11th

Franz Muller's 'Wire Spring' Film Premiere
21:00 Mengi
Northern Laughs: Comedy Show
21:00 Secret Cellar
How To Become Icelandic In 60 Minutes
19:00 Harpa
Out Of Control: Eurovision Drag!
22:00 Kiki Queer Bar
IUA Graduation Thesis Presentation
10:30 Gerðarsafn

Sunday May 12th

HANS.mov [night]: 'Pretty Persuasion' Screening
21:00 Gaukurinn
Guided Tour In English
11:00 National Museum Of Iceland
Clothing Market
14:00 Loft
Seat Filler: Iceland's Only Free Game Show!
23:30 Secret Cellar
Gloria Hole: Think You've Got Talent?
21:00 Kiki Queer Bar
Party Bingo With Sigga Kling
21:00 Sæta Svinið
Reykjavík Tool Library Repair Café
12:00 Nordic House
Icelandic Sagas: The Greatest Hits
19:30 Harpa

Monday May 13th

Stand-Up Comedy (in English!)
21:00 Gaukurinn
The Night's Watch Party: Game of Thrones Season 8 Screening
21:00 Loft

Tuesday May 14th

Eurovision Semi-Finals Screening
19:00 Loft
Funniest Four: Comedy Show
21:00 The Secret Cellar

Wednesday May 15th

'1948: Creation & Catastrophe' Screening
18:30 Bíó Paradís
Icelandic Sagas: The Greatest Hits
19:30 Harpa
Open Mic Stand-Up Comedy
21:00 The Secret Cellar
Retro Cup #2 Tournament
21:00 Gaukurinn
Reykjavík Metalfest: 'Lords Of Chaos' Screening
20:00 Bíó Paradís

Thursday May 16th

My Voices Have Tourettes
21:00 The Secret Cellar

Eurovision Semi-Finals Screening

19:00 Loft
How To Become Icelandic In 60 Minutes
19:00 Harpa
Harry Potter Pub Quiz
20:00 Stúdentakjallarinn

Friday May 17th

Friday Party!: 'Rocky Horror Picture Show' Singalong
20:00 Bíó Paradís

Saturday May 18th

Eurotastic Eurovision Party 2019
19:00 Bíó Paradís
Eurovision Finals Screening
19:00 Loft
How To Become Icelandic In 60 Minutes
19:00 Harpa
Northern Laughs: Comedy Show
21:00 Secret Cellar

Sunday May 19th

Reykjavík Metalfest: 'Slave To The Grind' Screening & Q&A
20:00 Bíó Paradís
Yoga
12:00 Loft
Seat Filler: Iceland's Only Free Game Show!
23:30 Secret Cellar
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
Guided Tour In English
11:00 National Museum Of Iceland

Monday May 20th

Stand-Up Comedy (in English!)
21:00 Gaukurinn
The Night's Watch Party: Game of Thrones Season 8 Screening
21:00 Loft
Mindfulness: Letting Go Of the Past
19:00 Loft

Tuesday May 21st

Funniest Four: Comedy Show
21:00 The Secret Cellar

Wednesday May 22nd

Pub Quiz
20:00 Loft
How To Become Icelandic In 60 Minutes
19:00 Harpa
Icelandic Sagas: The Greatest Hits
19:30 Harpa
Open Mic Stand-Up Comedy
21:00 The Secret Cellar

Thursday May 23rd

My Voices Have Tourettes
21:00 The Secret Cellar
Drag-Súgur DRAG LAB
21:00 Gaukurinn

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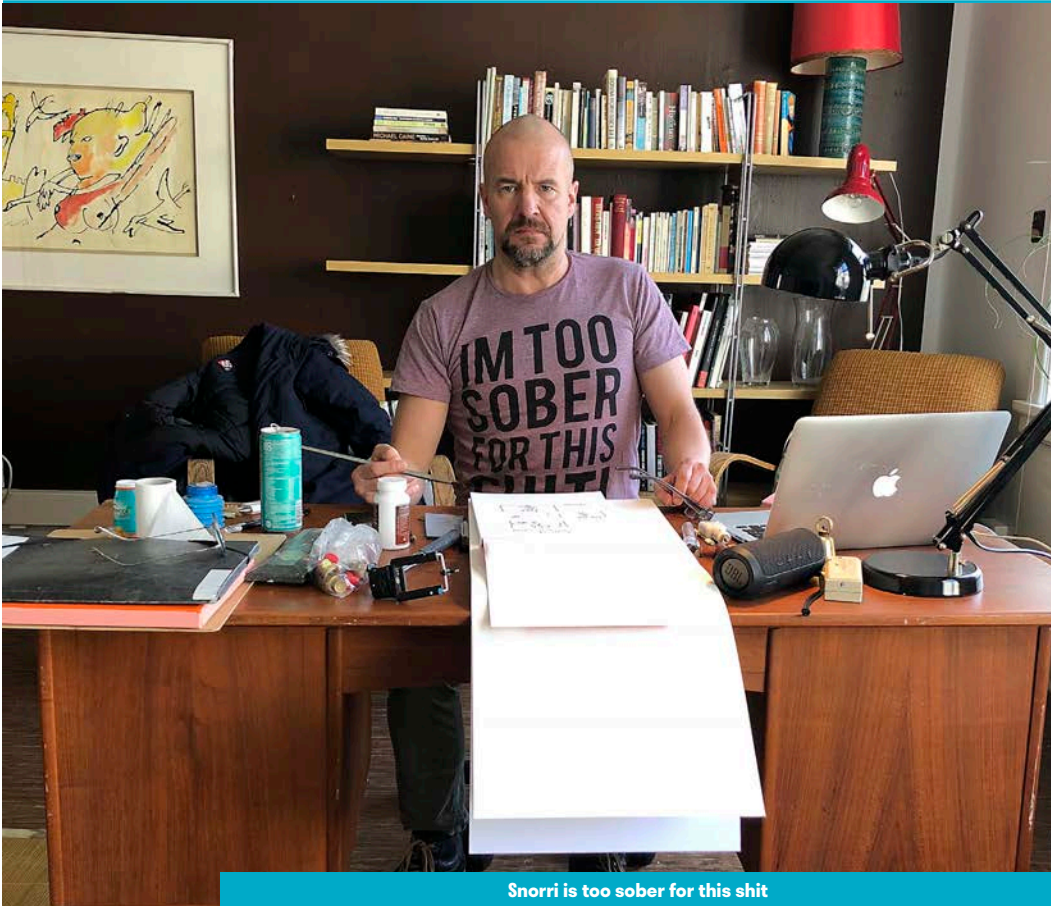
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Snorri is too sober for this shit



My father had a replica of 'Guernica' by Picasso that hung on our living room wall. I could watch it forever and it was almost like the image buried itself into my consciousness. When I was a teenager there was an exhibition in my elementary school where the same picture, in full size, was among other replicas of Picasso's paintings. And I was literally thunderstruck. At that moment I knew that I would become the greatest artist in the history of humankind.

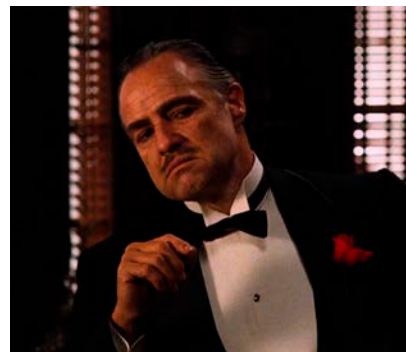
one of my favorite actors of all time. The wedding scene is probably the most notable scene I have ever seen on film. To make an offer that is impossible to refuse! I actually use this negotiation tactic all the time, and it works!

I have to name Andy Warhol as another influence; I have sometimes been referred to as the Icelandic Andy Warhol. I always loved Warhol's portraits and I loved his extreme image. But I didn't really realise until after I read the book, "The Philosophy of Andy Warhol," that we are closely connected in a spiritual way, and I think he is my twin soul.



I was truly relieved when I discovered Federico Fellini's movies. I love those movies—I think I have watched 'Amarcord' about 20 times. His influence on the world of film will never be appreciated enough.

When I saw Jack Nicholson in 'Easy Rider' I quickly found out that this man was my favourite actor. After I saw 'One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest,' in which Jack was brilliant and for which he won an Oscar, I realised that this man was the best actor of all time. No one is better than him, except myself, of course, because I have since discovered that I am also the best actor in the history of humankind.



The film 'The Godfather' had a great influence on me and my brothers. We always made the same Christmas card of us posing as gangsters from the film. We thought it was stylish and cool, especially Marlon Brando, who is

Words:
Snorri Ásmundsson & Valur Grettisson

Photo:
Snorri Ásmundsson

Greatest Artist In The World

Picasso is to blame for Snorri's megalomania

Snorri Ásmundsson is perhaps Iceland's most notorious artist. He gained notoriety when he announced twice that he was running for president against Ólafur Ragnar Grímsson. He has also been

very vocal against establishments like the church and politics. Here is what molded the artist that claims to be the best in the history of humankind.

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Cocktails 1,000 ISK.

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**Fractured Fairy
Tales: The Sagas
And Shit**

Grapevine contributor
Grayson del Faro's new book

Words: **Andie Fontaine** Illustrations: **Elin Elisabet**

Book

The Sagas And Shit' will be out in late autumn, both on the shelves of Icelandic bookstores and at shop.grapevine.is

Tackling the Icelandic Sagas can be a daunting task. Many of them are prefaced with complex descriptions of lineage and familial relations, and the writing can—in many parts—read as dry and academic, even in modern translations. This can be discouraging for those who want to delve into these crowning achievements of medieval literature, which is a shame; along the way, these tales recount plenty of drama, intrigue, sex, violence, and impossible feats of human strength.

Perhaps this is why Saga Recap—a series from the Grapevine of short, funny summaries of the Sagas which focuses only on the best bits—has been so successful. So successful, in fact, that not only has Saga Recap creator Grayson del Faro been tasked with applying the same winning formula to the Eddas, Grayson's delightful, snarky

recaps of the Icelandic Sagas have at last been compiled in a book.

From porn to apocalypse

'The Sagas And Shit: Icelandic Literature Crudely Abridged,' published by Forlagið, promises to deliver "the most famous masterpieces of Icelandic literature alongside some of the weirdest, most fucked-up sagas and skips straight to the good shit."

If you were under the impression the Sagas contained little more than one Viking battle after another, wow are you ever in for a surprise. Take a closer look, and you will find gems like the downright pornographic Saga of Bosi and Herraður; the over-the-top tall tales in the Saga of Gréttir the Strong, whose feats put Paul

Bunyon and Pecos Bill to shame; and the mind-bending weirdness of Völuspá, a Norse origin/apocalyptic story that makes the Book of Revelation read like the terms of service on a housing loan.

Monsters from hell and its suburbs

"Spoiler: they all die," Grayson wrote of that Saga for his recap. "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."

"Óðinn's hottest son, Baldur, gets the kiss of death from his little brother, who shanks him with mistletoe. Then shit gets metal."

You probably shouldn't use "The Sagas And Shit" as a study guide if you're cramming for a test on the Icelandic Sagas, but it is worth mentioning that these takes are written by someone who actually studied them in an academic setting, so we can guarantee the summations are 100% accurate albeit with Grayson's characteristic panache. For added goodness, Grayson's recaps are replete with illustrations from the incomparable Elin Elisabet Einarsdóttir. ♡

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

Kristín Mjöll Bjarnad Johnsen

Kristín Mjöll Bjarnad Johnsen (29) is an artist.

Words: Hannah Jane Cohen & Kristin Mjöll Bjarnad Johnsen Photo: Art Bicnick

Kristín is wearing:

- ▶ Vintage John Richmond Homme pants
- ▶ Vintage coat
- ▶ This shirt is from some Instagram website. I don't remember where
- ▶ The vest was a gift from my friend Agnes
- ▶ UNIF shoes

Describe your style in five words: 70s. Masculine. Feminine. Gothic. 90s. A little extra too maybe.

Favourite stores in Reykjavik: I would say Kvartýra №49. I think that's the coolest shop right now. I haven't shopped a lot in Reykjavik recently because I used to work abroad a lot. Húrra is also a cool shop.

Favourite piece: My Fenty pants. I just love how they fit and I think they are timeless.

Something I would never wear: Never say never. I thought sneakers and nice dress up clothes looked ridiculous but now I love it. There's nothing I particularly don't like at the moment, but maybe the shoes from Maison Margiela with a split toe. I know it's fashion and it's supposed to be a shocker, but I think it's kind of ugly.

Lusting after: I want this shirt from Kvartýra №49, the denim and black Crash Test Yourself one. I'd also love the Crash Test Yourself jumpsuit, or really everything from that store. ♡



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Food

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The blue one, the good one

The Only Cod War That Matters

Three downtown fish 'n' chips joints, rated

Words: John Rogers, Photo: Facebook

Ah, fish 'n' chips, the food of kings. Greyjoy ones, anyway. They're best eaten piping hot in the open air, doused in salt and vinegar, and preferably within spitting distance of the sea.

It seems like a dish that Reykjavik should excel in. Potatoes, fish and sea? Triple check. Love of all things deep fried? Check again, bold and underlined.

But much like a perfect pizza Margherita, spaghetti carbonara or Hungarian goulash, Britain's famous gift to the culinary world is simple to make, and difficult to perfect. We went to a few Reykjavik chippies to see how they fare in the only cod war that matters.

Fear the walking vinegar

Google's top hit is Icelandic Fish & Chips at Tryggvagata 11. It has a rolling menu of different types of fish—a promising start, suggesting they have a connection to the Icelandic supply chain. I opt for the tusk, which—somewhat sacrilegiously—comes with wedges instead of chips. What the heck, Icelandic Fish

& Chips? "Chips" is in the name of the restaurant! You had TWO JOBS.

A factor that partially rights this affront is the sight of malt vinegar on the tables. It comes in a small glass bottle with a pipette, which succinctly describes the Icelandic attitude towards this much-maligned condiment. It's stored like some kind of toxic, dangerous chemical. All that's missing is a bio-hazard symbol.

The fish comes quickly, in a generous portion of four fillets about the right size to be considered finger food. The batter is light, crisp and slightly salted, like a tempura hybrid. The tusk is flakey, juicy, and very enjoyable. The wedges, however, are weird. Deep-fried at high heat, they're charred and oily. Our tip is to skip the chips, and buy a pint with the change. Icelandic Fish & Beer—a concept we can get firmly behind.

Weaponized condiment

Next up is Reykjavik Fish at Geirsgata 4a. Here, the vinegar-phobia manifests in a spritzer with a tight lid; kind of a mace-like weaponized

spray version. The only fish on offer, outside of their wider non-fish-'n'-chips menu, is cod. Which is fine. We can respect picking a lane.

It comes as two big chunks in a thin batter, much like you'd find in an everyday British chippy. It even disintegrates in your hands in such an authentic way that I'm temporarily transported to Portsmouth harbour.

The chips? I'm shocked as they're revealed beneath the brown paper. They're not chips at all, but skinny, crunchy, cardboard-y french fries. Not cool at all, and a red card offence.

Vinegar for days

The third and final stop of the day is the red Fish And Chips Wagon, located on the harbourside street of Hlésgata. There's a big queue and plenty of people happily munching down their dinner on some nearby benches. It looks right and smells right. The condiment shelf comes with big, glorious vinegar bottles to properly douse the meal.

This must be the one, I think, opening the box to be serenaded by the perfect fried fish aroma. The chunky, fluffy chips are a sight for sore eyes. I reach for the battered, mouth-wateringly crispy fish... and find that it's a perfect miniaturised portion, around half the size of the other places.

So very close, and yet so far. If they upped the size of their offering, this would be the place. As it stands? Either double-dinner or a pilgrimage to Portsmouth Harbour might be in order. 🍷

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“Ragnheiður pulls forth a steaming clump of hay that emits wisps of smoke like a Hollywood special effect.”



A steaming chicken-poop fertiliser pile. Yum!

A ‘Shroom Trip For The Whole Family

Behind the scenes at Flúðir’s Farmer’s Bistro

Words & Photo: John Rogers

Mushroom Farm & Restaurant

Visit Flúðasveppir and Farmer’s Bistro at Garðastígur 8 in Flúðir, and online at farmersbistro.is.

The sleepy, pastoral town of Flúðir has seen an influx of visitors in recent years. Previously known as a quiet farming community with an abundance of geothermal water at its disposal, in recent times Flúðir’s proximity to the Golden Circle route has seen enterprising locals turn their minds towards entertaining tourists. The Secret Lagoon bathing spot has become a runaway success with thousands upon thousands flooding through its doors each year, and now other tourist-facing businesses are mushrooming around it. In the case of Farmer’s Bistro, quite literally.

The Flúðasveppir mushroom farm is the only mushroom farm in Iceland, producing an astounding 11 tonnes of chestnut, button, and portobello mushrooms each week, and employing 45 people in the process. In line with the town’s welcoming spirit of opening its doors to the public, today Flúðasveppir offers a tour of the farm, followed by a meal in their smart new farm-to-table restaurant, Farmer’s Bistro.



After the farm tour: the feast

added to the hay, resulting in huge, dramatically steaming heaps of future fertiliser. Having grown up on the farm, Ragnheiður is very familiar with this oddly alien hayscape, and plunges her hand into the pile, pulling forth a steaming

clump that emits wisps of smoke like a Hollywood special effect.

Waste not want not

But that’s not the most impressive thing on the tour. As we walk back to the lobby, we’re filled in on the zero-waste policy of the farm. Nothing at Flúðasveppir, it seems, goes to waste. “Unbeautiful” mushrooms are sliced and sold as pizza toppings; water is recycled; old crop and soil are composted and sold in bags for gardeners and houseplant enthusiasts. This best-practice mentality has led to visits from international industry groups, all keen to replicate Flúðasveppir’s sustainable, environmentally friendly model.

Farm to table

After the tour, we arrive back at the Farmer’s Bistro. The farm also produces bell peppers and all kinds of other vegetables, all of which feature in the menu of the bright, spacious restaurant. Mains vary from lamb—presented here as a tasty, spicy, filling wrap—to chicken salad with tangy ginger dressing, and a veggie steak that makes the vegetarian on our tour scribble down the recipe. Everything is locally sourced, and comes with abundant servings of fresh lettuce, pepper and tomato.

Of course, mushrooms feature too. The “gourmet buffet” option comprises a bowl of delicious mushroom soup with house-baked bread and a selection of salsas and tapenades. A mushroom ice cream dessert (yes, it’s a thing) is the cherry on the cake.

Next time you go for a spin around the Golden Circle, be sure to add a dash of green by dropping by Farmer’s Bistro—and be sure to get some mushrooms and a bag of that mycelium-infused soil to take some of Flúðasveppir’s fertile magic home with you. 🍄



SNAPS

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Travel

One Ring To Rule Them All

Hidden Iceland's pro-level Golden Circle tour

Words & Photos: Aliya Uteuova



Distance from Reykjavik:
125 km

How to get there:
Book a hotel pickup, sit back and relax

Tour provided by:
hiddeniceland.is

What are the components of a perfect tour? Hidden Iceland, a company founded by three friends, may have perfected the formula—they show their customers the Iceland they'd show a visiting family member. With a maximum of 12 people per tour, the company schedules visits to the tourist-heavy spots like the Skógafoss waterfall and the geothermal area of Geysir at times when they're least likely to be busy.

On a Saturday morning, I received a text message from our guide Ryan, announcing his estimated arrival time. I don't know about you, but for me this kind of extra attention to detail is a bonus.

Hot soup and steamy photos

Our trip for the day is the Golden Circle Platinum Tour, which covers several major spots in South Iceland over the course of around ten hours. The tour starts with a visit to the Secret Lagoon, a natural hot pool located in the village of Flúðir. We get there early, and for a good ten minutes, we're the only people in the water—everybody gets a good chance to relax in

peace, and take plenty of those coveted steamy geothermal photos without any crowds in the background.

We emerge from the pool feeling refreshed and ready for what lies ahead. Ryan drives us to the Friðheimar greenhouse, famous for its geothermally grown tomatoes. We're treated to a tour of the facilities, learning how this Icelandic business manages to produce over a tonne of tasty tomatoes each day, all year round, using geothermal energy. We taste the deliciously fresh tomato soup, with an impressive house-baked bread buffet. My advice? Skip the ravioli and pasta—it's the soup that you are really here for.

Enveloped in mist

After saying hi to some Icelandic horses at the Friðheimar farm, we're off to Gullfoss, one of Iceland's most powerful waterfalls. This formidable force of nature crashes down thunderously into the gorge below, filling us with energy. Iceland's signature persistent wind creates a misty fog that resembles a scene from the Sagas, which only adds to this once in a lifetime experience.

The next stop is the geothermal area of Geysir in the Haukadalur Valley. There are plenty of hot springs and geysers in this colourful region, such as Strokkur, Smiður and Litli-Strokkur. Strokkur is the largest of the consistently active geysers, erupting every five to ten minutes, spouting boiling water as high as 40 metres into the air. If you're not afraid to get a little wet, standing downwind of the geysir and feeling the warm, pungent mist enveloping you is a truly unforgettable experience. (This is not recommended on a windy day. A little spray is nice, but a wave of steaming water in your face is not.)

Powerful nature

After getting thoroughly soaked, we headed to the Þingvellir National Park. Located on the rift valley that separates the North American and Eurasian tectonic plates, Þingvellir is the site of the first known parliament in the world. If you want to picture how early, pre-Danish rule Iceland governed itself, this is the place to visit.

But Þingvellir National Park is also a perfect place to reflect. From the

“Standing downwind of the geysir and feeling the warm, pungent mist enveloping you is a truly unforgettable experience.”

top of the path, there's a wide view spanning hundreds and hundreds of acres of magnificent and mostly untamed land. This is where it hits me how lucky I am to be able to visit all these amazing and very different places in one day. Several people on the tour hail from metropolitan areas like Beijing and London, and to them particularly, taking a minute to see all that Iceland's nature has to offer was a rare and priceless experience.

The tour that started bright and early at 8:30am concluded at just after six in the evening—just in time for dinner. Before departing, everyone on the bus exchanged their contacts and shared the photos from the day. And who knows—maybe one day our paths will cross again. ☺



The best tomato soup literally anywhere at Friðheimar



The rolling fields of Þingvellir

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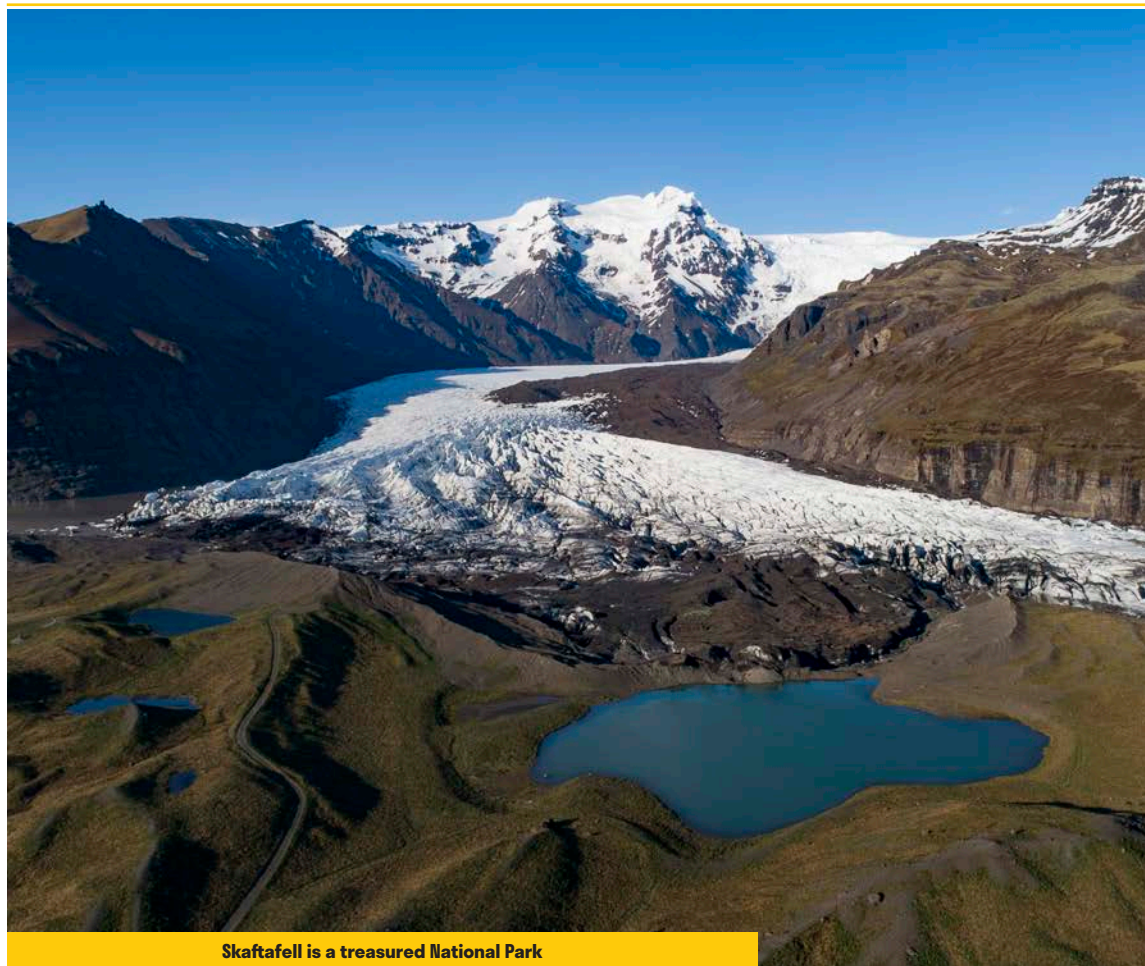
Travel

Distance from Reykjavík: 365km

How to get there: Route One South, all the way

Car provided by: gocarrental.is

Accommodation provided by: hotelskaftafell.is



Skaftafell is a treasured National Park

AREA GUIDE

Skaftafell

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

With glaciers, waterfalls and lava fields in abundance, you can't get more peak Iceland than the Skaftafell region. Located neatly between Vík and the Jökulsárlón Glacier Lagoon, it's an oft bypassed locale along the South coast that really shouldn't be. Stop for a hike, a meal, and some of the best glacial views you'll find in the country.

Eat: Freysnes



Directly across from Hótel Skaftafell is an unassuming gas station, grocery store and restaurant. Don't be put off by its exterior; head to the buffet for a heaping plate of lamb, potatoes and salad that'll rival the best restaurants in Reykjavík. They also offer a fish option, hamburgers, and fantastic French fries.

Activity: Glacier Hiking



There are various glacier hikes available in Skaftafell; indeed, the base camp is a village of tour operator chalets offering tours that range from an hour-long strolls to whole day excursions on the various

glaciers dotting the region. You can take a quick jaunt onto Skaftafellsjökull, walkable from the base camp; for those with more time or endurance, there are 4-5 hour tours onto Öraefajökull. Overlooking everything is Hvannadalshnjúkur, Iceland's highest peak—a seriously challenging and advanced expedition that takes 12-15 hours with a highly specialised guide. Whichever tour you choose, strap on your crampons and roam around the peaks and gullies as the sun shines; wear warm clothes and bring sunglasses for maximum comfort.

Hike: Svartifoss



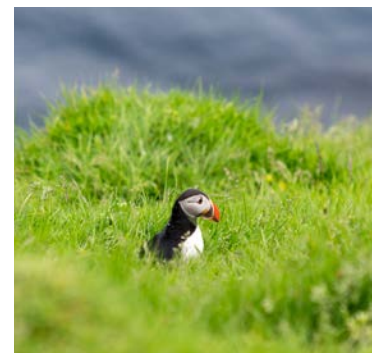
Goth? Geologist? Nature enthusiast? Whatever your persuasion, you'll enjoy the sublime beauty of Svartifoss. It's a severe, dark, glossy waterfall surrounded by thick, black, hexagonal basalt columns that lean together into a cathedral-like semicircular dome, demanding respect, veneration and, above all else, Instagram photos. The hike to the falls is a relaxing 45-minute jaunt each way, with just a few steep segments, making it suitable for hikers of all experience levels. Make sure to pay for parking at the national park though—it's easy to miss the booths in the parking lot.

Stay: Hótel Skaftafell



Simple, comfortable and clean, Hótel Skaftafell is a lovely no-frills place for you to crash during your Skaftafell adventure. Make sure to ask for a room at the back of the hotel, with a view of the Öraefajökull glacier and its highest peak, Hvannadalshnjúkur. With the surrounding gorgeous mountains and the hum of birds in the air, you'll feel like you're in a real life Hudson River School painting. There's a continental breakfast and an on-site restaurant; if you're on a tight budget, try the nearby campsite.

Activity: Ingólfshöfði Puffin Tour



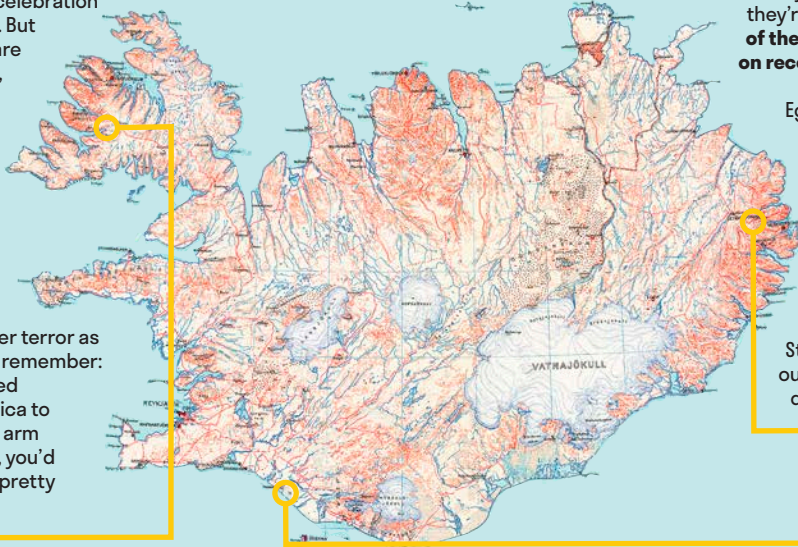
Halfway between Vatnajökull National Park and the Jökulsárlón Glacier Lagoon lies the hidden black sand cape of Ingólfshöfði. Teeming with puffins and all manner of bird life, it's a photographer's dream. Luckily for you, From Coast To Mountains offers a tractor-drawn hayride down to the shore. Crossing marshes, sand, flat grasslands, and small waterways, the tour will get you as close to the birds as possible. 🐦

Island Life

Hot news from the cold Icelandic countryside

Words: **Andie Fontaine**

It's hard to tell whether one of the latest headlines out of the Westfjords—"The Arctic tern is back"—is a celebration or a warning. But these birds are back indeed, having been spotted beginning their nesting in Arnarfjörður earlier this month. No bird inspires as much awe and sheer terror as the tern, but remember: if you travelled from Antarctica to Ísafjörður by arm power alone, you'd probably be pretty cranky, too..



Northeast Iceland will literally never stop bragging about their warm spring weather. Here we are in an almost-bearable Reykjavik May, and they're reporting one of the warmest Aprils on record. It averaged around 5.5°C in Egilsstaðir, with a high of 18.1°C. And you know what? We get it, Northeast-ers, you have the best weather and are the coolest kids in school. Stop rubbing it in our freezing, rain-drenched faces.

South Iceland for once has a news story that doesn't involve speeding or off-road driving, as it is reported that an elderly woman who found cash laying on the ground subsequently handed it over to the police, with the hopes that it be returned to its rightful owner. There may be hope for humanity after all.

Best Of Iceland

A selection of winners from our Best Of Iceland travel magazine



North: Best Pool
Hofsós Swimming Pool

Hands-down our panel's favourite, Hofsós Swimming Pool was praised for its spectacular views across the North Atlantic. Built into the hillside, Hofsós includes a 25m pool, hot pots and a sauna. "I love the relaxing atmosphere," said the panel. "It's priced like a municipal pool, but this amazing bathing spot is a design classic, with an infinity pool that makes you feel like you're swimming into the horizon."



Reykjanes: Must-See Spot
Seltún

Reykjanes is a lively, geothermally active peninsula, and there's nowhere better to feel the heat and power of the living earth than at Seltún in the Krýsuvík valley. The iconic zig-zagging wooden walkway takes you over steaming vents, bubbling fumaroles and gurgling clay pots; the colours vary from earthy to vividly fluorescent.



South: Best Accommodation
Skálakot Manor Hotel

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

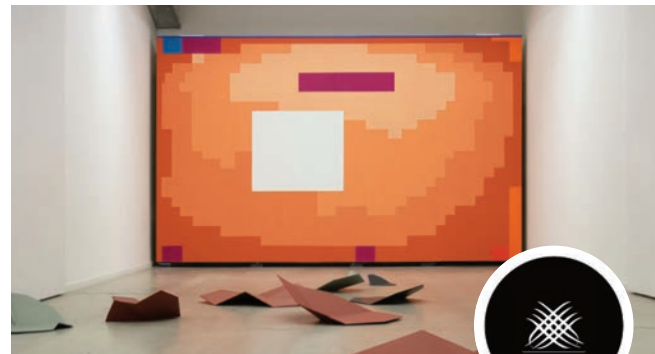


Hressingarskálinn (Hressó) is a Classical Bistro, located in the heart of the city at Austurstræti 20

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WELL, YOU ASKED

Throw Your Pylsa Into The Fjord

Words: **John Rogers**
Photo: **Art Bicnick**

How does one go about becoming an extra on Game of Thrones?

Well, first, you wanna identify the house you're going for. To be a Greyjoy, take up heroin and live rough for a few weeks. To be a Lannister, try infiltrating the upper echelons of Iceland's corrupt, crossbred political-business class and copy their haircuts and mannerisms. To be a Wildling, spend a weekend in Kaffibarinn. Or just join Sigur Rós—they managed it.

If someone on my Strætó bus is exceptionally smelly, is it ethical for me to spray said person with perfume?

As a perfectly fragrant and deodorised human who once turned around to find someone spraying me with perfume on the tube, I say no to this. You could have a case of mistaken identity, and this experience sucked for me. I smell great!

How does one properly hotdog in Iceland?

Start by going to Bæjarins Beztu, queuing with the tourists in the rain, and getting your Buddhist "one with everything." Watch the sauces and raw and crunchy onions being slathered onto the pink sausage and squished into the weird foamy bun. Next, go and throw the whole thing into the fjord. Hot dogs are processed junk food. Eat something healthy. What are you, five years old? 🍌

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WAR OF THE NERDS

Money > Buddies

In Eve Online, you can put a price on friendship

Words: **Hannah Jane Cohen** Photo: **Eve Online**

Can you put a price on friendship? Eve Online player Samantha Myth did. On a whim, he spent 16 months working his way up the ranks of the Amamake Police—more or less the Dothraki of the massively multiplayer online role-playing game—gaining the trust and admiration of their leader just to steal their rare ships and a chunk of cash from under their noses. Hello, Judas.

The heist

Samantha started his heist by working his way slowly into the inner circle of the Amamake, a feat he accomplished by providing it with information that led to the defeat of a rival group. Now in the gang, he did something quite cheeky, he lent Amamake's leader, Tikktokk, an expensive ship without asking anything in return.

Weeks later, Tikktokk paid him back by lending Samantha an even nicer ship—that's how much he trusted him. The ship, a Chremoas frigate, could only be acquired by winning the Alliance

Tournament, Eve's version of the Olympics, and it boasts an unprecedented 400 killmarks (the number of ships a ship has killed). To put it bluntly, the ship was basically a golden unicorn with heterochromia and perfect pitch. It was that rare.

Around the same time, Samantha asked two other members to borrow their rare ships. Now in possession of three nearly priceless ships, he took them, said peace, and left after 16 months of brotherhood.

Et tu, Brute?

After his heist, Samantha posted on the Eve Online subreddit. "This was a hard one to pull off and I have got to say I almost wish I didn't," he wrote at the end of the post. "I almost became emotionally attached to my victims. But this is EVE and this is the role I play."

Classy as always, Tikktokk commented confirming that Samantha Myth had his ships. He



Damn you backstabbing nerds!

commended the pirate on his heist, but then said that they were most sad to have lost their companionship in the game. "You have been one of the few people I actually enjoy playing with," he wrote. It was a tragic response, and

as one Redditor, Svenviko, commented back. "Damn, this story is like stealing your big brother's car, and he just replies saying, 'I'm more sad about losing our friendship' :'(" We agree, Svenviko. We agree. 🍌



CITYSHOT by Art Bicnick

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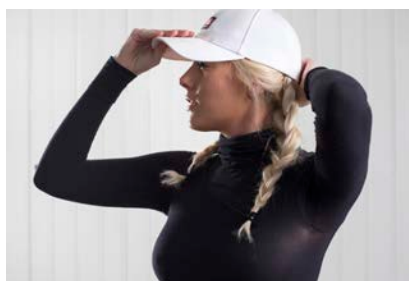
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LAST WORDS

Let's Play An Endgame

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

First off: I have been instructed by my editor that I cannot put any spoilers in this article about 'Avengers: Endgame.' I will honour this request. Maybe someone falls in love. Maybe someone dies. Hey, we all will one day.

I will instead focus on the phenomenon that is Marvel. In less than two weeks, the most recent iteration of the Avengers made more than two billion dollars, now on track to beat 'Avatar' as the most profitable film ever made. I applaud this. At least the Avenger's didn't have some sort of white saviour complex.

I get why people saw the movie. 'Infinity War' was a shocker. The bad guy won, and he didn't just win, he decimated. He killed half of all living things, though of course, that brought up a whole host of questions. Did he kill half off our gut bacteria? Was there mass indigestion the day after Thanos' quasi-apocalyptic victory? Who knows?

But I'm going to go back to the time before the Marvel universe was so vast, if you can remember it. Truthfully, making the first 'Iron Man'—the film that jump started the superhero craze—was controversial. Comics were niche and Iron Man was a particularly B-list superhero. He's a bit older, has no innate superpowers, and is basically a billionaire genius who wants for nothing. With no Batman-like backstory or notoriety—could people relate to him?

Well, they did, and it's a pretty accurate statement that without Robert Downey Jr.'s Tony Stark, there'd be no Avengers at all.

But it was the choice to create films within the same universe that was the most fundamental. This allowed them to have the—at that time—pipe-dream of one day making an Avengers film. Fast-forward more than 10 years, and all four iterations are within the top ten highest grossing films ever made, with 'Black Panther' rounding them out at number ten.

The formula was a dream, but now it's been done. 'Endgame' was, for me, a fitting finale to a fabulous series of films. When I left the theatre, I felt like a whole era was over and it was a beautiful feeling. I don't want a 'The Hobbit', 'Fantastic Beasts And Where To Find Them', or 'Star Wars'-esque prequel thing to happen, but I can't help but think there's not really anywhere for them to go now. But hey—there are a ton of B-list superheroes ready to be reborn. I'm voting for The Phone Ranger, whose fantastic power is that of communication—something we all need nowadays. 📞

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