

REYKJAVÍK GRAPEVINE

WOW Arises

News: Arms dealer ressurects budget airline

Bio Queens

Culture: They're women in drag, and that's fine

Himalayan Spice

Food: From the roof of the world to your table

Cheap Travel

Travel: See the country without going bankrupt

Ágústa Evgi:

THE PART OF FUN

The growth of an *iconic actor*,
from *amateur theatre*
to *Sylvia Nótt* in Eurovision
to HBO's *Beforeigners*

Plus!

GIG GUIDE × CITY MAP × TRAVEL IDEAS × FOOD



COVER PHOTO:
Magnús Andersen
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Styling and props:
Ólöf Rut Stefánsdóttir
Make up:
Fjöla Valdís Bjarnadóttir
Clothes from:
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First

EDITORIAL

The Race For A New Airline



Iceland is still trying to recover from the very expected **bankruptcy of WOW air** earlier this year. The summer high season for tourism is drawing to a close and the data is starting to trickle in. And it's mixed. A report released by Arion Bank this month shows in black and white the impact that WOW's fall had on the tourism sector. **There has been a 17% reduction of tourists to Iceland in just four months.**

At the same time, the figures show that tourist that still choose to come to Iceland **are spending more money than ever before.** Perhaps that's not a surprise, as

WOW Air was offering such low-cost airfare that they were practically paying bargain-hunting passengers to fly with them. No wonder they crashed right on the nose in April and filed for bankruptcy after a tedious and very public financial struggle.

Analysts think Iceland's tourism numbers will rebound, but slowly—a **2% increase in tourists is forecasted for next year**, so our troubles are far from over.

In this odd landscape, we have seen ambitious plans to restore the fallen airline. The most promising replacement now is probably WAB Air, which is run by former key staff from WOW Air. The other possibility is a little more dubious, with the **arms dealer formerly known**

as **Michele Ballarin**, buying up all WOW's assets and is aiming to be up and running in October.

We say "good luck," but hope at the same time that financiers and CEOs approach this market with much more restraint and caution than their predecessors—one bad apple means a lot of people losing their jobs, and even affecting the whole economy in a way that no one can afford. **VG ☺**



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



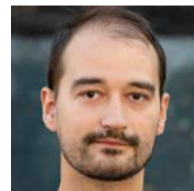
Hannah Jane Cohen is based out of Iceland by way of New York. An alumni of Columbia University, Hannah has lived on five continents and speaks three languages fluently. Her visionary work is known for expanding the definitions of emotion, introspection, and above all else, taste.



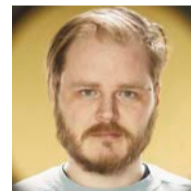
Alexander Jean Edvard Le Sage de Fontenay is a Reykjavik-born part-time DJ (under the pseudonym Bervit), event-planner and lover of art, creation and aesthetics. Most recent endeavors include co-producing The Grapevine's own Grassroots concerts at Húrra and LungA Art Festival's busy event schedule.



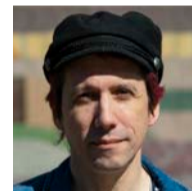
Shruthi Basappa traded the warmth of Indian summers for Iceland's Arctic winds. She's a food enthusiast masquerading as an architect at Sei Studio, and loves obsessive attention to detail. When not leading our Best of Reykjavik food panel, she can be found trying to become a Michelin restaurant inspector.



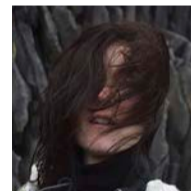
Samuel O Donnell Sam is an English major from The United States. He has his Bachelor's Degree, and keeps telling himself that this is the year he will begin pursuing his Master's. In his spare time, he enjoys playing video games, writing short horror stories, listening to all kinds of metal, and reading.



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.



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.



a rawlings is Grapevine's literature correspondent, also covering environmental news, travel, and more. An interdisciplinary artist whose work focuses on environmental ethics, dysfluency, and watery bodies, her books include 'Wide slumber for lepidopterists' and 'Sound of Mull.'



Lóa Hlín Hjálmtýsdóttir 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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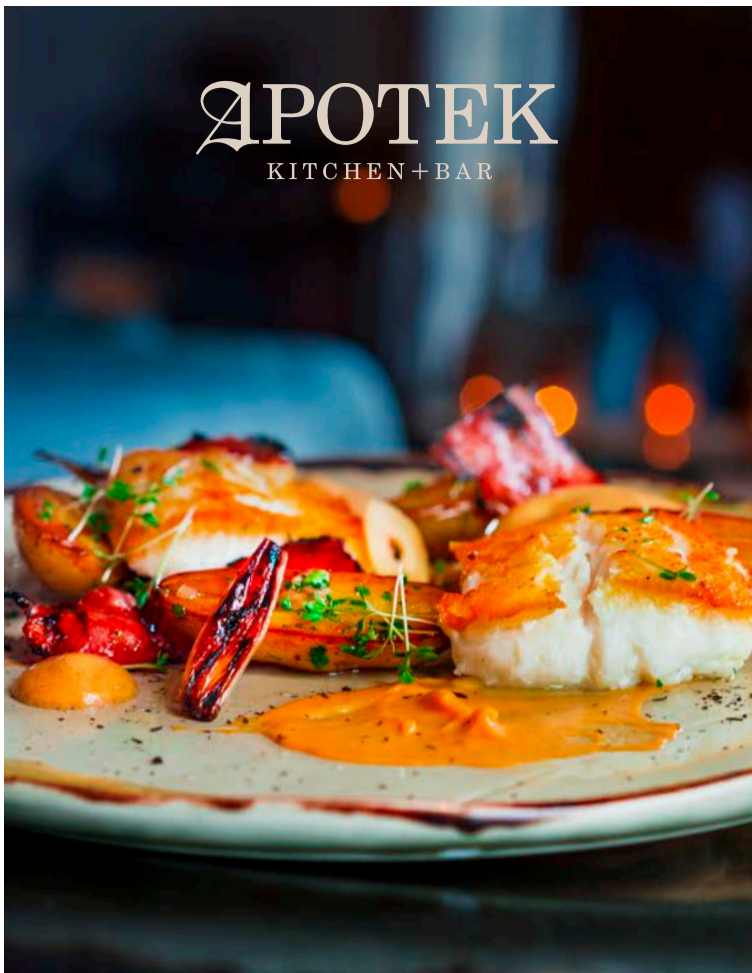


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Six little flags caused all this ruckus

What Are Icelanders Talking About?

The sound and the fury

Words: **Andie Fontaine** Photo: **Hjálmar Theodórsson**

NEWS Iceland is not a Nazi-friendly country. This became very apparent when a dozen members of the **Nordic Resistance Movement** gathered in downtown Reykjavik earlier this month to hand out flyers about “cultural Marxism” (a made-up concept popularised by Norwegian far-right terrorist Anders Breivik) and call people “race traitors”. While some Icelanders commented on social media that the best response would be to laugh at them or ignore them (interestingly, almost everyone suggesting this were people who'd never have to worry about being targeted by Nazis), some **200 Icelanders gathered for an anti-fascist rally** at the same spot just days later, braving the rain and cold to voice their opposition to intolerance. 200 versus 12 is a pretty encouraging ratio, to be sure.

Speaking of acts against intolerance, the arrival of US Vice President Mike Pence to Iceland was a showcase of expressions of diversity. Icelanders were both frustrated and confused by the extreme security measures Mike felt necessary to have, blocking off whole city blocks to traffic around Höfði, the historic 1986 meeting place of Reagan and Gorbachev, replete with **snipers on nearby roofs** and helicopters circling the area. Bear in mind that Angela Merkel, one of the most powerful politicians in Europe, openly walked the streets of downtown Reykjavik just weeks prior, with a minimal entourage. The company **Advania**, located just next to Höfði, **raised six Pride flags** as a visible show of support for diversity, something Mike has proven allergic to, and two people were arrested for burn-

ing the American flag. While some Icelanders commenting on the visit engaged in some Pelosi Clap-levels of projection (“Did you see the side-eye our Prime Minister gave him?”), other messages were clearer, such as **President Guðni Th. Jóhannesson** wearing a rainbow bracelet for his meeting with Pence, and talking about the importance of tolerance and diversity. Some Icelandic conservatives were “concerned” about hurting the feelings of dear tender Mike, but it seemed most agreed that a few Pride flags was a

fair exchange for effectively putting the city under US military occupation for seven hours.

The nation breathed a collective sigh of relief when **Parliament passed the Third Energy Package** into law, which was signed into execution by the President. At long last, the issue that has prompted some of the longest filibusters in Icelandic history, ramped up the populist social media propaganda machine and just generally exhausted everybody was finally laid to rest. And now that Iceland has officially adopted this EU regulation, we reckon it's only a matter of time before Brussels constructs an enormous extension cord, drags it across the North Sea, plugs it into our power grid and saps us completely dry of every last electron we produce. Don't say you weren't warned! 🇮🇸



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PUBLISHER
Hilmar Steinn Grétarsson hilmar@grapevine.is +354 540 3601 publisher@grapevine.is

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF
Valur Grettisson valur@grapevine.is

MANAGING EDITOR
John Rogers john@grapevine.is

ART DIRECTOR
Sveinbjörn Pálsson sveinbjorn@grapevine.is

NEWS EDITOR
Andie Fontaine andie@grapevine.is

CULTURE & TRAVEL EDITOR
John Rogers john@grapevine.is

PHOTO EDITOR
Art Bicornick art@grapevine.is

WEB EDITOR
Andie Fontaine andie@grapevine.is

LISTINGS DIRECTOR
Hannah Jane Cohen listings@listings.is

LAYOUT
Þorsteinn Davíðsson

COPY EDITOR
Catharine Fulton

ILLUSTRATIONS
Elin Elisabet Lóa Hlin Hjálmtýsdóttir Kosmonatka Þorsteinn Davíðsson

INTERNS
Sam O'Donnell samuel@grapevine.is
Lea Müller lea@grapevine.is

CONTRIBUTING WRITERS
Alexander Jean a rawlings
Claudia Schultz
Elvar Smári

Lóa Hlin Hjálmtýsdóttir Grayson del Faro Greig Robertson Kimi Tayler Magnús Helgi Sveinsson Rex Beckett Ragnar Egilsson Tara Njála Ingvarsdóttir Phil Uwe Widiger Shruthi Basappa Selma Reynisdóttir

PHOTOGRAPHERS
Art Bicornick Magnús Andersen Dominika Milek Juliette Rowland Polka Polkovska

SALES DIRECTORS
Aðalsteinn Þórðsson adalsteinn@grapevine.is
Helgi Þór Harðarson helgi@grapevine.is

CONTACT US:
—> Editorial +354 540 3600 editor@grapevine.is

—> Advertising 354 540 3605 ads@grapevine.is

—> Distribution 8 Subscriptions +354 540 3604 distribution@grapevine.is

—> Press releases listings@grapevine.is

—> General Inquiries grapevine@grapevine.is

FOUNDERS
Hilmar Steinn Grétarsson, Hörður Kristbjörnsson, Jón Trausti Sigurðarson, Oddur Óskar Kjartansson, Valur Gunnarsson

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And here we see the American tourist in his natural habitat

How Not To Approach A Waterfall

Do not tempt fate

NEWS

There are numerous sites of natural beauty and wonder all around Iceland, and while there is no one right way to visit them, there are a few wrong ones. This one especially.

Nora McMahon posted the above photo to the Facebook group Iceland Q&A on Monday, showing an unknown person wearing only a pair of shorts wading perilously close to the very edge of the Skógafoss waterfall, which is just over 60 metres high.

Words: **Andie Fontaine**

Photo: **Nora McMahon**

“Don’t be this idiot”

“Whatever you do, when you visit Iceland—don’t be this idiot,” she wrote in part with the post, as Vísir reports. “I thought I was going to witness this narcissist fall to his death just to get Instagram likes.”

The photos made their way to Bakland Ferðapjónustunnar, a Facebook group for tourism industry workers in Iceland. There, numerous tour guides and other workers expressed shock and dismay at the depicted behaviour,

with some suggesting that people who pull such stunts ought to be arrested, fined, deported, or all of the above.

Police say they are not investigating the matter, but they advised no one attempt to repeat this.

Örlygur Örlygsson, who runs the tour company Travice, was on the scene when this incident happened. He witnessed the fall-botherer arrive with several other tourists, whom Örlygur speculates were all Americans. Örlygur told reporters he was stunned speechless by this reckless behaviour.

“He said it didn’t matter because life itself is dangerous,” Örlygur recounted. “I didn’t know what to say, I was just really surprised by this.”

For the record, we at The Grapevine recommend observing any of Iceland’s many beautiful waterfalls from a safe distance. The last thing rescue workers want to do is risk their own lives to fish your body out of the rocks beneath a waterfall. 🇮🇸

ASKA
Seabird Ecologist
Q: Why Are Puffin Numbers Going Down?



Words: **Erpur Snær Hanson**
Photo: **Submitted by Erpur**

The puffin is a beloved bird that everybody associates with Iceland. However, recent studies have shown that their numbers have been dwindling. The Grapevine reached out to seabird ecologist Erpur Snær Hansen to ask why.

A lack of food is basically the cause, which started in 2003. The sand eel population fell in 2005. Iceland’s south and west coasts were hit particularly hard, so few chicks fledged. It’s been poor since, but the numbers started improving in the west over the last four years or so, and in the last two years have been good. This accounts for about 65% of Iceland’s puffin population.

The puffin population in the north has been doing OK the sand eel stock remains sufficient in that region after the departure of capelin in 2003. The east has been doing poorly.

This year, the Westman Islands have seen the most puffins since 2007, but the pufflings have been fed low energy food for the last weeks and their departure is now about three weeks overdue, in contrast to their “normal” growth period of 42 days.

The adults’ survival seems to have been fine, they are not short of food. But there is not enough around the colonies to feed all of these chicks. So that has been the problem. 🇮🇸

FOOD OF ICELAND

Hamburgers



Although Icelanders consider shark meat their country’s traditional cuisine, in reality, the truly traditional Icelandic food is the old-fashioned, fat and greasy hamburger. For decades, you could not travel around the country and buy anything else than a sloppy, slightly overcooked burger. And you had to have coleslaw and kokteilsósa (Icelandic cocktail sauce) on the side if you didn’t want to be perceived as a traitor.

Icelanders embraced American culture early on, adopting trash food like it was our own. **Food experts say that the first hamburger was probably sold in Iceland**

in 1941, although some believe that the first was sold in the famous road shop Staðarskáli in Hrítafjörður in 1960.

Either way, Icelanders definitely caught burger fever by the 1960s. That much is true.

Food experts think that American soldiers taught a woman called Jakobína Ásmundardóttir to make this delicious folksy traditional food when they were based here during the Second World War. If that’s the case, we salute thee, miss Jakobína, foremother of the wonderful Icelandic hamburger. **VG 🇮🇸**

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Some will go to great lengths to avoid renting a moving van

Moving Day

Ancient superstitions also spark joy

ICELANDIC SUPERSTITIONS

Words: **Andie Fontaine**

Photo: **Art Bicnick**

So you've got all your stuff boxed up, you've got the van hired, and you're ready to move into your new home. But are you sure you brought everything you'll need? In Iceland, there are superstitions surrounding having a particular set of items in your new home in order to avert disaster: salt, coins, bread, a candle, and a Bible or a

cross. Maybe.

We say "maybe" here because there are conflicting reports regarding which of these you will need and why. But the basic run-down is like this:

You need the salt to always have "salt in your porridge" (similar to "sugar in your tea", i.e., to have some kind of humble luxuries that make life more

bearable), the coins to ensure you'll always have money, and the Bible or cross to keep evil spirits away. Some say you also need bread to ensure you'll always have food, and some add the candle to ensure that the lights stay on.

These items are then placed in a small jar or pouch and kept in a safe place somewhere in the house, most often the kitchen cupboards.

So you get the basic idea: **assemble a small collection of tiny items that represent the ingredients of a happy, stable home, and then stash the collection somewhere.** The best thing about this is that you could very well do your own version of this. Get creative! Superstitions need not be dogmatic. 🍷

JUST SAYINGS

„Heimskt er heimaalið barn“

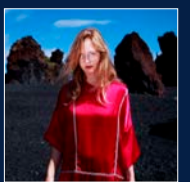
This saying is pretty basic. In English, it means 'a homeschooled child is a stupid child.' Sounds rough, but this is a saying in Iceland. **What it means is that an individual that does not travel or see the world, will be a stupid, narrow-minded bastard.** Once again, it sounds rough, but we didn't make this up; it's a real saying. To be clear, it's not about children, it's about intolerant and uncharitable people that vote for Donald Trump or Viktor Orban and think that the whole world revolves around them.

VG 🍷

LÓLABORATORIUM



Alexander Jarl - Marbella
Alexander Jarl announces himself in classic Jason Derulo-Style and then takes us on a trip to sunnier shores. This song is for anyone who is looking to prolong the Icelandic summer and ignore the fact that temperatures are hovering around 10 degrees Celsius. **LM**



Rauður - Himinbjörg
Rauður's new track is an ethereal work that feels dreamy at first, but by the end, a sinister vibe creeps in. The video is also very dream-like, with footage of ocean waves played in reverse, and the artist climbing around the surrounding rocks and laying down in the water. **SPO**



Sin Fang - Hollow
I feel like a kid on Christmas. This song is absolutely brilliant, the video, directed by Ingibjörg Birgisdóttir, is fantastic. Sin Fang is back and better than ever. The song is incredibly strong and I can't wait to see those guys at Airwaves later this winter. **VG**



Haraldur Þór - Pieces
Some of us remember what it was like to be emo. Haraldur Þór does a fantastic job of reviving that feeling without copying His Infernal Majesty or The Used. The track sounds fresh while also delivering a strong vibe of Chuck Taylors and skinny jeans. **SPO**



Benni Hemm Hemm - MIKLABRAUT
This is a feel-good song that will instantly put a little smile on your face as you're sitting in someone's passenger seat, head out the window, with the fresh winds of the Icelandic countryside blowing in your hair. Perfect for any road-trip adventure—just make sure to get your pretty head back in before the driver hits the brakes. **LM**



gugusar - I'm not supposed to say this
gugusar is the Icelandic response to Billie Eilish, just with an added touch of Soundcloud autotune and depression. The girl is only 15—yeah, seriously, 15—but her three released tracks betray a knowledge of tonal maturity far beyond her years. Write this name down now so you can genuinely say you listened to her before she was famous. **HJC**

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

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THE REAL THING

The Pepsi League



The sore losers in FC Valur wants to extend the football season in Iceland, which currently runs around five months. In a statement sent to Visir.is, among others, the club said that they want the same system as in Denmark, where the six highest-ranked teams in the league play internally while the six bottom teams do the same to avoid falling down to the second league. To do this, Valur proposes that the season should be longer, and it would gain from it because better teams would put up a better show and play some “real games” as they so modestly put it. They also point out that team members are on the payroll for up to 12 months every year, so they would get more out of their gladiators with this system. So their suggestion is that the Pepsi league start at the beginning of April and end around the 10th of October.

Valur is in fifth place now, so they would barely qualify for the super round. Valur's supporters are very disappointed how the season ended. Meanwhile, FC KR is crushing their opponents and has a seven-point lead on Breiðablik, who are currently in second place in the Pepsi League. VG ☘



FOOTBALL



Our Boys Unleash Footballing Eyjafjallajökull

It was a bloodbath.

Words:
Greig Robertson

Illustration:
Lóa Hlín Hjalmtýsdóttir

Oh yes. It's the time of year when the Icelandic diaspora converges on the motherland and erupts like Eyjafjallajökull all over its opposition. In recent days, senior smiters and snow leopard cubs alike have taken the Euro qualifiers by storm, sweeping aside Moldova and Luxembourg, respectively. As we quickly forget the subsequent defeat to **Albania**, here's exactly how our boys took another step towards continental dominance, plus a special landmark for Gylfi Sigurðsson:

Moldovans weep as usual suspects scorch earth

World-renowned football maestros Moldova were made to look like a team of part-timers by **Erik Hamrén's** bloodthirsty clan on Saturday evening, succumbing to a resounding 3-0 defeat at Laugardalsvöllur. In the hammering, **Kolbeinn Sigbórsson** conjured up his first competitive Iceland goal since the Euro 2016 quarter-finals, while **Birkir Bjarnason** and **Jón Daði Böðvarsson** put the icing and cherry on the cake.

“Nothing less than a pair of smittings will do if Iceland are to reach the 2020 finals the easy way.”

Guðjohnsens unite and smite

Sveinn Aron Guðjohnsen joined up with his old man for Iceland's U-21s' battle with Luxembourg—and it looks like being under Eiður's tutelage is paying off. The Spezia forward fired his side ahead from the penalty spot early in the second half before Jón Dagur Þorsteinsson and Willum Þór Willumsson netted in quick succession. The father-son duo look set to rise all the way to the top of Iceland's coaching and playing ranks, with Eiður currently serving as assistant to Arnar Viðarsson and Sveinn honing his trade in Serie B.

Til hamingju með afmælið to the OG

Iceland's bewitching playmaker **Gylfi Sigurðsson** turned 30 last week, although his accelerated ageing should slow down dramatically now that he's no longer coached by Sam Allardyce. Over the last decade, “The Viking Virtuoso” has established himself as a lowkey Premier League great, **notching 59 goals and 44 assists in 251 games**. **Gylfi still has plenty to give**, and will be central to Everton's hopes of finishing in the European spots this season.

Albanian bloodbath sees hunters become hunted

Aron Gunnarsson's barmy army fell to a shock defeat by Albania on Tuesday, **losing 4-2** at the Elbasan Arena. Accomplished **finishes from Gylfi Sigurðsson and Kolbeinn Sigbórsson weren't enough save the icemen from the abyss**. They'll face France and Andorra at home next month. Nothing less than a pair of smittings will do if Iceland are to reach the 2020 finals the easy way. ☘

Follow our live-tweets on Euro qualification matchdays on Twitter at [@rvkgrapevine](#). Iceland's march to the Euro 2020 trophy will continue throughout 2019.

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"We are almost technically bankrupt," says new Post Office CEO

Draconian Postal Institution Promises To Change

Birgir Jónsson takes charge as CEO

request additional funding from the state. He wants to restructure the company from the ground up. "We have already changed the executive management team," he says. "Since I have been there, we have hired new managers and made the company a lot more efficient."

He also plans to sell subsidiary companies. "We have been criticized a lot because we own a lot of them. We are in the process of selling those and pulling back a little." He hopes these changes will be seen as an olive branch to customers. "I would like to show that we come in peace, at least."

The more interesting part of his plan, he says, is **fixing the service and getting it up to the same level as neighbouring countries**. "The good thing about this industry is that we don't have to reinvent the wheel. We just have to look at other countries and do what they're doing." The focus for the next 12 to 18 months will be to rise up to that standard, especially with their parcel industry.

Thus far, this work has been easier than he expected. "I thought I was going into this kind of very wooden, dusty institution. It's not like that at all," he says, adding that there are a lot of people on every level of the company who have ideas that, for some reason or another, the previous management team would not implement. He also had expected to need to make a lot of staff changes, but he has only had to lay off a total of 18 people, all in the management sector.

son left his position as **CEO of Póstur and Birgir Jónsson**, (whom you may recognize as the drummer for the band Dimma) took over. From the outset, he had the goal of changing things for the better. He says he took the job because he likes a challenge. "It's a high profile business problem," he says. "It's a very challenging thing, a relatively big company in a tight spot."

Big plans

The Grapevine met with Birgir to discuss his ideas to improve the state of the post office. His plan is twofold.

First, he plans to remedy the business side of things. **"The post has been bleeding money,"** he says, adding that it has been necessary to

Settling on the price

One major criticism of the post office has been how expensive it is. Birgir speculates that the inefficiencies of the business were always directly

Words: The post office in Iceland has an infamous reputation. First of all, there's the fact that when residents receive a package, they are notified by means of a slip of paper, which is often lost. If they leave the package at the post office for this or any other reason, they have to pay a fee for collecting a parcel

Sam O'Donnell

Photo: Provided by the subject & Art Bicnick

late, or worse, risk having it returned to the sender without notice. **Either way, the fee to collect the parcel, whether or not it is late, amounts to more than the parcel's actual worth. It's a nightmare.** But it looks like this may change. Last May, Ingimundur Sigurpáls-

"I CANNOT RECOMMEND THIS TOUR ENOUGH, IT WAS ABSOLUTELY AMAZING!"

"IT WAS REALLY AN AMAZING EXPERIENCE! WORTH EVERY PENNY!"

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reflected by price. “Sometimes there were good reasons for price increases, but the business was not run as efficiently as it could have been.” He went on to say that he can’t make any promises about cutting the price for the post. However, he is willing to promise that they will give back the value for money by raising the service. He also said that as soon as his team get the post into profit, he is sure they will have enough leverage for them to decrease prices. “To be honest that will be a big reward for me and my team, because that will mean we did a good job of turning the company around.” He says, smiling, “I really hope we can meet in 12 months time and we can talk about lower prices.”

What took so long?

Birgir met with Hanna Katrín Friðriksson, along with the chairman and the vice-chairman of the board, on September 2nd, in front of the Transport and Communications Committee. Hanna asked, essentially, what took the post office so long to make these changes. **“I can’t answer that. I don’t know. I’ve been there for three months,”** Birgir says. “I can say we are doing it now.” He smiles.

The general auditor of the state released a report in June, which shined a light over the past problems and issues with the post office. Birgir found this report help-

ful, because it highlighted a number of areas that needed improvement. So he devised a plan to fix the areas that the report highlighted. However, he still has to contend with the free market. “It is changing a lot over the first of January because we are losing our monopoly,” he says, referring to legislation that recently passed. Birgir says that his official position on this legislation is neutral. “If the state wants to pull the company out of the competition market, then it’s fine by me.”

The future

The post office doesn’t have a lot of time. **“We are almost technically bankrupt,”** Birgir says, adding that the state gave the company about 1.5 billion ISK which will have to get them through this year. After that, they have to stand on their own feet.

In that timeframe, he hopes that people will see and appreciate the changes he implements. “It will always be too slow, and we will never be good enough, but I hope people will see progress.” As for the business side, he is optimistic. “I’m pretty sure we will be operating with a profit next year, based on the restructuring programs. I think the main business of the Icelandic post is the parcel business. So I think the focus is going to be on that for a while.”

Hopefully, one day that means no more paying ridiculous fees. ☘

“The good thing about this industry is that we don’t have to reinvent the wheel. We just have to look at other countries and do what they’re doing.”



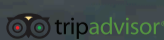
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Open fish farms, seen from above. Toxic waste not pictured.

A Pink, But Toxic Gold-Rush

The controversial salmon farming industry

Words:
Magnús Sveinn Helgason

Photos:
Screenshot "Under The Surface"

In the past decade, the fjords of Iceland have been the site of a gold rush as ambitious promoters have rushed to draw up plans and apply for permits to fill every fjord to capacity with open pen salmon farms. The industry has been booming, its growth rate exceeding even that of tourism.

For scale: tourism, which many in Iceland feel has been growing too fast for its environmental and economic impact to be evaluated, causing excessive stress on Iceland's fragile nature, grew nearly five-fold between 2008 and 2018. At the same time, the output of farmed salmon ballooned from just 292 tons to 13,448—a staggering 45-fold increase.

According to plans outlined by the industry, the salmon party is just start-

ing. Applications have been filed for farms with a capacity totaling 130,000 tons of salmon and further plans are already being discussed. The Icelandic Marine and Freshwater Research Institute, which conducts risk assessments for aquaculture in Icelandic waters, has thrown some cold water

on these plans, capping the capacity of fjords where aquaculture is permitted at 71,000 tonnes. Since a number of fjords have yet to be assessed, that total will likely increase.

Green or not so green

The website of Icelandic Aquaculture, the primary lobbying group of the industry, claims that the industry is the most environmentally friendly food producing industry in the world and promotes salmon as the green, or rather pink, alternative to both white or red meat. The carbon footprint of each kilogram of salmon is 2.5 kg of CO₂, less than a tenth of the carbon footprint of beef and half of that of chicken. Industry spokesmen claim the environmental impact is minimal, which has quite a lot of appeal to many Icelanders who have grown increasingly apprehensive about further expansion of hydropower or geothermal to power energy-intensive industries, and are concerned about the potential environmental impact of tourism. Meanwhile, environmentalists and conservationists have sounded

the alarm. Salmon farming in open sea pens is a far cry from being environmentally friendly or sustainable according to Jón Kaldal of the Iceland Wildlife Fund, a nature conservatory founded in 2017 to protect wild salmon populations. "When we look at the various ecological impacts, industrial-

scale ocean aquaculture has, and all the risks associated with salmon farming in open sea pens, it is nothing short of baffling people are willing to make this gamble. The industry is a ticking ecological time-bomb."

Mountains of waste

Open sea pens are simply floating cages made of nylon nets, anchored to the seafloor and held afloat by plastic buoys. The cages, which can each contain up to 200,000 fish who stay in the pens for up to three years, allow any waste to flow freely into the ocean. The waste descends to the seafloor where mounds of uneaten fish feed, faecal matter, rotting remains of dead fish and pesticides used to kill parasites all pile up beneath the pens.

"If we use the conservative Norwegian estimate, rather than the figures from the PR material of Icelandic salmon farmers, we can see that salmon farming is a polluting industry which places enormous stress on the ocean," Jón tells me. If current plans for farms producing 71,000 tons are realized the industry would produce as much sewage as 1,136,000 people, more than three times the entire population of Iceland. Jón points out that while all municipal sewage and waste from farming or other food production on land, including land-based aquaculture, must be treated before it's released to the ocean, waste from open sea pens are exempt from such requirements. "They just dump all of this into the sea, as if the oceans were bottomless garbage and waste dumps. Which they aren't."

Loss of genetic diversity

Research has found that two thirds of Norwegian salmon stocks show signs

of interbreeding with farmed salmon. Conservationists fear that the same will happen in Iceland if the industry continues to expand. If plans for 71,000 tons of salmon farming are realized, 30 million fertile farmed fish will be in open net cages in Icelandic waters. According to Norwegian estimates 0.2% of salmon in open sea pens escapes, or one salmon for every ton of farmed salmon. At first glance such figures don't seem very dramatic, but it means that we can expect 71,000 salmon escaping from the cages, many of whom would end up swimming into Icelandic rivers where they will spawn. For comparison, the spawning stock of wild Icelandic salmon is believed to count 50,000 fish.

Creating jobs by destroying them elsewhere

The survival of the wild salmon stocks of Iceland is not only an environmental question, Jón stresses. It is also a question of the livelihood of thousands of Icelandic farmers and a large and thriving sports fishing industry which is a crucial pillar of many rural communities. Some 1,800 farms receive income from renting angling rights for salmon and trout. According to a report by Economists at the University of Iceland the angling industry generates 1,200 full-time jobs.

"The spokesmen of sea pen farmers argue that the industry is crucial for creating jobs, a mantra which is then faithfully repeated by the politicians. But this promised job creation comes at the cost of other jobs in the tourism industry and the livelihood of thousands of people in rural communities. It's a terrible economic policy to create jobs in one place by destroying them in another. Ironically we might not even be creating any jobs," Jón adds. "Growing automation in the sea pen industry will likely make this even worse."

Jón expresses hope that the politicians can be pressured to see the environmental and economic logic of protecting the wild salmon. "I have nothing against aquaculture. But it has to be done in a way that doesn't endanger or destroy nature and animal life. Salmon can be farmed sustainably in closed systems on land."

Dubai of the north

Jón argues that Iceland has perfect conditions for land-based aquaculture. "But it eats into the profits of the salmon farming companies and requires a significant investment, which they are unwilling to make. The

industry is focused on fast profit. And the politicians have played along, relaxing regulations, weakening oversight and even offering financial incentives to encourage the industry."

There is something eerily familiar with this story. A similar story could be told of the

great boom industry of the late 90s and 2000s: The financial sector. When the headlong rush by politicians and reckless investors focused on short term gain and any cost, and their dream of making Iceland a "Dubai of the North" came to a crash in 2008 it took down with it the Icelandic economy. We can only hope that the salmon farming boom does not end in a similar crash, the collapse of the wild Icelandic salmon. ♡

"We're sacrificing the lives of the next generation for our own. Not even for survival but for comfort."



To the governments and members of parliament of Iceland, Norway, Scotland and Ireland:

"As concerned citizens from across Europe, we urge you to bring a halt to the devastation of wild fish and the surrounding ecosystems caused by open net salmon farms. We call on you to impose an immediate ban on new open net cages and commit to phasing out existing ones everywhere."

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"We're looking for a very strong Icelandic face," WOW Air's new owner Michele Edwards says.

A Cloud Of Doubt Around WOW Air

An American tycoon plans to resurrect WOW Air by October

WOW Air is a unique brand," she told RÚV. "It's well-recognised." She also said that the founder did a good job of building the WOW brand, which is an interesting thing to say, considering the fact that the WOW Air brand was widely recognised as a no-frills means of travel to and from Iceland, and consulting a Michelin-starred chef is incompatible with a low-cost airline.

It is worth mentioning that in order to keep costs low, Edwards wants to **focus on reducing passenger compensation**. It is unclear what exactly she means by this, but it's most likely she is referring to the EU's compensation laws, which state that if a passenger is delayed, their bag is lost, or they are inconvenienced in a number of other ways, they would be entitled to compensation. Edwards' company would therefore be required to have **fewer delays, lose or delay fewer bags**, and ensure that every customer is completely satisfied with their experience. She also plans not to ferry staff between Reykjavik and Keflavik, which WOW Air used to do at significant cost. She also said that she plans to hire a much **smaller IT department**. Perhaps the savings incurred by this perfect plan will generate enough profit for the American Tycoon that she will be able to keep WOW's low-cost reputation without going bankrupt herself. Probably not, though. ✂

Words:
Sam O'Donnell

Photo:
Art Bicnick

In late July, it was announced that Oasis Aviation Group (OAG) had agreed to buy all assets in the WOW air bankruptcy estate. When the liquidators caught wind that controversial figure **Michele Roosevelt Edwards (FKA Michele Ballarin)** was behind OAG, they cancelled the deal. **Edwards had previously announced that she intended to invest 24 billion ISK into what was left of WOW Air and revive the company.**

In early August, Edwards returned to Iceland with her lawyer, Páll Ágúst Ólafsson, and public relations guru, Gunnar Steinn Pálsson, trying again to resurrect the budget airline. Something must have worked, because in early September she finalised the purchase of the assets for an undisclosed amount. She now has \$85 million USD commit-

ted to the business of bringing WOW Air back to life, with the intent to make Iceland a European hub. She says she wants to capture the Icelandic experience, and to make flying fun again. Without specifying a purchase price, she assured RÚV that she plans to have the company back on its feet by October. "We are debt-free and want to stay debt-free," she told the state broadcaster.

Lofty goals

WOW 2.0's twin headquarters will be Washington Dulles and Keflavik international airports. Michele is reportedly hopeful that the company will start with two freight planes, and by next summer, she hopes to have between ten and twelve freight and passenger planes. "I'm not seeing more than twelve aircraft when we're full-sail, as you Vikings would say here," she said. She has not specified how many former

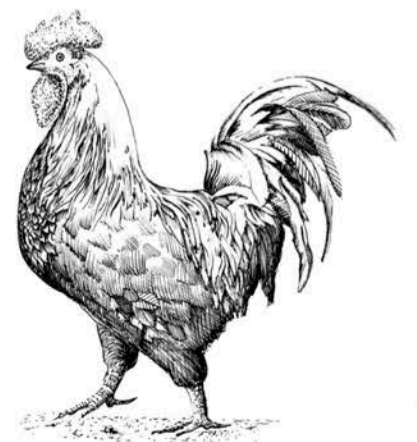
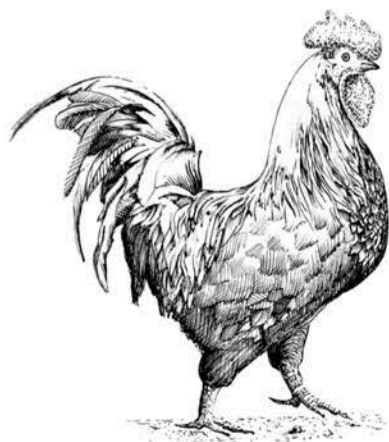
employees she plans to re-hire, but **she does want to bring back at least some of the pilots and flight attendants.** "We're looking for a very strong Icelandic face."

This is a very optimistic goal, but it might be too idealistic. **Kristján Sigurjónsson, editor in chief at travel news site turisti.is**, has been vocal about his doubts. "I do not yet have full faith in the resurrection of WOW air," he told Morgunblaðið, adding that the purchase of the assets alone isn't enough to run an airline. "You would need more information on how to do this. We still do not know what airline licenses they intend to use."

The how

Edwards remains optimistic. "Many airlines have historically challenging times. Maybe they didn't become permanently grounded or face closure. But

"I do not yet have full faith in the resurrection of WOW air."



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The Magic Happens When You're Playing

The rise of Ágústa Eva, from amateur
theatre to Eurovision to HBO

Words:
Andie
Fontaine

"As I'm getting older, with more experience from life, I'm also getting more passionate about changing the world for the better," Ágústa reflects as we sit in the empty dining room of Fjörúkráin, the Viking hall in Hafnarfjörður that her father helped build. "But how to do it and in what way, I don't know. I'm just open to the inner voice and intuition. I've never been a planner, but you get scared as you get older, with all the

issues that we have, and need to change and be brave. I so hope and pray that I can be a part of some kind of change. I think I'm just getting ready for whatever form that presents itself to be."

This is a running theme with Ágústa—she is a firm believer in having an open heart and an open mind to the changes that life might throw her way, in having fun being the guiding light. It's this attitude that has informed

every creative decision she has made throughout her career, reflected in the broad range of projects and roles she has taken on. Now that she has landed a major role in HBO Europe's *Beforeigners*, once again attracting international attention, we were curious to know what shaped Ágústa into the artist she is today.

Photos:
Magnús
Andersen

Being born into it

Acting has always been a part of Ágústa's life, even if she wasn't aware of it at first.

"I think it was a kind of state of spirit that I was born into," she says. "I was always singing and drawing, and mucking around. Plus, my mom was always singing and dancing with us, and my dad is an artist. So it's kind of what I was born into."

Her family took a liberal approach to how they raised her, giving her the freedom to find her own way. "I was never pressured by people asking me what I was going to be when I grew up, whether a doctor or whatever. That wasn't a part of my mindframe to decide anything. I've always been in a state of flow, so to speak, so there wasn't anything I decided on being or becoming for a job. It just kind of developed in a natural, flowing way."

Nonetheless, Ágústa found herself drawn to acting, in a purely organic fashion.

"As a child, you're always playing and acting pretend. That was a thing we used to do a lot when I was a kid; tricking and spying on people. Like pretending to be blind or something in front of tourists, or pretending to be wounded. Also, prank phone calls. That was a lot of fun. I never thought about as 'acting'. I never went to the theatre. I saw movies, but I was never really captured by people acting or stardom, because we were brought up with that mentality that everybody is equal, so we didn't really idolize anyone."

Kill your idols

This final point is important to Ágústa on a personal level. She believes there has been a kind of cultural shift in Iceland; where once the likes of Bobby Fischer or Damon Albarn could walk the streets of Reykjavík without so much as a second glance, Iceland has more recently begun to get hooked on celebrity culture.

"I think that's really unhealthy," she says. "The average person's self-esteem goes down if you think someone is more important than you are. We're all equal. You'd never pick a favourite amongst your children." She worked for a time as a kindergarten teacher, which deepened this conviction. "I love all kids. That's what you learn from being a teacher. You can see the beauty in everybody, no matter how difficult the kids are. You can love every child as much, and I think that's the same thing with people. You can't measure people's worth in something as shallow as being famous. Because anyone can become famous in Iceland if you're stubborn enough."

Guiding light

Ágústa's first film audition—for the Hrafn Gunnlaugsson film *Hin helgu vé*—took place when she was 10 years old. She advanced pretty far in the auditions—part of which, inexplicably, involved pretending to be a cat and a dog—until her parents read the script.

"They were like 'No way' and I said 'Why not?' and they said 'You'll thank us when you're older', and they were right," she says with a laugh. "It had a lot of nudity and killing, kids watching people have sex. Just a bit disturbing for a 10-year-old to take part in. So we didn't do that."

When she was 17, she took part in a

photoshoot for a hairdressing competition that her friend was competing in, when a photographer approached her, offering her to take part in a group of people travelling to New York to take part in the Modeling Association of America International competition. This time in New York included tryouts for soap opera acting, which she took part in more as a lark than anything else.

"I had a prepared text, for a scene where I was breaking up with a guy, and I decided I'd mindfuck him; just confuse him and make him uncomfortable," Ágústa says. "That was my aim: just to play. Not acting. It was really far from me. So I went in, played a bit with

his mind and had fun, and I ended up in the second place, and invited me to come live in New York and act in soap operas. I was like, 'What? No, I'm 17. I'm not going to move to New York and act in soap operas, are you crazy?'"

Up on a stage

This same hairdresser friend also introduced her to amateur theatre; in this instance, Leikfélag Kópavogs.

"I had a really good director, Ágústa Skúladóttir," she says. "She kind of changed my life. At first, it was awkward to stand on a chair and give a

recital. But then she allowed us to make our own characters, and I was there for three years just having fun and making things. It's really easy to dare me into doing things."

Ágústa would end up spending three years of her life in this theatre, an experience which, while educational and rewarding, was also gruelling.

"I have a great love of creating things, but when you're in theatre, your creative process is not as big. It's very easy to be overworked in theatre. I like things that you can look back on, like movies—you make a product and it's there and it's always there. But theatre stays in your heart and soul, and if it's good enough it makes a difference



in the audience's hearts. So if I had to pick—and I have picked!—I would put theatre out of my life because it's so time-consuming and it can easily take over your life. I value family over work, so that's why I said goodbye to the theatre." Even shooting films will afford actors long periods of downtime; contrary to popular belief, being on a live stage is far more demanding, in Ágústa's estimation. "In theatre, I was working every day and night, weekends, too. I only had Mondays off. It drains you, your family and social life. It's not remotely worth it for me."

However, one of the people who saw her perform at this theatre—Gaukur Úlfarsson—would prove helpful in

Sylvía at the time. Just before Gaukur and I made Sylvía, in 2004, I had quit my job as a kindergarten teacher, and was asked to front a TV show; like sitting on a couch with a young stud, the two of us together talking about music and famous people. With my amateur theatre character-building background, I wanted to bring that into television, so I asked Gaukur to help me. We started to make a character gallery, and the network picked Sylvía, saying they wanted to make a show revolving around that girl. It was a nice choice by [former television station] Skjár 1."

This satirical take, embodying Iceland's nouveau riche culture, had

success. Sylvía Nótt's television show, *Sjáumst með Sylvía Nótt*, was a sort of cringe-comedy series, featuring awkward interviews driven by Sylvía's seemingly boundless self-confidence. It was a huge hit, and it wasn't long before a songwriter approached Ágústa and Gaukur about Sylvía competing in Eurovision 2006.

"Gaukur and I would make every decision based on 'Would Sylvía do this?' and of course, she totally would," Ágústa says. "It wasn't a plan, it was just something that happened. Which is in keeping with how Sylvía developed. And what does Sylvía do when she's actually in the competition, how does she talk to others? People were on needles, this timebomb on live television. It was very bold of the nation to vote for her. Huge punk move."

with stand-up comedy kind of levelling the game a little." In Iceland, she says, you have to go to the one acting school, and then only two or three people are selected. But is it changing? "It's still very much like this. I would love to see more than one school."

Vikings: not just for nerds anymore

Ágústa's latest project, HBO's *Beforeigners*, has been getting very positive reviews. Set in Oslo, Norway in the near future, it features characters from the Stone Age, the Viking Age and the 19th century turning up in the modern-day, with complex results.

"It gets into people coming from other countries, not speaking the language, not having your family, being traumatised and lost, and how we accept each other, and how we decide—or not—to understand each other and live together," she says. "That was very appealing to me. With HBO connected to it, I felt I could trust this project. And my character [a Viking woman named Urðr Sighvatsdóttir] is so well-written and I can reflect on many things in my character. At times it felt like it was written for me."

There's a good reason why Ágústa would feel such a strong connection to the character, given her family background.

"My father was one of the first guys of this generation to pick up our Viking heritage as a cool thing," she says. "I grew up in a Viking village (Ásgarður, in south Iceland), and he was making Viking souvenirs and such. And at that time, it wasn't cool to be into Viking stuff. It was considered nerdy! It's only recently become a cool thing, where young people have become proud of their Viking heritage."

The magic of play

Ágústa believes that in any project she has taken up, there has been a recurring theme of the roles seemingly written for her, even when they weren't. *Jar City*, for example, was based on a book of the same name by Arnaldur Indriðason and written years before Ágústa became famous.

"In every assignment I do, the connections reflect my personal theme or what's going on in my own life," she observes. "It's ridiculous. Everything is so close, always. And it was no different with *Beforeigners*. I have no explanation for this, and I don't want to dive into it because I think I would go crazy."

When I point out that this seems to be a running theme in her career—following one's heart and being driven by the desire to have fun—Ágústa is philosophical, with closing words that could almost be words of advice for aspiring artists anywhere.

"The magic happens when you're playing," she says. "That's the thing we all strive to have. We all want to be happy, we all want to have magic in our lives. I think that makes a good perspective in creating things and touching people's lives. Having fun is the core of it. If you take it too seriously, or think you're not enough or have to be a certain way, that's when you get nowhere in your career and unhappy in your life. I think you'd be much happier digging holes for a living than being an unhappy creative person." 🍷

When the satire is too convincing

Nonetheless, the satire was lost on a lot of people overseas. Even some Icelanders were fooled by the character.

"It was really brain-frying for a lot of people, even people who went to school with me," she says and recounts being in a bar, running into a former classmate. "He grabbed me with both arms and asked, 'Ágústa, what happened to you?' and I was like 'What do you mean?' and he said 'What did they do to you? You were always so nice.' When I figured out he was talking about Sylvía I was like 'I was acting!'"

The response to Sylvía Nótt's performance of her Eurovision song, *Congratulations*, not to mention her behind-the-scenes antics, rankled a lot of people. Ágústa admits the backlash got to be too much, "but I was having so much fun I didn't even notice it. But after Eurovision was done I slept on the beach for two weeks." She had gone on tour as Sylvía through the Balkans and Scandinavia, with only a two-day pause between Eurovision and the tour, filming the whole time. "But it was a lot more fun than it was tiring."

Following this, Ágústa took a completely different approach to her career, eschewing even any aesthetic trappings that might remotely resemble her former alter-ego. "I was just covered in wool clothes. I didn't even want to wear mascara. I'd never been exposed publicly as myself. I have many sides. I have a lady side, a bit of punk in me, and a bit of a hippy, like many people have. So at that time, I really exaggerated my Icelandic hippy side."

The silver screen

While the sun may have set on Sylvía Nótt, it also rose upon a new film career for Ágústa. This included some serious, even heavy, dramatic roles in films such as Baltasar Kormákur's *Jar City* and Olaf de Fleur Johannesson's crime drama *City State*. When asked which is more challenging, comedy or drama, Ágústa took the opportunity to reflect on the state of Iceland's acting world.

"Comedy is way more scary," she says. "A lot of our greatest actors are our best comedians, who then develop into drama. But they've had a hard time, because the hierarchy of acting is such that it's really hard to get into. Even if you studied abroad and come back to Iceland. But it's changing a bit,

launching Ágústa onto the international stage with a new project: Sylvía Nótt.

"Congratulations, for I have arrived"

"She was quite the puzzle," Ágústa reflects. "We had a lot of mini-Sylvías in our society. And in that year, 2004, we were building up to an explosion in our money-crazy society, everyone had a new car, so the party was getting pretty tiring for us. We were getting a bit sick of people's shallow attitudes towards life. We had TV characters like

several layers to her. But was she based on any one person?

"The way Sylvía talked, and the foundation of her before the philosophy came in, that character was based on two really good people who are close to me," she says. "One, who acted pretty much like Sylvía when she was drunk, and the other was a child. Then we layered her up. For example, everyone was saying 'skiluru' ('y'know') and I was really annoyed by that so I decided I'm going to put 'skiluru' with every other word I say. I was just trying to kill the word."

She and Gaukur played the media masterfully in the cultivation of this character, at points contending that Sylvía was the daughter of the director of Skjár 1, reflecting the often nepotistic nature of the Icelandic brand of



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Turn Me On With Your Electric Feel

Extreme Chill Festival

September 12th - 15th - Various locations — 4-day passes are 9.900 ISK

The Extreme Chill Festival is an annual event for electronic music lovers taking place both in Reykjavík and Berlin. On the festival's 10th anniversary, Icelandic and foreign artists hit the stage in seven different locations in the Reykjavík city center: Gamla Bíó, IDNÓ, Gaukurinn, Mengi, Exeter Hotel, and Klaustur Bar. No need to buy an expensive ticket to Berlin to see the likes of TANGERINE DREAM, they'll come to us. **LM**



SOULFLOW COMEDY

Women & Queer Stand Up
Open Mic Night

September 16th - 21:00 - Gaukurinn - Free admission

Every Monday, Gaukurinn hosts an open-mic stand-up night. Only women and queer folks are allowed to sign up to go on stage, but everyone is welcome to attend. If you're feeling especially spontaneous you can even sign up the same night or take part in the improv audience participation game. **LE**



Nostalgia And A Touch Of Voyeurism

Icelandic Snitsel

September 19th - 20:00 - Tjarnarbíó - Free admission

Janus Bragi Jakobsson and Loji Höskuldsson provide the opportunity to get exclusive insight into Icelandic family life. In a performative lecture, they present old video-recordings that they collected. The videos are an expression of the fear of being forgotten—so if you're just a little bit voyeuristic and keen on keeping the memories of strangers alive, this might be something for you. **LE**

CULTURE NEWS

Festival

New To Us. #3 will be on September 21st at 20:30 at Hlemmur Square. Admission is free!



Knockin' 'em dead

The Next Big Thing

At New To Us, see the future of the Icelandic scene before they get famous

Words:
Hannah Jane Cohen

Photo:
Polka Polkovskaa

"If you're a new artist, where do you start?" asks **James Cox, the music coordinator at Hlemmur Square**. The British transplant sits back on a couch in the corner of the hostel café, smiling broadly. "How do you do that? Where do you play? Well, we've created a dedicated space [for those artists] to make a home in before they take a step up." He pauses, wringing his hands together. "And that's New To Us."

Getting involved

The new concert series, created by James in collaboration with Hlemmur Square

bar manager Halldór Viðar Hjaltested, seeks to shine a light on the newest and brightest of the Icelandic scene. The series also hopes to put Hlemmur Square on the map as a proper concert venue, something that's desperately needed in light of the continued closure of many music venues around the city.

"There's a lot going on in the DIY/underground scene," James explains. "There are a lot of interesting artists that need a stage to showcase themselves and maybe give them a new audi-

"If you're a new artist, where do you start?"

ence, give them somewhere to play, and somewhere to build on."

And the first iterations have, he emphasized, been successful in that regard. "The first one was with Dead Bird Lady and Frid," he says. "Frid is so talented and it was only her fourth or fifth gig. The set was amazing, and watching it, I thought, 'This is why we do this.'"

The second event featured second-place Músiktilraunir winners Konfekt as well as Elin Harpa. "Konfekt only started performing as a band in 2019, and they've already taken 2nd in the Music Experiments Competition. It's an exciting time to get involved," he relays.

Enter the library

Hlemmur Square has, in the past, occasionally hosted concerts, namely as an Airwaves Off-Venue, but always in the front of the hostel directly next to the door. New To Us, though, will move the party from the main entrance into a smaller room in the back, therefore making the concert more centralised. "We call it the library," James explains. "It's covered with antique furniture, weird picture frames, lamps, so it makes for a cosy, intimate place, where everyone is there to listen to the music."

The next event, which will be on September 21st, features newcomer Salóme Katrín and Matthildur. While Salóme has yet to release recorded music, the Grapevine recently named her "one to watch" after seeing her performance at this year's Hátíðni festival. Matthildur, meanwhile, is known for her soothing and seductive vocals, which are sure to thrive in the intimate concert space.

"We want to put on new artists and new music," James explains. "And also have an exciting night where people can come to see the 'next big thing' they didn't even know about." **™**

ELECTRIC DREAMS

Music

Follow LaFontaine's music at soundcloud.com/lafontaine199x. Find out what 199X Recordings is all about on 199xrecordings.com. LaFontaine's next EP 'Dehumanized' will be released on Planet X Records late-October.



Let Me Be What I Want To Be

LaFontaine on his musical upbringing, releasing electronic music on vinyl

Jóhannes LaFontaine—better known under is electronic-music moniker LaFontaine—is a known figure in Iceland's clubbing scene. He started making music when he was eleven and has numerous solo projects and collaborations under his belt, not to mention countless live and DJ sets performed at most of Reykjavík's clubs and festivals over the years.

Currently, he hosts a regular club-night at Bravó with fellow electronic-musician Exos, and runs his own label, 199X Recordings.

Best known for his techno, Jóhannes still has a broad taste for music. "My parents were big metal-fans and I grew up listening to the same bands they did," he explains. "Then, my uncle Gulli [of bands Fu-

fanu and russian.girls] introduced me to different kinds of music when we were growing up. From there, I got more into techno and dance-music in general."

The idea for 199X Recordings came back in 2016 when Jóhannes got bored of releasing digital-only tracks. "I stumbled upon music by [the Swiss techno musician] Mateo Hurtado on SoundCloud and decided I wanted to press it on vinyl," he explains. "Some people said that releasing an unknown artist on a new label isn't clever. I say fuck them, I still love it!"

199X Recordings released 'Inverted Forest' by Mateo Hurtado last year following a successful crowdfunding project. "We have a few releases lined-up for the coming months, first-up will be a solo-EP of my songs as LaFontaine, which will include a remix by Volruptus," he says. "Then we will release an EP of songs by [local electro-acid musician] ThizOne."

Jóhannes' next release, 'Dehumanized,' will be out on Planet X Records next month and includes a remix by leading US techno-producer Matrixxman. "Matrixxman played the original version of 'Dehumanized' during his Boiler Room set at this summer's Dekmantel festival," he explains. "It's really cool and rewarding to see well-known artists play your music. That set created a lot of hype for me." **™**

Words:
Alexander Le Sage de Fontenay

Photo:
M. Kristensen



Cis women can do drag, too. "It's your gender, you can express yourself. It's performance art; just do it."

Drag Show

Femme In-Unity takes place at Gaukurinn on September 19th at 21:00. Pay what you want (1,500 kr. minimum) every króna goes to Stígamót.

PMS: Pretty. Messy. Sexy.

Meet the Bio Queens of Iceland, an unstoppable force taking the Reykjavik drag scene by storm

Words:
Kimi Tayler

Photos:
Art Bicnick

Jenny Purr, Lola VonHeart and Chardonnay Bublée are as fierce, cheeky and passionate offstage, as they are on stage. Coming together as part of a new female-led drag initiative, Femme In-Unity, they are on a mission to change the landscape of gender non-conformative performance.

What is a Bio Queen?

A Biological Drag Queen—also sometimes called a Faux Queen or Hyper Queen—is, simply, a biological woman in drag. “Apparently you have to tell people that you have a vagina when you’re a biological woman in drag, as a drag queen...” Jenny explains “I take it as a compliment if people ask me, are you a woman? Because I’ve blurred the line of gender. That’s drag for me; it’s making people question what they know.”

Lola says she doesn’t mind the term. “I just don’t think there shouldn’t be an

otherness. Drag is subjective, it’s your own expression of whatever you want to heighten.”

Though playing with and expressing an extreme and heightened form of femininity, there is an openness in the way these women see the art form, “At the end of the day drag is a performance art and what you’re portraying doesn’t have to be subject to gender or anything else,” states Chardonnay.

Falling headfirst into Drag

“I watched all these beautiful Drag Queens on stage, and I felt like, I wish I could feed my fantasy like them,” Jenny says of her drag evolution. “2016 was a very rocky time for me because I hated my body after a very traumatic event, but I still wanted to find some way in myself to express it.” Seeking a platform of expression and with unending support from incomparable drag matriarch Gógó Starr, she recalls dis-

cussing the idea of becoming a queen. “Gógó said of course you can, it’s your gender, you can express yourself. It’s performance art; you just do it.”

Jenny may be the original trailblazing Icelandic Bio Queen, but Lola and Chardonnay were hot on her heels. Lola recalls the moment she realised she could be a part of this world. “I was watching Drag Sígur and thought ‘wow I wish I could do this.’” After being told Jenny was a woman, she realised there was nothing stopping her.

The youngest of the Bio Queen personas, Chardonnay performed first show in September 2018 and hasn’t looked back. In the short time since, she’s made a name for herself as a talented live singer, host, one half of a power couple with Milo de Mix and undoubtedly one of the hardest working Queen’s in Iceland. When she casually says, “I’ve been super active” it’s somewhat of an understatement!

Greater lashes, bigger hair

It isn’t always easy being a Bio Queen. While taking on an art-form with a complex history of marginalisation and discrimination, some female performers have their efforts dismissed, being objectified or told they have an advantage, Jenny says. “I think it’s so crazy how females are always held accountable for being the best—you have to be better and work harder than a guy.”

“It has to be more. Greater lashes. Bigger hair. Because if I go on stage as a Bio Queen with a more natural look, I’m just a random girl going on stage,” explains Chardonnay. Whilst it might be considered sparkle and superficiality, what they are portraying is the female narrative. “Yeah sure a cis male can come on stage and be a queen and talk about being a woman, but we are women and we deal with misogyny every day. It’s so precious to

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have this platform to scream it off the stage. You're a woman and you're willing to fight." Chardonay continues.

Drag is inherently political. It is a statement every time a performer puts on their metaphorical (and literal) war paint and walks out of the house. However, as Lola makes clear, "We are still choosing to do this. This is something that we really enjoy doing, and for whatever reason we continue to do it, even though it's hard."

"And we do have the privilege of being undercover drag queens," adds Jenny "In the daytime, we don't look like drag queens; but in the night time we are like Batman! Fabulous drag Batman!"

Community

Creating a community full of love and support is at the heart of the scene. "It's so funny because people like to pit us against each other," Jenny says. "We're not throwing pearls at the stage, saying I hope she falls. We are a community."

Lola reiterates how important her drag family is: "We are always there to help, and comfort. People have this perception of Drag Queens being caty and never getting along. And also, just women in general can NEVER get along."

"And that's why I love that we're doing a show with an all-female cast," Jenny continues. "It's very empowering. We are women, and we can put on a show together, we can support each other. We can appreciate everyone's effort and we're not intimidated by each other."

Femme-In-Unity is the result of their passion, love, and a desire to work together. "We just figured why can't we do that on a grander scale?" Char-



Ascending to glory

donnay explains. "We have amazing kings, queens, monarchs...monsters. We have everything."

Far from excluding anyone, this is a show about empowering a certain group within the drag scene. Taking place at Gaukurinn—the spiritual home of drag in Iceland—a cast of ten will come together for a spectacular show in support of Stígamót; an institution that helps survivors of sexual abuse and violence.

With every penny of ticket sales and tips going to the charity, Jenny explains the importance of this event: "Basically, at some level, we have all experienced some form of attack. Whether its harassment or, unfortunately, actual assault. This is something that we women can connect to."

What can we expect?

"A spectacular show!" says Chardonay, "I also love that we're getting a bunch of kings in one show. That doesn't happen in other drag scenes, because it's always separate. That's something that's very special about the drag scene in Iceland."

"Drag kings face a lot of obstacles in drag. So, we are booking drag kings because they're amazing, they're female, and they deserve the stage and platform," Jenny adds.

At the show itself, you can expect guaranteed comedy, fabulousness and fierceness as well as a more serious take—"Just like every female mood-swing!" says Jenny.

There is no doubt these women are doing something differently, and are

about to smash the glass ceiling; all while holding hands and looking fabulous! ♡

"In the daytime, we don't look like drag queens; but in the night time we are like Batman! Fabulous drag Batman!"

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Another satisfied customer gets "The Executive"

From Hair To Eternity

The cities best hair saloons

Words: The Grapevine Hair Dept. Photos: Art Bicnick

Unless you plan on looking like Tom Hanks in *Castaway* your whole life, at some point, you'll need a haircut. In Reykjavík, there are so many places to choose from, it can feel like a paradox of choice. Luckily, the folks here at the Grapevine have sat for lots of haircuts from many different places, and we're happy to guide you to some of the best we've found.

Rakarastofa Ragnars & Harðar

Vesturgata 48

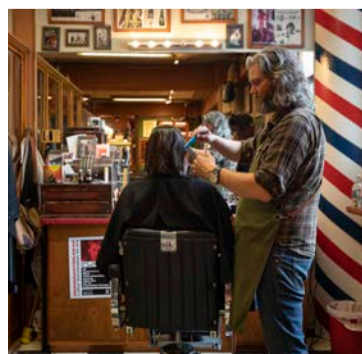


Going to Rakarastofa Ragnars & Harðar is like travelling back twenty years, minus the toxic

masculinity bullshit. When you sit in the old school barber chair you just point at the haircut you want from an old poster with images of different rockabilly styles. The barbers are father and son. If you want to go for a classic and firm look and get some political chit-chat in at the same time, you choose the father. If you want something younger and a chat about tattoos, you choose the son. Both, of course, are excellent barbers. Also, if you want to tidy up that beard, they are the ones to go to. **VG**

Stjúri

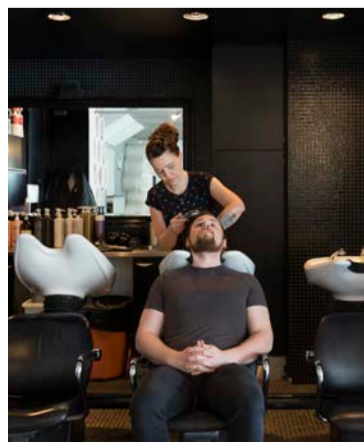
Laugavegur 59



Stjúri is almost like an institute in itself. Placed in the legendary gentleman's store, Kormákur & Skjöldur, and always dressed like a British gentleman from the fifties, he gives you a unique vibe that is hard to find anywhere else. Stjúri is one of the few that can give you a solid haircut in just 15 minutes. If you're kind, and tell a good joke, he even gives you a cognac to ease those nerves. But don't expect it, that's rude. **VG**

Rauðhetta og úlfurinn

Skólavörðustígur 8



Rauðhetta og úlfurinn is another institution of Reykjavík hairdressing. If you want to get the cool blonde downtown Reykjavík girl look, look no further. It's a hip place right in the centre of town. A lot of talented and ambitious hairstylists have taken their first steps at Rauðhetta og Úlfurinn, which is named for the Little Red Riding Hood fairy tale. So take a chance and let the wolf get into that hair. **VG**

Barbarella

Suðurgata 7



Based on the name of a badass movie heroine, Barbarella will make sure you look your best. Whether you're planning to stop an evil scientist from destroying the world or simply going out on a Friday night, the stylists here will take good care of you. It's located very close to downtown, so if you are going out on a Friday night, you don't have to go far to show off that new 'do. **SPO** 🍷



BEST OF REYKJAVÍK

Best Goddamn Store

Winner:
Fischer
Fischersund 3

For most categories, one of the first questions out of the mouths of panel members was "does Fischer qualify?" From packaging-free shampoo, to frequent art openings, to a special perfume section, the store serves up a sensory, highly aesthetic shopping adventure. "They are paving the way for a new type of store in Reykjavík," the panel determined, praising the stores out-of-the-box thinking, and their careful focus on customer experience. "This is a place I barely want to mention," one panellist continued. "It's so good I don't want it to win and get crowded!"



Runners up:
Góði Hirðirinn
Fellsmúli 28

Góði Hirðirinn, or "The Good Shepherd," looks like a cross between a stylish hoarder's house and an eclectic garage sale. Take an afternoon to rummage around this Aladdin's cave in search of hidden gems, which could be anything from old Icelandic manuals to blue leather armchairs to a bag of old toys.

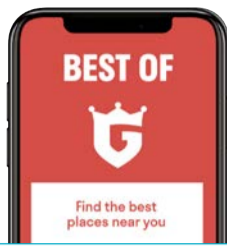


Drekkinn
Njálsgata 23

"Drekkinn is the last 'sjooppa' in 101 Reykjavík," one panellist declared. "It hasn't changed over the years, but it has remained relevant." This grungy convenience store/vape palace/bodega/hamburger joint is a remnant of pre-tourism Reykjavík. "That hamburger smell really takes you back," they concluded. "I hope it always stays the same." 🍷

September 13th—September 26th

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: Einar Steif & Sam O'Donnell
Photo: Art Bicnick

Einar Stef

Einar Stef is the drummer for electronic metal band, Hatari. In a rare moment, he speaks, and shares with us what a perfect day for him would look like.

Morning

I would wake up quite early after a perfect sleep. I say early because I'm a very type B person, but I would really like to be type A. I would wake up my daughter, who is nearly 2, and together with my girlfriend we would make some **oatmeal banana pancakes**.

Mid-morning

Then we'd go to the swimming pool, **Sundhöllin**, because they have a nice play area for children. The weather would be fantastic, so we would spend some quality time outdoors in the children's

pool, and in the hot and cold tubs.

Afternoon

I would drop my daughter off at her kindergarten and go to my studio, where I would be super productive and get a bunch of work done. Then I would go for lunch at **Mandi** and get the perfect falafel wrap, maybe with some extra hummus.

Late afternoon

After lunch, I would go get some coffee with friends at **Reykjavik Roasters**. Then I would have a walk downtown in the beautiful weather and pick up my daughter from her kindergarten on the way. We would go to the playground together, and after lots of time on the swingset, we would go to her grandparents' house where I would drop her off.

Evening

I would catch a movie marathon at **Bió Paradís**. It's 'The Matrix Trilogy', of course. I would get a big bucket of popcorn and a SodaDream, because in a perfect world they offer SodaDream in **Bió Paradís**. Then, after the movies, despite only consuming things all day, I am still hungry, so it's time for dinner. So I go to **Hverfisgata 12**, which never closed, and I get the potato and truffle pizza and it's the best version of itself that it has ever been.

Night

After dinner, I would pop into **Húrra**, which on my perfect day, also never closed, and Radiohead are doing a surprise gig. After the concert, my friends and I would stroll the few remaining non-gentrified bars still in Reykjavík. Then I would go home to my sweet bed and get another night of perfect sleep. 🍷

Vital Info



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

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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, Ingólfstorg, by Hallgrímskirkja, by Reykjavík Art Museum, Lækjargata and by Eymundsson on Skólavörðustígur. Toilets can also be found inside the Reykjavík City Hall and the Reykjavík Library.

Public Transport

Most buses run every 20-30 minutes
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Venues

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

Austur Austurstræti 7 D3	lónó Vonarstræti 3 E3	American Bar Austurstræti 8 D3	Kex Hostel Skúlagata 28 E7	Andrými Bergþorugata 20 G6	Kaffibarinn Bergstaðastræti 1 E4	B5 Bankastræti 5 E4	Kaffi Vinyl Hverfisgata 76 E6	Bar Ananas Klappargatun 28 E5	Kiki Queer Bar Laugavegur 22 E5	Bió Paradís Hverfisgata 54 E5	Loft Bankastræti 7 E4	Bjarni Fel Austurstræti 20 E4	Mengi Óðinsgata 2 F5	Bravó Laugavegur 22 E5	Nordic House Sturlagata 5 H2	Boston Laugavegur 28b E5	Paloma Naustin D3	Dillon Laugavegur 30 E5	Prikjö Bankastræti 12 E4	Dubliner Naustin 1-3 D3	R6013 Ingólfsstræti 20 E4	English Pub Austurstræti 12 D3	Reykjavik Roasters Kárástigur 1 F5	Gaukurinn Tryggvagata 22 D3	Stofan Café Vesturgata 3 D3	Hard Rock Café Lækjargata 2a D3	Ölsmíðjan Lækjargata 10 E3	Hressó Austurstræti 20 D3	Tívoli bar Hafnarstræti 4 D3	Húrra Naustin D3	Tjarnarbió Tjarnargata 12 E3
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Museums & Galleries

ART67 Laugavegur 67 F7 Open daily 9-21	ASÍ Art Gallery Freyjugata 41 G6 Open Tue-Sun 13-17	Aurora Reykjavik Grandagarður 2 B1 Open 09-21	Asgrímur Jónsson Museum Bergstaðastr. 74 G4 July 8-Sep 1, Mon-Fri	Berg Contemporary Klappargatun 16 E5 Tu-F 11-18, Sat 13-17	The Culture House Hverfisgata 15 E5 Open daily 10-17	The Einar Jónsson Museum Eiríksgata G5 Open Tue-Sun 10-17	Ekkisens Bergstaðast. 25b F4	Galleri List Skipholt 50A H10 M-F 11-18, Sat 11-16	Hafnarborg Strandgata 34, 220 D3 Open Wed-Mon 12-17	Hitt Húsið Pósthússtræti 3-5 D4	Hverfissgalleri Hverfisgata 4 D4 Tu-Fri 13-17, Sat 14-17	i8 Gallery Tryggvagata 16 D3 Tu-Fri 11-18, Sat 13-17	The Penis Museum Laugavegur 116 F8 Open daily 10-18	Kirsuþerjatréð Vesturgata 4 D3 M-F 10-18, Sat-Sun 10-17	Kling & Bang Grandagarður 20 A4 W-Sun 14-18, Th 12-21	Listastofan Hringbraut 119 A4 Open Wed-Sat 13-17	Living Art Museum Grandagarður 20 A4 Tu-Sun 12-18, Th 12-21	Mokka Kaffi Skólavörðustíg. 3A E5 Open daily 9-18:30	Museum of Design and Applied Art Garðatorg 1 E5 Open Tu-Sun 12-17	The National Gallery of Iceland Frikirkjuvegur 7 F3 Open daily 10-17	The National Museum Sudurgata 41 G2 Open daily 10-17	The Nordic House Sturluggata 5 H2 Thu-Fri 11-17, W 11-20	Hafnarhús Tryggvagata 17 D3 Open 10-17, Thu 10-22	Kjarvalsstaðir Fiskagata 24 H8 Open daily 10-17	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 Kistuhylur 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 Fri-Sat 10-16	Sigurjón Ólafsson Museum Laugarnestangi 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
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A



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The Map

Get the bigger, more detailed version of The Reykjavik 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. Fjallkonan

Hafnarstræti 1-3

Named after the female personification of Iceland, Fjallkonan is located smack-bang in the middle of downtown, and caters to locals and tourists alike. For the Icelandic-cuisine-curious, there is a platter of whale, lamb and puffin, all presented beautifully. For those who are just looking for a great selection of fresh meat, fish and vegetarian options, Fjallkonan does these to perfection as well.

2. Block Burger

Skólavörðustígur 8

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

3. Matur og Drykkur

Grandagarður 2

In how many ways can we say, "eat here"? Is it the whole cod head you should get, or perhaps the double-smoked dried lamb, or the creamy halibut soup? Whatever you get, rest assured it'll have roots in Icelandic culinary history, elevated to fine dining standards. And do not leave without trying the fried-to-order kleinur.

4. Sandholt

Laugavegur 36

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

5. Le Kock 2.0

Tryggvagata 14

In the ground floor of a new hotel, it's a large space with three components: the Le Kock diner serving burgers, fish and chips, and comfort food favourites; a cocktail bar called Tail; and a second branch of Deig, Le Kock's sister bakery. The music policy can be shaky—unless you like Status Quo—but the all-day happy hour has 1,500 ISK cocktails and 800 ISK beers.

6. Ramen Momo

Tryggvagata 16

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

7. Public House Gastropub

Laugavegur 28

What happens when Icelandic ingredients are tended to with Japanese flair? Public House Gastropub only gives out-of-the-ordinary, satisfying answers. The duck thigh in a pancake served with ginger sauce and the crispy shrimp dumplings with sriracha mayo are to die for. Come early and enjoy happy hour while you can: you'll never want to leave.

8. Messinn

Lækjargata 6b

Messinn may be modelled on the well-known Westfjords restaurant Tjoruhúsið, but it's now no doubt a Reykjavik restaurant of choice. What keeps us coming back is how the food keeps getting better every time we dine there. Our favourites include their savoury plockfiskur, velvety graflax, and a perfectly seared trout with honey and almonds.

9. Sea Baron

Geirsgata 4a

Some say the langoustine soup recipe has changed a little since the eponymous "Sea Baron" himself passed away, but this harbour-side diner is as popular as ever anyway. Get a warming cup of soup, and a melt-in-the-mouth fresh fish kebab, still smoky from the coals.

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. Curious

Hafnarstræti 4

Watch out, henny—there's a new

queer bar on the scene, and it's decked out in tropical apparel. Serving up cocktails, coffee and—starting in August—a vegan café, Curious is a one-stop-shop for whatever scene you belong to. Werk.

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. Loft Hostel

Bankastræti 7a

Loft stands many heads and shoulders above most of the al fresco drinking spots in Reykjavik, not least because it's on the roof of the Loft Hostel and has a balcony that looks over downtown. Before the evening-time entertainment begins, it's the perfect place to catch some late-afternoon sun.

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 Reykjavik's generally pricey craft bar.

17. Papaku Reykjavík

Klappastígur 38

Formerly Bar Ananas, Papaku Reykjavík is Reykjavik's only beach bar, and it is truly a breath of fresh air for the otherwise dreary downtown scene. No sir, this is no dive bar, but a club, with a pool table, piano, darts board, a spacious bar, a tiny dance floor, and a solid line of DJs that all aim to make you bust a move.



18. American Bar

Austurstræti 8

Football fans will rejoice in seeing the row of screens perennially tuned on sports channel above the bar, while troubadours aficionados will find in American Bar a great spot to listen to classic country music. Grab a rib from the adjacent Dirty Burgers & Ribs and be happy.

Shopping

19. Kvartýra №49

Laugavegur 49

This minimalistic, Bauhaus-esque spot took the Icelandic fashion

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New In Town



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scene by storm upon opening in 2018, with its eclectic streetwear selection. They have designers that no one else has.

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 tea, to artworks and records.

21. IÐA 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 there is interesting. If the magazines fail, people-watching never does.

22. 12 Tónar

Skólavörðustígur 15

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

23. Farmers And Friends

Hólmaslóð 2 & Laugavegur 37

If you want to pick up an Icelandic

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

24. 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 garments by streetwear brands.

25. Spúútnik

Laugavegur 28b

This well-curated clothing emporium

is more like a secondhand clothing boutique than a charity shop. It's expensive but it's all imported stuff you won't find anywhere else. They're also very particular with their selection: after sorting through maybe six shirts, they'll determine that just one is truly good enough.

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.

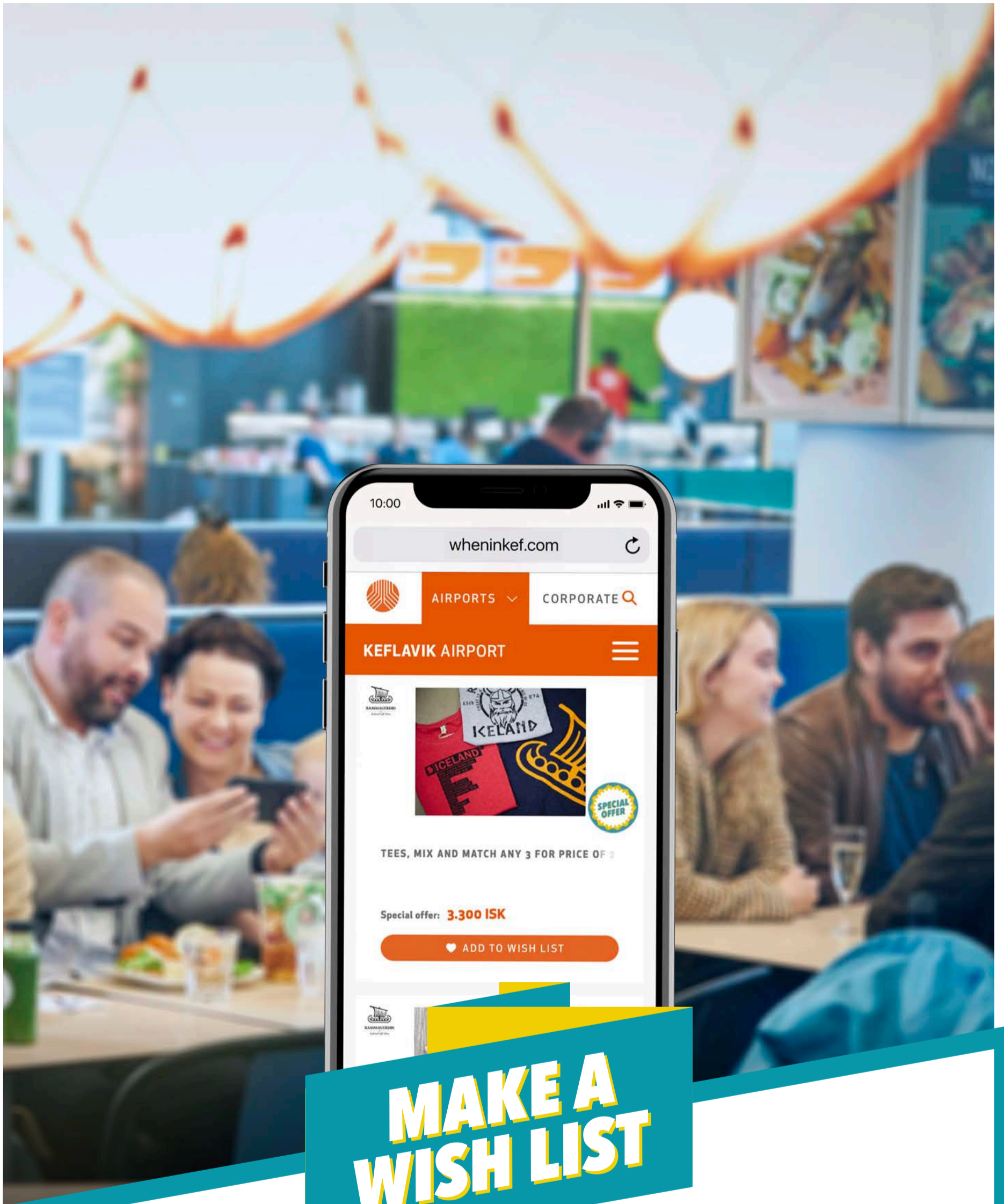
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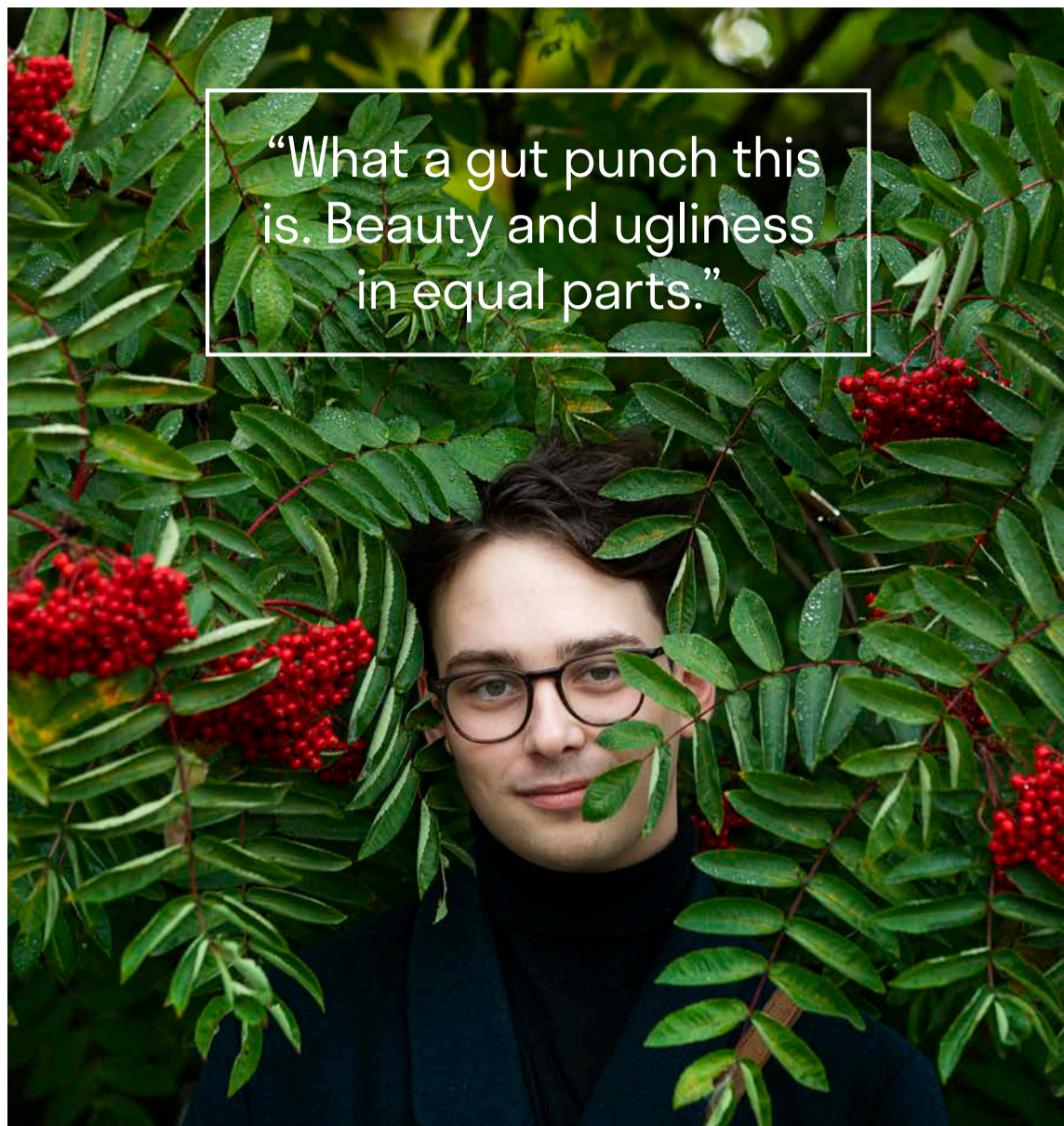
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“What a gut punch this is. Beauty and ugliness in equal parts.”

ARTIST PLAYLIST

Obscene Bass And Crazy Drummers

Elvar Smári Júlíusson tells you what you need to be listening to

Words: Elvar Smári Júlíusson/Valur Grettisson Photo: Art Bicnick

Elvar Smári Júlíusson made a splash two years ago with his debut album ‘Ljóstillifun’, released under his artist name Án. Here, the electro enthusiast tells us his favourite tracks of all time. It’s a playlist full of lyrical strikes and warm humanity.

Rival Consoles

Pattern of the North

I think songwriting in electronic music is an under-appreciated skill and Rival Consoles certainly has it. This song in particular has such warmth and humanity. It’s expressive. It’s emotional. These are not words that I can use to describe much electronic music, but I really want to. It’s a very difficult thing to achieve. His work inspires me a lot.

Nick Mulvey

Fever to the Form

I heard this song for the first time this summer after listening to an interview where Nick and producer Dan Carey discuss the process of creating his debut album. It was love at first listen kind of deal. There are some really cool production tricks in this one, the Moog-y synth bass comes as an unexpected

twist; the drummer is going absolutely crazy, but the drum sound is very small and dry; some spooky Mellotron strings; reverse cymbals. Great stuff. And I weirdly relate to bringing fever to a form.

K.óla

Nýir Draumar

I debated if I should just make every single track on this list a song from ‘Allt verður alltilfæ’ but I’ll let “Nýir Draumar” do. I am so impressed with this album. I mean, I expected the album to be good, but not this freaking good. This song almost feels like a house track (someone do a remix please). I like the blend of LoFi and HiFi elements, how the chorus kind of washes over you and having the lyrics in Icelandic brings so much honesty. I am officially calling on The Reykjavik Grapevine to give this album all the awards at the end of the year.

Steve Reich

Music for 18 musicians (ECM Recording)

I have such strong love for this piece of music. In the summer of 2018, I had a week where I remember doing very little apart from

listening to this piece and eating camembert. I really want to add a 4 to the floor kick to this and dance to it.

Low

Quorum

What a gut punch this is. Beauty and ugliness in equal parts. I don’t want to over-conceptualize it, but this album makes me think of the chaos of social media, politics and the climate crisis.

Jai Paul

Str8 Outta Mumbai

Real hits only. Jai Paul feels like if Prince had Ableton and zero recording budget. It’s hard not to think about the drama surrounding this album, the leak and the 6 years of silence from Jai Paul following it. I admire his decision of just releasing it in the raw unfinished form the world first heard it in. And I feel like the rawness is exactly what makes it great, from the bedroom quality of the vocal recordings to the really strange cut-out silences and obscene amount of bass. ♡

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Music



"All around me are familiar faces..."

Melody-Minded Chapters

The visual classical world of **Gabriel Ólafsson**

Words: **Rex Beckett** Photo: **Art Bicknik**

Concert

Gabriel Ólafsson's debut album 'Absent Minded' is out now on One Little Indian, available on all streaming platforms and in stores on vinyl.

As Icelandic artists continue to establish themselves in the world of modern classical music, a new generation of musicians is beginning to follow in the same vein. One such artist is the bright young pianist Gabriel Ólafsson, who is making melodic, romantic yet minimal music fit for a movie score. He has just released his first album, 'Absent Minded', after being picked up by One Little Indian records right at the inception of his career.

Jazz teen

The 20-year old Reykjavík native began playing piano at age five and headed to the FÍH music school in his teens to study jazz. From there, he began composing quite young. "I wrote the main melody of the album when I was 14," he says. "I always had this melody in mind. It has different chapters that were written later and then I sort of put it together."

This piece became the title track of his album, which he composed, arranged and recorded himself over 2018. These songs with many chapters recall older classical pieces of the Romantic era that flow gracefully from one section to another, without necessarily repeating. "Some think it's unnecessary to have too many movements in a track but liked it like that," he says; "to have obvious chapters and strong melodies and different flavours."

Obsessed with film scores

He actively composed as he recorded,

each song creating visually evocative worlds. Gabriel finds much of his inspiration and influences in movie scores, and he approaches his songwriting with film in mind. "I've been obsessed with film scores since I was 7-years old, when I was watching Pixar movies," he says. "It just blew my mind how writing a theme or having specific instruments for the score, it sort of transports you to the place or the vibe of the movie."

"I definitely do this system, where they have certain themes to each song," he continues. "I didn't have characters or a plot, but I wrote these melodies with themes. Even though I like to keep the story of the album with the listener, this is definitely how I approached it. I am always imagining a music video while I'm composing."

Little bit of electronic

Gabriel is now on the cusp of playing at Iceland Airwaves for the second time, and is feeling far more confident and ready to put his best foot forward this year. "I was really happy back then because I hadn't released the album and still a lot of people were there," he says. "I had eight players with me last year, which is a bit much, so maybe I'll do something a little different this time. Minimise it a little bit. Maybe have a bit of electronics. I think I'll be playing work-in-progress songs."

In the meantime, he is already composing and recording for a second album, where he finds that his process has changed but the goal is still the same. "I think I've retained the sound I'm kind of creating for myself, with strong melodies and obvious chapters," he says. "I'm really looking forward to the future, knowing what I've learned on this album. This album will always be close to my heart." ❦



MUSIC NEWS

One of the biggest icons of electronic music,

Tangerine Dream, has painted stadium-sized soundscapes for no less than half a century and now they're bringing their art to the ExtremeChill festival. The festival's 10th edition will be taking place in Reykjavik from September 13th to 15th. Other bands on the lineup include **Marcus Fischer**, **Eraldo Bernocchi**, **Kristin Anna**, **Christopher Chaplin** and **Hoshiko Yamane**. VG



Iceland Airwaves revealed their full line up a few days ago. Local favourite **Hjaltalin** returns to the festival after a five-year hiatus, with a brand new upbeat sound. German house music heroes **Booka Shade** also appear, remixing their favourite music, forcing everybody in a five-kilometre radius to dance. Some countries, including Indonesia and Palestine, are sending artists for the first time. Indie duo **Stars and Rabbit** hail from Indonesia and will bring chill vibes. Meanwhile, **Bashar Murad**, who collaborated with **Hatari**, will also join the lineup. VG/SPO



Icelandic icon **Björk Guðmundsdóttir** and Swedish artists **Fever Ray** and **The Knife** remixed each other's songs. The outcome is experimental as to be expected. Both **Fever Ray** (**Karin Dreijer**) and **The Knife** (**Karin and Olof Dreijer**) decided to put a new spin on Björk's "Features Creatures" from her 2017 LP "Utopia". They kept the original lyrics—the poetics of the song therefore remain but it's transformed by upgraded beats. Karin sings on both remixes. VG/Lea

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21/9 BURLESQUE SHOW BY TROUPE "LADIES & A GENTLEMAN"

22/9 SINGER/SONGWRITER NIGHT

25/9 SUNNA FRIDJONS + BAND, CHRYPTOCHROME

26/9 DRAG-SÚGUR DRAG LAB MONTHLY EXPERIMENTAL DRAG SHOW

27/9 UNDER THE CHURCH (SWE), URÐUN, NARTHRAAL

28/9 AARU, HOLLOW FRONT (US)

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HAPPY HOUR
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VÍKING
Létíól

Our Picks



Tangerine Dream

September 14th - 20:00 - Gamla Bió - 9,990 ISK ★

Once upon a time, electronic chill-out music was the domain of but a few artists, amongst them

the incomparable Tangerine Dream. Their breakout album *Stratosfear* is still considered a classic

in the genre, and you'll be pleased to know they're not only going strong; they're also performing in Iceland as a part of the Extreme Chill Festival 2019. The listed price here is for all Extreme Chill events, including this concert. So bring your good vibes, your bottle-bottom glasses and your questions about the nature of the material universe to Gamla Bió this Saturday, and let Tangerine Dream transport you to the astral plane. **AF**



Cryptochrome & Sunnu Fridjons + band

September 25th - 21:00 - Gaukurinn ★

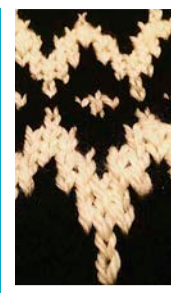
Let the beat soothe your soul!. **AF**



Soulflow Comedy - Women & Queer Open Mic Nights

September 16th - 21:00 - Gaukurinn ★

Think you've got comedy chops? Want to test out your hot five? Maybe wanna refine your standup craft in a safe, supportive environment? Bring your best bits down to Gaukurinn to bounce your finest gags off the crowd. **AF**



Knitting Night

Sept. 18th - 20:00 - Kex Hostel ★

Absolute beginners and seasoned pros alike are welcome to this cozy event. **AF**



Femme-In-Unity

September 19th - 21:00 - Gaukurinn - 1,500 ISK ★

Not just an all-female drag show! This special event is collecting proceeds for Stígámót, a vital rape crisis centre in Reykjavik. Hosted by Chardonnay Bublée and Jenny Purr, with fabulousness well into the night. **AF**

September 13th—September 26th

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 September 13th

22:00 Prikið
KGB
22:00 Kaffibarinn
Óli Dóri
22:00 Bravó
Blóðmör, Moronic, Boiling Snakes, Eilíf Sjálfsfróun
18:00 R6013
Sakaris
21:00 Kex Hostel



Extreme Chill Festival, Day 2

21:00 Gaukurinn
Mugison
20:00 Háskólabíó



Emiliana Torrini Af Fingrum Fram
20:30 Salurinn
Hjaltalín
22:00 Græni Hatturinn

Saturday September 14th

★**Extreme Chill Festival, Day 3**
21:00 Gaukurinn
Spegill
22:00 Prikið
Simon fknhdsm
22:00 Kaffibarinn
Formaðurinn
22:00 Bravó
Ottoman & Volcanova

21:00 Hard Rock Café
Kef LAVÍK
21:00 Kex Hostel
Divur
17:00 & 21:00 Harpa
Vocal Line and Vocal Project
20:00 Harpa
Al-Qalifa (Leo Africanus)
20:00 Frikirkjan Reykjavík
Mugison
20:00 Háskólabíó
Hjaltalín
22:00 Græni Hatturinn

Sunday September 15th

Z
22:00 Kaffibarinn
Extreme Chill Festival, Day 4
20:30 IÐNÓ
Women of Note
16:00 Harpa

Monday September 16th

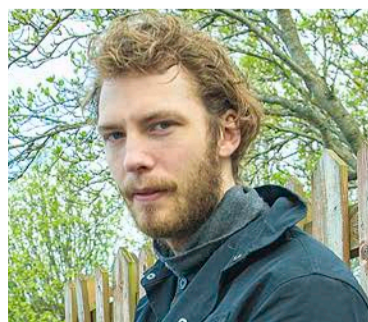
John Brnlv
22:00 Kaffibarinn

Tuesday September 17th

Þorsteinn Eyfjörð
22:00 Kaffibarinn

Wednesday September 18th

KRBEAR
22:00 Prikið
DJ Passa
22:00 Kaffibarinn
Einar Sonic
22:00 Bravó



Marteinn Sindri 'Atlas' Release Concert
20:30 Iðno

Andrés Þór
20:00 Suðurnesja Jazz Club
Knitting at Kex
20:00 Kex

Thursday September 19th

★**Femme-in-Unity**
21:00 Gaukurinn
Nían
22:00 Prikið



Alfons X
22:00 Kaffibarinn
Karitas
22:00 Bravó
Debussy & Prokofiev
19:30 Harpa
Bless Bless Listastofan
20:00 IÐNÓ
Paradis Sessions
20:30 Hlemmur Square
Andrés Þór 'Paradox'
20:30 Frikirkja in Hafnarfjörður



Jón Jónsson and Friðrik Dór
20:00 Valaskjálff Egilsstöðum
Prieykið
20:00 Hannesarholt
Nýju Fötin Keisarans
21:00 Gamla Bió

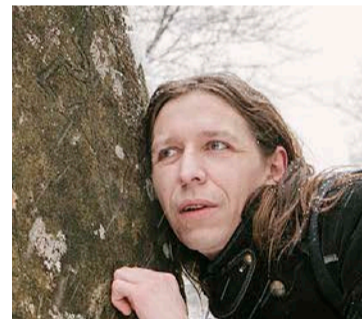
Friday September 20th

DJ Vala
22:00 Prikið
Sonur Sæll
22:00 Kaffibarinn
KGB
22:00 Bravó
Spünk, Kvelja, Velvet Villain
22:00 Gaukurinn
Klíkkuð Menning
20:00 Kex

Saturday September 21st

Karitas
22:00 Prikið
Frimann x Bensöl
22:00 Kaffibarinn
This Is Nonsense
22:00 Bravó
New To Us Music Night
20:30 Hlemmur Square
Reikistjörnur - GDRN
14:00 Harpa
Burlesque Show
21:00 Gaukurinn
Jóhann Jóhannsson
20:00 Hallgrímskirkja

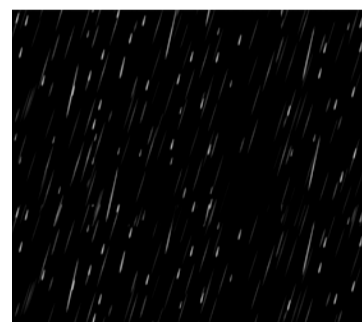
Sunday September 22nd



Krystal Carma
22:00 Kaffibarinn
ISO Youth Orchestra plays Beethoven's 9th
17:00 Harpa
Visa og Skvisa
14:00 Hannesarholt
Singer/Songwriter Night
21:00 Gaukurinn

Monday September 23rd

DJ Bricks
22:00 Kaffibarinn

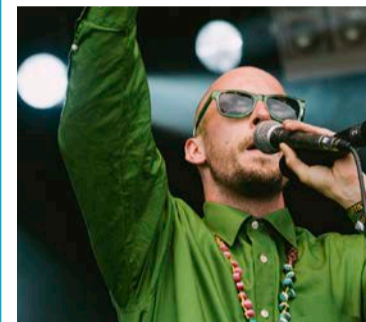


Zur Schöpfung der Gerburd der Vernichtung des Zerfalls
20:00 R6013

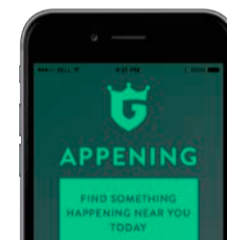
Tuesday September 24th

Óli Dóri
22:00 Kaffibarinn
Terrordisco
22:00 Bravó

Wednesday September 25th



★ **Cryptochrome & Sunna Fridjons**
21:00 Gaukurinn
Maggi Lego
22:00 Prikið
Jamie Clarke
22:00 Kaffibarinn
Bollywood Dance
19:00 Loft



★ For music listings from Sept. 12th on, check out happening.grapevine.is or our app Happening, available on iOS and Android

Thursday September 26th

Uné Boys
22:00 Prikið
Kalmarsambandið
22:00 Kaffibarinn
Krystal Carma
22:00 Bravó
Sváfnir Sig and band
21:00 Hard Rock Café
Rex Pistols, PANG, HARSH R, hexhex-hex
19:00, R6013



Sæunn and Shostakovich
19:30 Iceland Symphony Orchestra
Drag - Sógur Drag Lab
21:00 Gaukurinn



Treasures of a nation

Selected works from the collection

Opening hours:
please visit our website
www.listasafn.is



Listasafn Íslands
National Gallery of Iceland

FRÍKIRKJUVEGUR 7, 101 REYKJAVÍK



Pictured here with a rare, non-screeching tree

The Screeching Of The Trees

Flaaryr's complex intercontinental journey

Words: Rex Beckett Photo: Art Bicnick

Album

Flaaryr's new album 'Vegvísir' is out now on streaming platforms and Bandcamp: post-dreifing.bandcamp.com/album/vegv-sir

Way down south, almost at the bottom of the world, but before the frozen sheet of Antarctica, lie the rich natural wonders of Patagonia. It was there that Argentinian-born artist Flaaryr found himself immersed in sounds that stuck permanently in his core. This was the place where the songs from his new album, 'Vegvísir', came to exist. Just released on Post-dreifing, it is a journey through a disarming, stunning sonic forest.

Stave that guide

Flaaryr was born Diego Manatrizio in Buenos Aires in 1993. Playing in bands and on his own in his hometown for several years, he moved to Iceland six months ago with a minimal solo setup of his dad's 40-year-old classical guitar and a looping pedal. It was this sudden and recent move to Iceland that inspired the title and concept of his album, as the name refers to the famous ancient Icelandic stave.

"Aside from the fact that this symbol is extremely overused for touristic shit, it has a beautiful meaning which is to guide the way when there is no visibility," he says.

"I think it's a very good metaphor, like in my case, for moving twelve thousand kilometres away from home, not having an idea of what is going to happen. Stay on track, keep going. It's a super weird situation in a place where you don't speak the language and don't know anyone, trying to not get lost."

A whole new world

He primarily uses a method called prepared guitar, where the timbres have been altered with objects placed in or on the strings. "I started using the prepared guitar when I started listening to a series of John Cage pieces called Sonatas and Interludes, for the prepared piano," he says. "It was like a mind explosion. The sounds were like, 'What instrument is that? I have no idea what the fuck it is!' I started researching and I saw that he put objects between the strings. A whole new world opened."

Trial and error

Diego uses objects like rubber bands, pieces of wood, and bits of metal, and is always experiment-

ing with more. "Back then, all the shit I found I put it between the strings!" he laughs "Just seeing what happened. It was a lot of trial and error. Now I have a set of tools that I use, but I'm constantly trying new things."

This method of highly experimental yet intricate, technical playing was the perfect way for Diego to convey the life-altering experiences he had while in Patagonia. "A couple of years ago I hitchhiked there with a friend," he recounts. "We went from Buenos Aires to Ushuaia, which is the capital of Tierra del Fuego. It was an amazing experience and I fell in love with Patagonia. It's so peaceful and you have forests and snow and beautiful things. Patagonia is the only place in Argentina where I really feel at home."

Different tempos

The album starts with a piece named after Patagonian trees, his complex and beautiful compositions evoke the atmosphere of his beloved territory, employing the techniques of his inspirer, John Cage. "The main melodies on the album are phased overdubbed loops, playing at different time signatures," he says. "There are a lot of wood sounds, hitting the guitar in the box and stuff. I tried to create the sensation of walking in the forest, surrounded by sounds, and all you hear are the trees screeching and crackling."

This dichotomy of places so far south and so far north to influence his music makes for quite a jaw-dropping experience. No wonder he needs a beacon through the fog. 🍷

"I tried to create the sensation of walking in the forest, surrounded by sounds, and all you hear are the trees screeching and crackling."

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"An album was not the plan," Viktor says

Emotional, Intimate, A Little Experimental

Viktor and Yair have created a work of ambient art with 'Vast'

Words: Sam O'Donnell Photo: Art Bicnick

Album/ Concert

Album played live in Berlin on November 9th

Viktor Orri Arnason is probably best known in Iceland for his work in the band Hjaltalín, but lately, he's been doing his own thing. Most recently, his own thing is collaborating with fellow Berlin resident and musician Yair Elazar Glotman to create an emotional project that somehow feels simultaneously enormous and intimate. The duo will play the album live in Berlin on November 9th, but until then, they have more experimenting to do.

"It's really difficult to make this work live because of issues that would occur when we start playing the music through speakers," says Viktor. "You create feedback. And you need all the microphones to be able to do this, so that's going to be a good month of experimenting."

"An album was not the plan, but rather a very happy accident."

Destined to work together

The collaboration happened almost out of nowhere. The two had never met, but they both separately contributed to Jóhann Jóhannsson's reworked version of Solari by Ryuichi Sakamoto. They heard each others' work and liked it.

"We were also encouraged to meet because we had such similar ways of approaching our instruments," Viktor says—they both have a background in classical music and a love for rock and roll.

"A seminal piece that started my love for music was 'L.A. Woman' by The Doors," Yair says. "I found it on a cassette in my dad's music collection when I was 5-years old." Meanwhile, Viktor played in a rock band when he was a kid and won the Icelandic battle of the bands when he was 12-years old. Both artists gravitated toward classical music at an early age.

And so, with their similar taste, Viktor invited Yair to his studio for a play date. They pooled their resources and knowledge, pressed record, and began to play. "An album was not the plan, but rather a very happy accident," Yair says. "Challenging each other to listen to things differently was the only suggestion we made for each track," Viktor adds.

Don't call it experimental

The result is a project that sounds like a score for an epic film. That's not surprising, given Viktor's background working with Jóhann Jóhannsson and Ólafur Arnalds. However, Viktor says it was never supposed to sound like a film score. "It was supposed to be an attempt between two musicians to create something out of bass, contrabass, and violin or viola. And just the two of us playing together, and exploring new worlds with those instruments." Yair agrees that the work was never supposed to be anything other than a new perspective between two musicians and their instruments. "The perspective is capturing a distorted image where close and far are blended, and resulting in a focus on the hidden textural and spectral qualities of those instruments."

While the two spent a lot of time experimenting with different sounds, they hesitate to call their work 'experimental'. Viktor's manager, Antonio Cárdenas, doesn't hesitate. "Experimental, emotional, and intimate," he describes it with a smile. "These three words work well together, with experimental placed last," Viktor says, laughing. "If it's only experimental, people get afraid of the music."

"It is a new perspective and approach to two very old and familiar musical instruments," Yair finishes. 🍷



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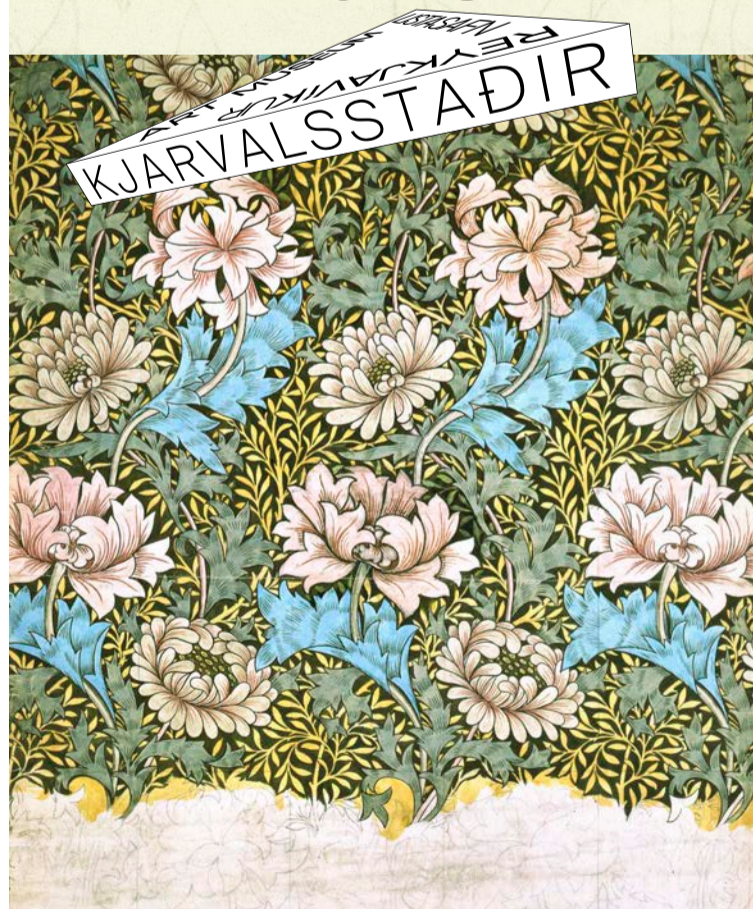
The Icelandic Museum of Rock 'n' Roll
For more go to www.rokksafn.is

Open daily

William Morris

30.06.–
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Let Beauty Rule!



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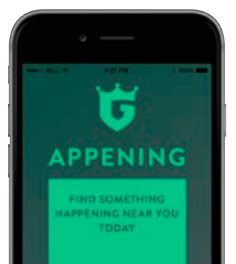
22 August - 12 October 2019 *Late Summer Show*

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EYBORG GUÐMUNDSDÓTTIR
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A Huge, Awesome Experiment

Listastofan closes its doors after
four successful years

Words: **Phil Uwe Widiger** Photo: **Julie Rowland**

Exhibition

Listastofan's final exhibition *WE RUINED EVERYTHING* opens September 6th. The goodbye party will be held at Iðnó on September 19th.

"If there is one thing I could say about Listastofan, it would be that it was one huge, awesome experiment," says Martyna Daniel of the four years in which the artist-run gallery has gone from a simple art studio to a vibrant art space with regular exhibitions, workshops, live drawings, readings and concerts.

Once upon a time in Reykjavík

"I almost feel everything happened by accident," Martyna laughs. Initially, the space was thought as a simple art studio. But life had different plans. "We were overwhelmed with requests for sort of everything," says Martyna. "I think a reason why it was so easy to find people to rent desks with us was because there was no direct competition to a place like this then. It sort of escalated from there."

Killing the baby

With Listastofan becoming a full success, the decision to close was not made overnight. "Things happened organically," explains Martyna. "The co-directors have also moved on to other projects. In a few days I'm turning 30 and I am a bit sensitive to symbolic dates. What do I want to do in my thirties? The answer is: not Listastofan."

Instead, Martyna wants to focus on filmmaking, which she has studied and which is what brought her to Iceland initially. And she wants to go back to experimenting. "That's one of the reasons why I feel like it's time to close Listastofan — the experimental phase is over. It works and we've proven that. Now we kill our baby."

Be young and shut up

From the very beginning, Listastofan had its own slogan—"Be Young and Shut Up"—advertising the arrogant attitude of adolescence. And it's farewell exhibition,

WE RUINED EVERYTHING, is the epitome of this. "It's like a loud teenage scream for attention," Martyna laughs. "It's pretty much the essence of Listastofan."

The exhibition features both Icelandic and foreign artists, another of Listastofan's trademarks, and is a humorous take on the theme of destruction. "When I started telling people that we were going to close there was a lot of whining, a lot of sadness," remembers the co-founder. "The last exhibition had to make fun of all these interactions. Well, yeah, I ruined everything, sorry!"

Going out with a bang

Listastofan will officially close with a goodbye party at Iðnó, featuring music and art, speeches, and some other surprises. "There will be a symbolic pack down of our exhibition and then we'll

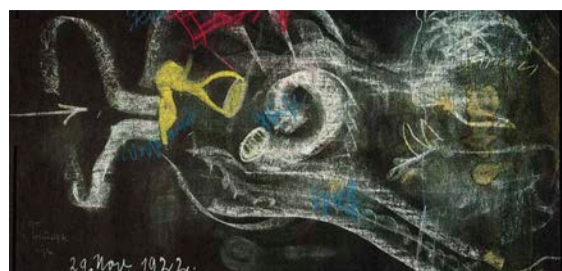
"The experimental phase is over. It works and we've proven that. Now we kill our baby."

physically move everybody to Iðnó and have a massive party there," Martyna explains. "Whether it's in Listastofan, Iðnó or new spaces opening all over town, it really doesn't matter as long as you can

show what you are doing and work together. I don't really feel like we are closing anything."

In fact, a project group for Listastofan's successor has already been founded. The Grapevine reached out for an exclusive statement: "The space will be taken over following the worker cooperative model, a novelty in Iceland, and will continue to offer desks for artists to rent upstairs. What used to be the exhibition area will go through some renovations and will gradually be open for events and workshops, with the long-term goal of being turned into a café." ☺

Our Picks



Helga Óttarsdóttir, Hilma af Klint, and Rudolf Steiner. The symposium will take an excursion into theme within the context of contemporary art and art practice. Talks will be held in English, everyone is welcome.

★ Symposium – Free event in English

21st of September 2p.m. - 5 p.m. - Gerðarsafn

Lots of tiny people – spirituality in arts with JBK Ransu (IS), Silvana Gabrielli (IT/CH), Walter Kugler (CH)

and Johannes Nilo (SE/CH). Introductions in the form of lectures and discussion on the topic of the exhibition, Spirituality in Arts, in relation to the works of Gerður



★ WE RUINED EVERYTHING

September 6th-19th - Listastofan

Alas, Listastofan is closing. They're capping off their influential run with one last hurrah entitled 'WE RUINED

EVERYTHING.' The exhibit features eight Icelandic artists mulling the theme of destruction with absurd humour. Burn the place down. **HJC**



★ MOTHER & CHILD

Until September 29th - Kling & Bang

This exhibit turns the floor into a ceiling. A figurative life-sized bronze statue

lies upside-down, permitting the viewer to subvert their gaze and see the world from a new direction. Basically like entering 'Stranger Things.' **HJC**



★ Icelandic Cornershops

Until November 5th - Reykjavík Museum of Photography

In the mid-80s, small shops were on every street corner, serving

as social centres, where people gathered to chat, catch up, and exchange news. This exhibit celebrates that lost piece of history. **HJC**

September 13th—September 26th

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 MUSEUM OF PHOTOGRAPHY

Encounters - Nordic Photography Beyond Borders

The exhibition includes photographic- and videoworks by five Nordic contemporary photographers/artists: Bára Kristinsdóttir (Iceland) Johannes Samuelsson (Sweden) Miia Autio (Finland) Nanna Debois Buhl (Denmark) and Sandra Mujinga (Norway)

• Opens on September 14th, 2019
• Runs until 12.01.2020

REYKJAVÍK ART MUSEUM - ÁSMUNDARSAFN

Helgi Gíslason: Where The Boundaries Lie

Helgi Gíslason presents a series of sculptures from different periods of his career. In his work, Helgi deals with man and the human condition. His works, though, are up for interpretation.

• Opens on August 31st, 2019
• Runs until November 3rd, 2019

REYKJAVÍK ART MUSEUMS

Autumn Bulbs

The Reykjavík Art Museums—all of them—present a special exhibition outside the walls of the museum. Public art, in the public domain, which focuses on intangible media and manifestation.

• Opens on September 7th, 2019
• Runs until September 29th, 2019

Ongoing

NATIONAL GALLERY OF ICELAND

Treasures Of A Nation

A selection of over 80 works chosen from the national gallery's collection displays the evolution of art since the 19th century.

• Runs until December 31st, 2019

EINAR JÓNSSON MUSEUM

Permanent Exhibition

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

LISTHÚS ÓFEIGS

Pétur Halldórsson

Eitthvað úr Ísskápnunum,

NÚLLIÐ

NA RFI

Sept 14 to October 9

• Runs from Sept 13 to Sept 15

REYKJAVÍK CITY MUSEUM

Settlement Sagas

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

REYKJAVÍK ART MUSEUM - ÁSMUNDARSAFN

Ásmundur Sveinsson: Under the Same Sky - Art In Public Space

Ásmundarsafn is named after sculptor Ásmundur Sveinsson. This new permanent exhibition presents the artist in a new light. What dialogue does his works provoke?

• Runs until December 31st, 2019

REYKJAVÍK MUSEUM OF PHOTOGRAPHY

Encounters - Nordic Photography Beyond Borders

The exhibition includes photographic- and videoworks by five Nordic contemporary photographers/artists: Bára Kristinsdóttir (Iceland) Johannes Samuelsson (Sweden) Miia Autio (Finland) Nanna Debois Buhl (Denmark) and Sandra Mujinga (Norway)

• Runs until 12.01.2020

NATIONAL MUSEUM OF ICELAND

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

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

D39 Emma Heiðarsdóttir: Margin

In her first solo exhibition, Emma Heiðarsdóttir questions when and where the art experience begins and ends. Her works deal with site-specific interventions, three-dimensional objects, and visuals.

• Runs until September 22nd, 2019

SIGURJÓN ÓLAFSSON MUSEUM

Connections

To celebrate the 13th anniversary of the museum, this exhibition presents 13 artists in dialogue with Sigurjón and his art.

• Runs until October 6th, 2019

MUSEUM OF DESIGN AND APPLIED ART MORRA

Fashion designer Signý Þórhallsdóttir takes over the lobby to work with Icelandic flora on silk and paper for her MORRA collection.

• Runs until September 25th, 2019

Behind The Scenes: Archiving A Ceramic Collection

In 1979, Anna Eyjólfsdóttir began to collect ceramic pieces by Icelandic artists. In 2017, the Museum of acquired her collection. Currently, the museum is cataloguing the collection in front of your eyes.

• Runs until September 25th, 2019

NORDIC HOUSE

Porcelain Souls

Photographer Inuteq Storch went through his parents' archives and found photos and letters from their lives in Greenland and Denmark in the '60s and '80s. Explore them here.

• Runs until September 26th, 2019

REYKJAVÍK ART MUSEUM - KJARVALSSTAÐIR

Jóhannes S. Kjarval: Can't Draw a Harebell

Here, explore the floral works of Jóhannes S. Kjarval, after whom the museum is named. Be it ornamental plants, potted plants, or wildflowers, you'll find it all.

• Runs until December 31st, 2019

William Morris: Let Beauty Rule!

English artist William Morris was a true Icelandophile, and even translated the Sagas. Here, see original drawings of Morris's

patterns, wallpapers and work processes, paintings, drawings, and more.

• Runs until October 6th, 2019

GERDARSAFN KÓPAVOGUR ART MUSEUM

Just drink tea performance by Dawn Nilo.

Free event in English. Register at gerdarsafn@gerdarsafn.is

Just Drink Tea is a radical act of hyper moments; a ceremony that celebrates the sensual human experience. It seeks to elevate the word just to imply the complexity of something greater that can be found in the simplicity of being. Guests will serve each other tea in a series of deepening rounds of poetic and sensual soul exercises. 22. September 1 p.m. to 5 p.m.

REYKJAVÍK CITY LIBRARY | GERÐUBERG CULTURE HOUSE

Open and informal reading circle with Ós Pressan

September 18th Gerðuberg Culture House

• Once a month 7:30-9:00 PM

Women's Story Circle | Music Workshop with Magga Stína & Sigrún

Reykjavík City Library | Gerðuberg Culture House

• Every Saturday from 21 September - 19 October at 13.00 - 15.00

ÁRBÆR OPEN AIR MUSEUM

HEIMAT: Two Worlds

To mark the 70th anniversary of the arrival in 1949 of a group of Germans to who travelled to Iceland aboard the Esja ship, this exhibition presents photographs of their journey made by Marzena Skubatz.

• Runs until October 31st, 2019

MUSEUM OF DESIGN AND APPLIED ART

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Behind the Scenes
Archiving a ceramic collection

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Designer in residence

RÝMD GALLERY

It's so nice to see you

Atli Pálsson, Ongoing

• Runs until September 1st, 2019

LIVING ART MUSEUM

Artist Talk

Karl Ómarsson in conversation with Anna Lindal, 14.09.2019 kl. 15:00

REYKJAVÍK ROASTERS

i kring 03

A collection of short stories. A mish-mash of pictures. A zine. Journey to all three Reykjavík Roasters locations and you'll experience all of this in Kári Björn's three-part exhibition.

• Runs until October 9th, 2019

HAFNARBORG

Everything At The Same Time

In this exhibit, explore how young artists take on and confront the freedom in contemporary visual arts. How can one extract meaning from that which can mean anything?

• Runs until October 20th, 2019

LIVING ART MUSEUM

Artist Talk

Karl Ómarsson in conversation with Anna Lindal, 15:00 14th September 2019

18

Late Summer Show

Margrét H. Blöndal, Ásgerður Búadóttir, Eyborg Guðmundsdóttir, Kristín Jónsdóttir Frá Munkaþverá, Anna Ótarsdóttir, Ragna Róbertsdóttir, Karín Sander, Júlíana Sveinsdóttir

• 22 August - 12 October 2019

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SEP 4TH, WED | 20.00 - 22.00

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SEP 6TH, FRI | 18.00 - 19.30

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WINE & FOOD
PAIRING - LIMITED SEATING

SEP 18TH, WED | 19.00 - 21.00

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LAUGAVEGUR 120, 105 REYKJAVIK

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HAPPY HOUR & BAR OFFERS

THURSDAYS | 18.00 - 20.00

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LAUGAVEGUR 120, 105 REYKJAVIK

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IN THE GARDEN

LIVE MUSIC, HAPPY HOUR & OTHER BAR OFFERS

SATURDAYS | 18.30 - 20.30

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INGÓLFSSTRÆTI 1, 101 REYKJAVIK

MUSIC
IN THE SKY
ÍVAR SÍMONARSON PLAYS LIVE GUITAR



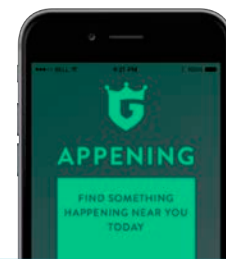
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Film

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FILM



Börkur Gunnars spreads the good word

Moviegoers and Fanatics Unite

It's RIFF O'clock

Words: Tara Njála Ingvarsdóttir Photo: Art Bicnick

Movie Festival

RIFF returns for its sixteenth year and will be held from September 26th through October 6th. The festival offers an expansive program of screenings, Q&A sessions, a masterclass with legendary director Claire Denis, and more. The official schedule will be released on September 16th. Get your tickets here: <https://riff.is/shop/>

It's that time of year again! The Reykjavik International Film Festival (RIFF) returns for its 16th year running, meaning that it's showcase time for International and local filmmaking and storytelling at the festival's main hub and Reykjavik's finest art-house cinema Bíó Paradís.

RIFF continuously offers film-fanatics space to stumble upon and binge some of the year's best films. The RIFF organizers spend the year traveling to film festivals creating the schedule. "We try to get the films that pick up the most excitement at the festivals, we also select from hundreds of applications," shares Börkur Gunnars, one of RIFF's team members. Noteworthy features include the 2019 Cannes prize Winner, "Parasite" directed by Bong Joon-ho and Cannes fan-favorites like "Lighthouse" by Daniel De Faux and "The Dead Don't Die" by Jim Jarmusch, which has an all-star

cast.

Börkur continues, "We also have many exciting documentaries like 'Push' (2019) by Fredrik Gertten, which follows the rental crisis in major cities," Börkur continues. "The mayor of Copenhagen started making changes to their legislation after seeing that one. These films have tremendous effects around the world."

"Then there's 'Cold Case Hammarskjöld' (2019), in which the murder of the Secretary-General of the United-Nations is investigated. The investigators solve the crime after all these years."

Elfar Aðalsteins' first feature film, "End of Sentence" (2019), will open the festival on September 26th, marking the film's debut screening in Iceland. Elfar and Academy-Award nominee John Hawkes will attend the opening and hold an audience Q&A after the screening.

The Great Claire Denis

Every year RIFF highlights the works of an esteemed filmmaker and this year Börkur takes particular pride talking about the VIP. "This year, French director Claire Denis is celebrated as RIFF's guest of honour. She's a French-hero." RIFF will screen a retrospective of her work including, "High Light" (2018); "Let the Sunshine In" (2017); "Nénette

and Boni" (1996) and "Chocolat" (1988). Denis will also host a masterclass where the audience will have the chance to talk to her about what drives her, gain insight into her process and the making of her films.

TerroRIFFic

This year, Bong Joon-ho's sci-fi thriller "The Host" (2006) will be re-discovered and re-appreciated, if it gets too spooky you can always take breaks and go into the sauna. "Step into the deep waters of Horror. It will be terroRIFFic," Ólafur Ásgeirsson, this year's swim-in host, of the Swim-in says mischievously.

"These films have tremendous effects around the world."

Speaking of spooks, the RIFF team is introducing the exciting new horror category, Arctic Chills, focusing on Nordic horror and thrillers. Including films like "Kokodi Koko-da" (2019) directed by award-winner Johannes Nyhold and classics of the genre like "Evil Ed" (1995).

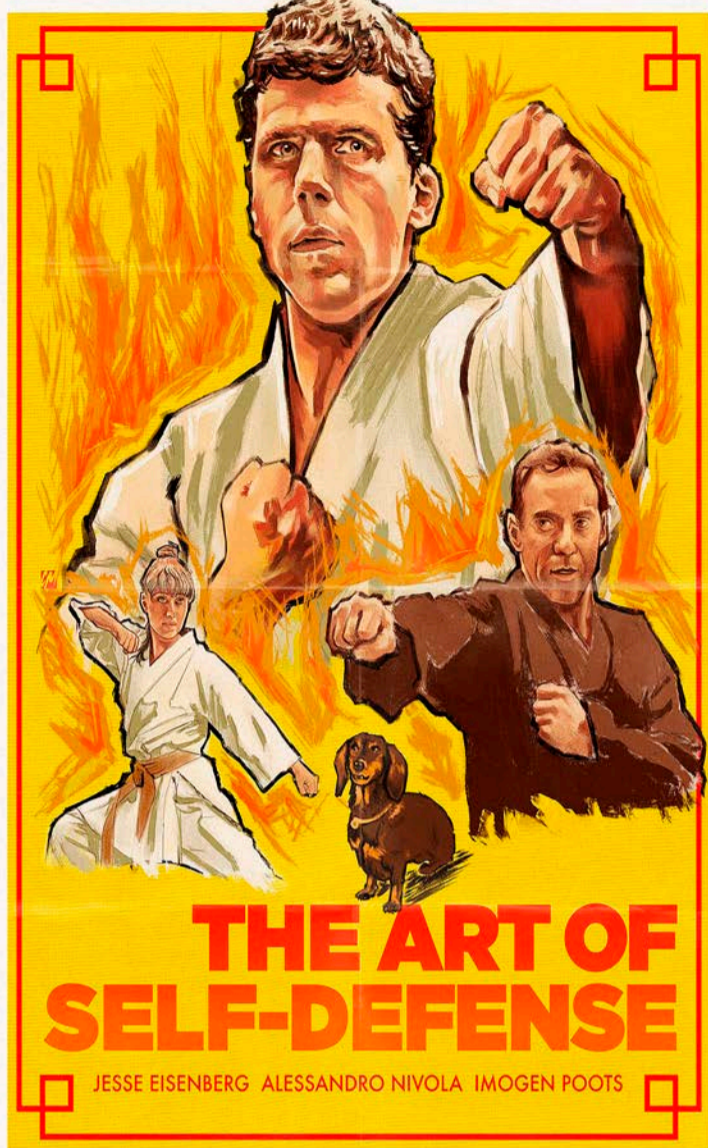
Time to Wander

RIFF's schedule is packed, you can and you should try to navigate its extensivity. While we recommend scouring the schedule and making a wish-list, These are to be marked on your schedules but you won't be disappointed by just stumbling in and out of the screening rooms., as RIFF's magic is to be found in wandering between unexpected worlds. (be so bold as to toss aside the schedule!) 🍷

gpu.is/film

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Various Events



The Art of Self Defence at Bió Paradís

Friday September 13th

- ★ **The Art of Self Defence**
22:30, Bió Paradís
- Monthly Repair Café No. 11**
18.00 Reykjavik Tool Library

Saturday, September 14th

- Héraðið/The County**
20:00 Bió Paradís, English sub

Sunday September 15th

- Black Sundays: 'The Company Of Wolves' Screening**
20:00 Bió Paradís
- Classic Sundays: Remarkable women play classic**
16:00 Harpa, 3.500 entry fee.
- Guided Tour In English**
11:00 National Museum Of Iceland
- Party Bingo With Sigga Kling**
21:00 Sæta Svinið
- Hvítur, hvítur dagur**
19:30-22:00 Bió Paradís, English sub
- Mozart's Le nozze di Figaro**
From the 15th of September to the 18th of October The Icelandic Opera
- Free Yoga Class**
12:00 Loft
- How To Become Icelandic In 60 Minutes**
19:00 Harpa
- Icelandic Sagas: The Greatest Hits**
19:30 Harpa
- The Women's Story Circle**
13:30 Grófin Culture House

Monday September 16th

- How To Become Icelandic In 60 Minutes**
19:00 Harpa
- Mosaic Rug Workshop: Multicultural Family Festival**
13:00 Gerðarsafn

Tuesday September 17th

- Learn to draw for free**
17:00 Kristín Arngrímsdóttir, Reykjavik City Library
- Yoga Workshop For Bread Eaters**
18:01 Miðstræti 5

Wednesday September 18th

- Golden Mic Stand-Up Comedy**
21:00 The Secret Cellar

Thursday September 18th

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

Friday September 20th

- Icetrália, stand up**
21:00 Austurbær, in English. Entry 3.500 ISK
- Friday Party!: 'Chicago' Screening & Live Podcast**
20:00 Bió Paradís
- How To Become Icelandic In 60 Minutes**
19:00 Harpa

Saturday September 21st

- Slaygðu Helgi!: 'Angel' S02E19 Screening & Live Podcast**
13:00 Bió Paradís
- Slaygðu Helgi!: 'Angel' S02E120 Screening & Live Podcast**
13:00 Bió Paradís
- Burleque Show**
Gaukurinn
- How To Become Icelandic In 60 Minutes**
19:00 Harpa

Sunday September 22nd

- Free Yoga Class**
12:00 Loft
- Icelandic Sagas: The Greatest Hits**
19:30 Harpa
- Black Sundays: 'Kurosawa's Dreams' Screening**

- 20:00 Bió Paradís
- Hautlaukar, Þórunna Björnsdóttir**
17:00 an outdoor exhibition at the corner of Pósthússtræti and Austurstræti
- Black Sunday**
Belle De Jour
- 20:00 Bió Paradís, English Sub

Monday September 23rd

- The Week In Iceland: News Recap**
17:00 Reykjavik City Library Kringlan
- The Magic Viking**
21:00 Secret Seller



The Magic Viking

Tuesday September 24th

- Funniest Four: Comedy Show**
21:00 The Secret Cellar
- Yoga Workshop For Bread Eaters**
18:01 Miðstræti 5

Wednesday September 25th

- Culture Wednesday - with Jón B.K. Ransu one of the curators of Lots of tiny people.**
Guided tour
12:00 - 13:00 Gerðarsafni.
- Open Mic Stand-Up Comedy**
21:00 The Secret Cellar



Yoga Workshop For Bread Eaters

Thursday September 26th

- Café Lingua: Language Rendezvous**
18:00 Veröld - Hús Vigdísar
- How To Become Icelandic In 60 Minutes**
19:00 Harpa
- My Voices Have Tourettes**
21:00 The Secret Cellar
- Introduction To Bio Plastics: Starch**
18:00 Reykjavik Tool Library

Friday September 20th

- Dúndurfréttir plays Abbey Road in its entirety**
20:00 Eldborg, Harpa.
Entry fee 5.990 - 11.990



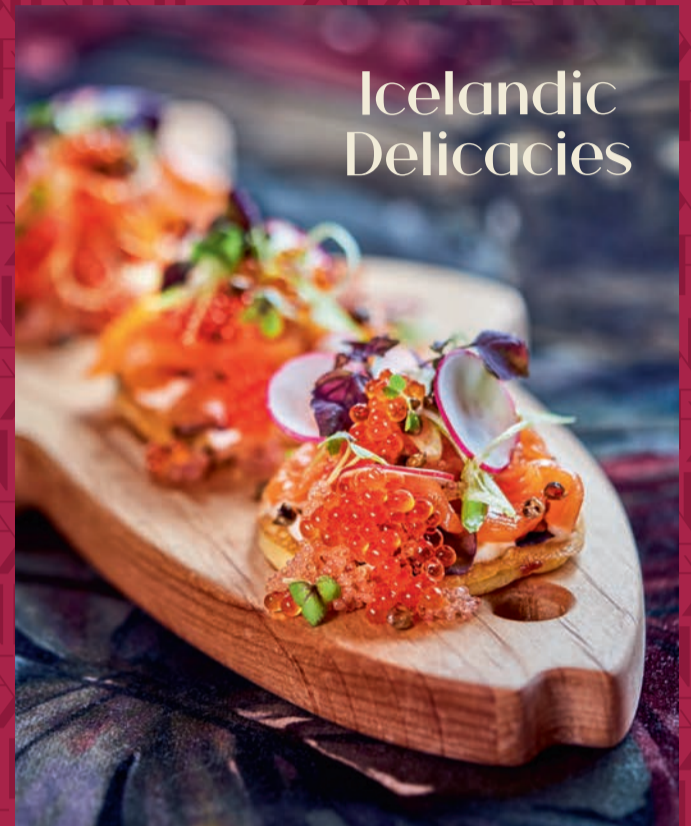
★ For event listings from Sept. 13th on, check out happening.grapevine.is or our app Appening, available on iOS and Android

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ICELANDIC PLATTER

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

THE LAMB BURGER

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Dancer and playwright Selma Reynisdóttir shares her secrets

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MAKING OF AN ARTIST

Life Is Like A Pair Of Race Dogs

Selma tells us about dogs, Sadie Smith and the mysterious origin of dance moves

Words: Selma Reynisdóttir Photo: Art Bicnick

Feel Free by Zadie Smith

I have kept this book close to me since this spring. The book is a collection of her essays that range from the topic of Brexit to dance lessons for writers. Usually when I read, I read with my brain and the activity of reading keeps within our social construct of dualism. I read while my body lies or sits still. But when I read this book my body is active. Not only is it because some of her essays describe how humans move their body through the social-political landscape, but also because of the rhythm in the text itself.



Blood Orange

I once read it in an interview that Blood Orange doesn't want people to immediately like his music; he'd rather they be intrigued. I think that is really cool and I like the thought of people not liking your stuff immediately. If I like something immediately things don't stay with my thoughts as much, then I just put them straight away to the "I like this" category. But if I am intrigued first, then I get to develop my love for the music or whatever I am intrigued by. And also Dev Hynes' dog is named after his album, 'Cupid.'

How do people get their moves?!

Those who share the dance floor with me give me a lot of inspiration. Lately, I have been wondering how people style their movements, especially in Iceland where dance is not a part of the culture. How do people develop their personal dancing style? When I go out dancing I see so many great dancers, and I keep wondering how they developed their personal dance style. Have they practised at home? Are they influenced by someone? 🐾

Dancer and playwright Selma Reynisdóttir's show, 'Independent Party People' is currently running at Tjarnarbió. To celebrate, we sat down with Selma to find out what made her the artist she is today.



My sister

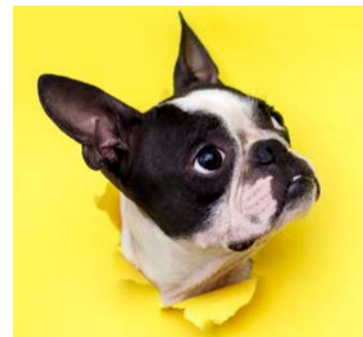
I think the first appreciation of art I experienced was when my sister and her friends got into Blur.

Damon Albarn was who they were mostly into. They were always asking me questions like: Who is the cutest? And I always had to answer: Damon Albarn. I was five and thought they were acting stupid and promised myself never to act this stupid about any boy.

Every time I hear "Girls and Boys," I can see the CD case lying on our living room floor: The dogs racing, going somewhere but nowhere. I think the cover is a good metaphor to the Blur mania I witnessed. It came into my life like someone had released a pair of race dogs into our house, but as soon as they had run over every chair in the house they were gone and me and my sister moved on with our lives like nothing had happened.

ing had happened.

I go through something similar when I am really into a project. The project becomes like two race dogs; running and knocking down all the furniture. The only thing you can do is to focus on the dogs while they are there.



Dogs

I love dogs. The relationship between human and dog goes far back and is complex. It can be beautiful at times, but also disturbing. One of my favourite books is 'Timbuktu' by Paul Auster, a story told by the dog Mr. Bones. I am also a big fan of the movie 'Best in Show.' At the moment, I am looking into Amundsen's expedition to the South Pole from the sledge dogs' point of view.



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Every day from
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Beer 695 ISK,
Wine 745 ISK.

BEER GARDEN
Every day from
15:00 to 19:00.
Beer 800 ISK,
Wine 800 ISK.

BIÓ PARADÍS
Every day from
17:00 to 19:00.
Beer 800 ISK,
Wine 800 ISK.

BRAVÓ
Every day from
11:00 to 20:00.
Beer 700 ISK,
Wine 900 ISK.

**BRYGGJAN
BRUGGHÚS**
Every day from
15:00 to 19:00.
Beer 700 ISK,
Wine 1,050 ISK.

CAFÉ BABALÚ
Every day from
19:00 to 21:00.
Beer 690 ISK,
Wine 795 ISK.

DILLON
Every day from
14:00 to 19:00.
Beer 600 ISK,
Wine 850 ISK.

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

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

GEIRI SMART
Every day from
16:00 to 18:00.
Beer 500 ISK,
Wine 600 ISK,
Cocktails 1,200 ISK.

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

Wine 700 ISK.
ÍÐA ZIMSEN
Every day from
19:00 to 22:00.
Beer 495 ISK.

ÍSAFOLD
Every day from
16:00 to 18:00.
Beer 600 ISK,
Wine 900 ISK.

KAFFIBARINN
Every day from
15:00 to 20:00.
Beer 750 ISK,
Wine (On Wed.)
700 ISK.

KAFFIBRENNSLAN
Every day from
16:00 to 20:00.
Beer 550 ISK,
Wine 750 ISK.

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

KEX HOSTEL
Every day from
15:00 to 19:00.
Beer 750 ISK,
Wine 750 ISK.

LOFT
Every day from
16:00 to 20:00.
Beer 750 ISK,
Wine 750 ISK.

LOFTIÐ
Wed- Sun from
16:00 to 21:00.
Beer 800 ISK,
Wine 800 ISK,
Cocktails 1,500 ISK.

MARBAR
Every day from
16:00 to 19:00.
Beer 600 ISK,
Wine 650 ISK.

MIAMI
Every day from
15:00 to 20:00.
Beer 500 ISK,
Wine 800 ISK,
Cocktails 1,000 ISK.

PABLO DISCOBAR
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Beer 700 ISK,
Wine 1,000 ISK,
Cocktails 1,500 ISK.

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REYKJAVÍK**
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Beer 690 ISK,
Wine 800 ISK.

PRIKIÐ
Every day from
16:00 to 20:00.
Beer 600 ISK.

PUBLIC HOUSE
Every day from
15:00 to 18:00 &
23:00 to 1:00.
Beer 890 ISK,
Wine 890 ISK.

PETERSEN SVÍTAN
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16:00 to 20:00,
Beer 800 ISK,
Wine 1,000 ISK,
Cocktails 1,500 ISK.

SÆTA SVÍNIÐ
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Wine 745 ISK.

**SESSION CRAFT
BAR**
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Wine 900 ISK.

SKÚLI CRAFT BAR
Every day from
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Wine 900 ISK.

SLIPPBARINN
Every day from
15:00 to 18:00.

Beer 500 ISK,
Wine 750 ISK,
Cocktails 1,200 ISK

SPÁNSKI BARINN
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Beer 650 ISK,
Wine 850 ISK.

STOFAN CAFÉ
Every day from
16:00 to 18:00.
Beer 750 ISK,
Wine 950 ISK.

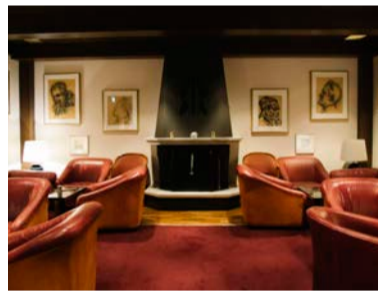
SOLO
Everyday from
15:00 to 18:00.
Beer 800 ISK,
Wine 800 ISK.

SUSHI SOCIAL
Every day from
17:00 to 18:00.
Beer 645 ISK,
Wine 745 ISK,
Half-priced
cocktails.

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

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

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



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place to sit and

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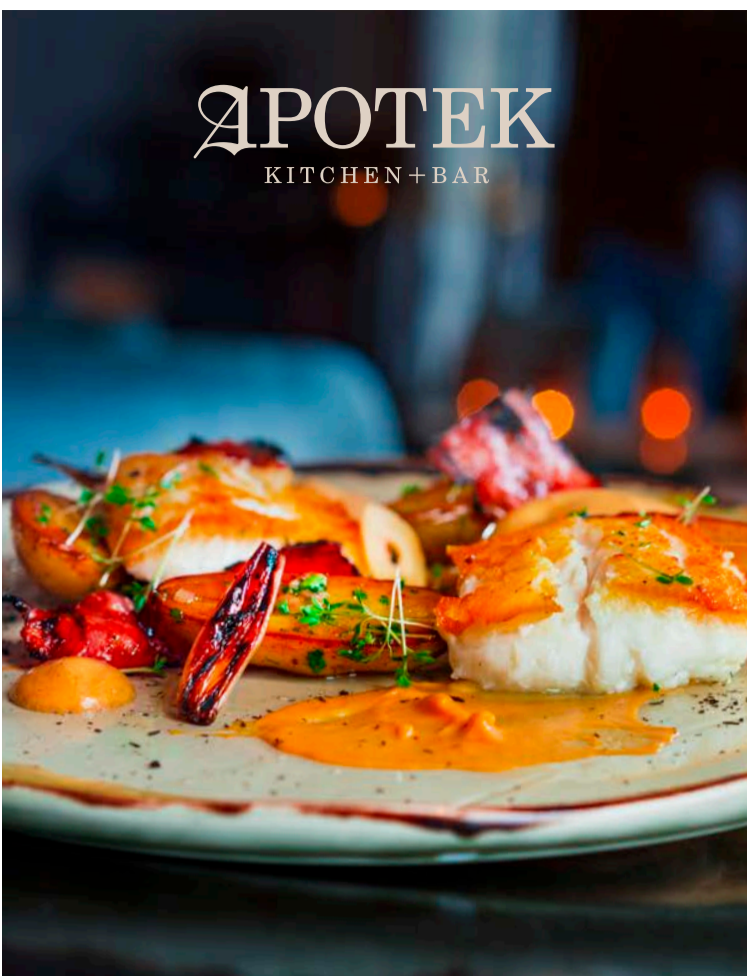
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11:00 - 14:30
Soup of the day
- 990 ISK |
| Dominos
Tuesdays-All day
Medium Sized
pizza with 3
toppings -1,000
ISK-Vegan option | Tapas Barinn
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17:00 - 18:00
Half off of
selected tapas
Various prices |

- Deig / Le Kock**
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Donut, coffee &
bagel -1,000 ISK
- KEX Hostel**
Every day
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Chicken wings -
650 ISK
Baked almonds -
500 ISK
- Sushi Social**
Every day
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1,000 ISK
- Avocado fries -
690 ISK
Lobster sushi,
ribs & more -
890 ISK
- 1,500 ISK
And Under**
- Hamborgara-
búlla Tómasar**
Tuesdays-All day
Burger, french
fries & soda -
1,390 ISK

- Gló**
Every day-All day
Bowl of the
month - 1,290 ISK
Vegan option
- Shalimar**
Monday - Friday
12:00 - 14:30
Curry - 1,290 ISK
Vegan option
- Sæta svínið**
Every day 15-18
Chicken wings -
1,190 ISK
"Dirty" fries -
1,390 ISK
- Solon**
Monday - Friday
11:00 - 14:30
Ceasar salad -
1,490 ISK
- Lemon**
Every day
16:00 - 21:00
2f1 Juice +
sandwich
1,095 ISK
Vegan option
- Uppsalir - Bar
and cafe**
Every day 11-14
Burger & fries -
1,390 ISK
Vegan option
- 2,000 ISK
And Under**
- Essensia**
Every day-All day
Lunch-catch of
the day - 1,980 ISK

- Bryggjan
Brugghús**
Monday - Friday
11:30 - 15:00
Dish of the day
soup & bread -
1,690 ISK
- Solon**
Monday - Friday
11:00 - 14:30
Fish of the day -
1,990 ISK
- Matarkjallarinn**
Monday - Friday
11:30 - 15:00
Fisherman's fish
soup -1,990 ISK
- 5,000 ISK
And Under**
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lunch -3,390 ISK
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lunch - 4,390 ISK
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Skriðuklaustur - German architecture in Iceland

Twenty Years of Skriðuklaustur

Skúli Björn Marks Anniversary of East Iceland's Literary Heritage

Words: **a rawlings** Photo: **Timothée Lambrecq**

Writer's Museum and Artist Residency

Skriðuklaustur's program runs throughout the year

Just beyond Iceland's largest forest and by the southern tongue of a long, slender lake purported to house a cryptid serpent, Skriðuklaustur writes its history. Once a 16th-century monastery and, more recently, home to Icelandic author Gunnar Gunnarsson, Skriðuklaustur now marks its twentieth anniversary as a cultural centre in East Iceland.

The institute bustles with activities as a writer's museum for Gunnar Gunnarsson, a fully-booked artist residency, a cultural centre, monastery excavation, and restaurant *Klausturkaffi*. "In the interview my wife and I gave in 1999, we said we would definitely leave the post in 5 years," Skúli Björn Gunnarsson laughs, reflecting on his many years as the director of Skriðuklaustur and his wife Elisabeth's work running *Klausturkaffi*. "We thought we would be too exhausted after building it up from ground zero. And we were exhausted, but still enthusiastic. Fate brought us to Skriðuklaustur."

Writer's museum with a twist

"From the beginning, the institute board and I made it a policy that we would build it up as a cultural centre, in a more open way than a typical writer's home like we can say *Gljúfrasteinn* is," explains Skúli Björn, making reference to the writer's museum of Halldór Laxness in Mosfellsdalur. "The

institute was supposed to be not only the museum about the writer, but also to continue with his ideology. We were taking part in society more than a typical museum would do."

Skúli Björn describes the institute's mandate. "A typical writer's home is a pilgrim's place for the readers of that writer. As a target group for a dead author, that is usually only decreasing. It's my opinion that a classical writer's home as a museum and a pilgrim's place is maybe not the best way to continue the legacy of the writer. Our ambitions were to spread the legacy of the writer and have more people read Gunnar Gunnarsson."

Monastery excavation

A ten-year excavation (2002-2012) of a medieval monastery became the second major foundation for the institute. The name Skriðuklaustur indicated the monastery's existence. "It was the last monas-

tery established before 1500," explains Skúli Björn, "and it only functioned for 60 years until the reformation to Protestantism. Then it disappeared as the buildings weren't used anymore. When we started the institute, one of our questions was, 'Where is the ruin from the monastery?'"

The ruin was located in 2000. "We now have one monastery totally excavated in Iceland."

At home in words

As for their artist residency, applicants run the gamut of arts, including visual art, music and literature. The institute has been moving to offer increased residencies for writers and scholars,

however, as residency accessibility throughout Iceland tends to favour visual artists. "We have priorities," Skúli Björn admits. "If you are working with something related to Gunnar or East Iceland, then you rank a little higher on the application list."

Visiting writers can apply for up to six weeks' stay. It's been an in-demand residency for the past twenty years, with at least 90% usage on an annual basis. "People are staying there even over Christmas, in the darkest months," Skúli Björn remarks.

Influential solitude

The residency's location offers a distinct benefit to working writers. "Our residency provides solitude and loneliness, up in the valley out of the town," says Skúli Björn. "People who come here do so to finish their works and have some peace from the external world."

Skúli Björn comments on the influence that Gunnar Gunnarsson's works have on contemporary writers who stay in the residency. "Gunnarsson's works are trying to get into the visiting writers' works all the time," he laughs.

Game for heritage

Skúli Björn has designed a new course for the University of Iceland this autumn, called 'Gamification and Cultural Heritage'. His time is split between visits to teach in Reykjavík, and his directorial duties at Skriðuklaustur. The unexpected combination of gaming and heritage is influenced by an overseas collaboration on the medieval monastery and Skúli Björn's work with Gunnar Gunnarsson's legacy.

"Gunnar Gunnarsson was a really passionate player of the card game *Lomber* (or *l'Hombre*). The card game was close to extinction 20 years ago, so the institute decided to teach the game to new generations. It's an old card game played on 40 cards, originating in Spain and France in the 15th century. It spread all over Europe as a gambling card game. In Iceland, we only play it in the winter. The old tradition was that you could only play it during months with 'R' in it—September through April."

Extending life

Being able to actualize new editions of Gunnar Gunnarsson's works helps support the overall project of Skriðuklaustur. "The writer's family handed over the copyright to the institute, at least temporarily," Skúli Björn explains. "That has been quite successful, because we have had a lot of new translations and editions of his works. 'Advent' was published in Italy two years ago and they have sold 10,000 copies already—good for a dead author. There's also a new edition in French that will be published next year."

Skúli Björn also notes multiple non-literary projects stemming from Gunnar's writing. The Icelandic band *Mógil* will launch a CD inspired by Gunnar's book 'Advent,' and there is also a film project for the same book in the financing stage. A TV series is in the works, inspired by another of Gunnar's books, 'Svartflugl.'

"He passed away in 1975, but he is still alive in his works," says Skúli Björn. "I hope we can take some credit for that, after twenty years of the institute." ❧

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

Hulda Vigdísardóttir

Hulda Vigdísardóttir (25) is the Queen Beauty Iceland 2020.

Words: Hannah Jane Cohen Photo: Art Bicnick



Wearing
Outfit from H&M

Describe your style in five words:
My friend once described me as “a genius at getting ready in a short amount of time.” I could be wearing pyjamas and in 30 minutes be full glam. But I like trying different things with my style, mixing this and that together.

Favourite stores in Reykjavik:
I love AndreA by AndreA. That’s probably my favourite. I also love COS and Monki. Hildur Yeoman is beautiful, too.

Favourite piece:
A shirt my Grandmother gave me when I was 18-years-old. She had it herself and it’s really cosy. It’s pink and really comfy and I like that she

used to wear it—old, but a classic.

Something I would never wear:
Army clothes. It’s not me.

Lusting after:
A silver jacket.

Funny fashion story:
I actually got my pageant gown just the day before the event and tried it on for the first time at the pageant. I’m very tall so there had to be adjustments—my Mom actually did them. She was awake the whole night sewing it for me! The funny thing is that Sunneva, who won the same title last year, also tried on her dress for the first time on the same day of the show, as well. There must be something with this title. I was so glad it fit! ♡

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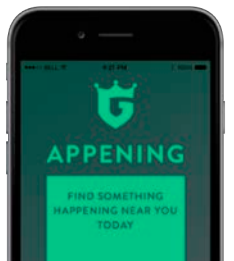
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Food

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From the roof of the world to your table

Beyond Momos

Himalayan Spice is a whirlwind of delicate Nepali flavours

Words: Shruthi Basappa Photo: Art Bicnick

Himalayan Spice

Visit the restaurant at Himalayan Spice at Laugavegur 60A and online at himalayanspiceiceland.com

The words 'tourist trap' are all I think lately as I walk down Laugavegur. A Nepali restaurant on the main street had, therefore, firmly remained on my avoid list and the menu advertised outside wasn't enticing either. Tourist trap, I was smugly convinced.

But in the past year, there has been a change in name, ownership, as well as in the kitchen. At Himalayan Spice, under owner Ash Kumar Gurung, chefs Pradip Gurung, Duraj Gurung and Shyam Thapa have crafted a fastidious menu, designed to showcase the mountainous cuisine of Nepal.

Nepali Cuisine

Nepali fare is distinctive, even as it shares similarities with the cuisines

of India, Tibet and China. Thanks to the altitude and shorter growing periods, grains like buckwheat and barley; hardy veggies like daikon radish; lentils; leafy greens; and cheese are integral parts of the cuisine. Himalayan Spice does an appreciative job of capturing this spirit, even as the menu offers Indian restaurant classics like palak paneer.

Beyond Momos

When an innocent-looking timbale of puffed rice is set down, I'm mentally prepared for a bhel-puri like dish. But Chatpate (1099 ISK), with its tumble of crushed Wai Wai noodles (a Nepali brand of noodles with a near-cult following) and puffed rice, enrobed in a sour, sweet, spicy tamarind slicked sauce, steals my heart. Chopped cucumber adds a touch of freshness, and we wipe our plates clean, in mild disbelief that we just had chaat this good in Reykjavik.

Momos are by now synonymous

with Nepali cuisine. Unlike Tibetan momos, with their delicate filling of meat, green onions and soy, Nepali momos are a transitional version as they jostle between Tibet and India. Ergo, turmeric and other ground spices find favour here.

The chicken momos (2499 ISK) are at that exciting edge of familiar newness, with juicy minced chicken jolted with spikes of fresh green chillies, the unexpected bite urging you to eat another steamed dumpling. Forego cutlery, however, they're best enjoyed by hand. The skins could've been slinkier, but I'll still go back for my momo-tomato chutney fix.

Dal-Bhat

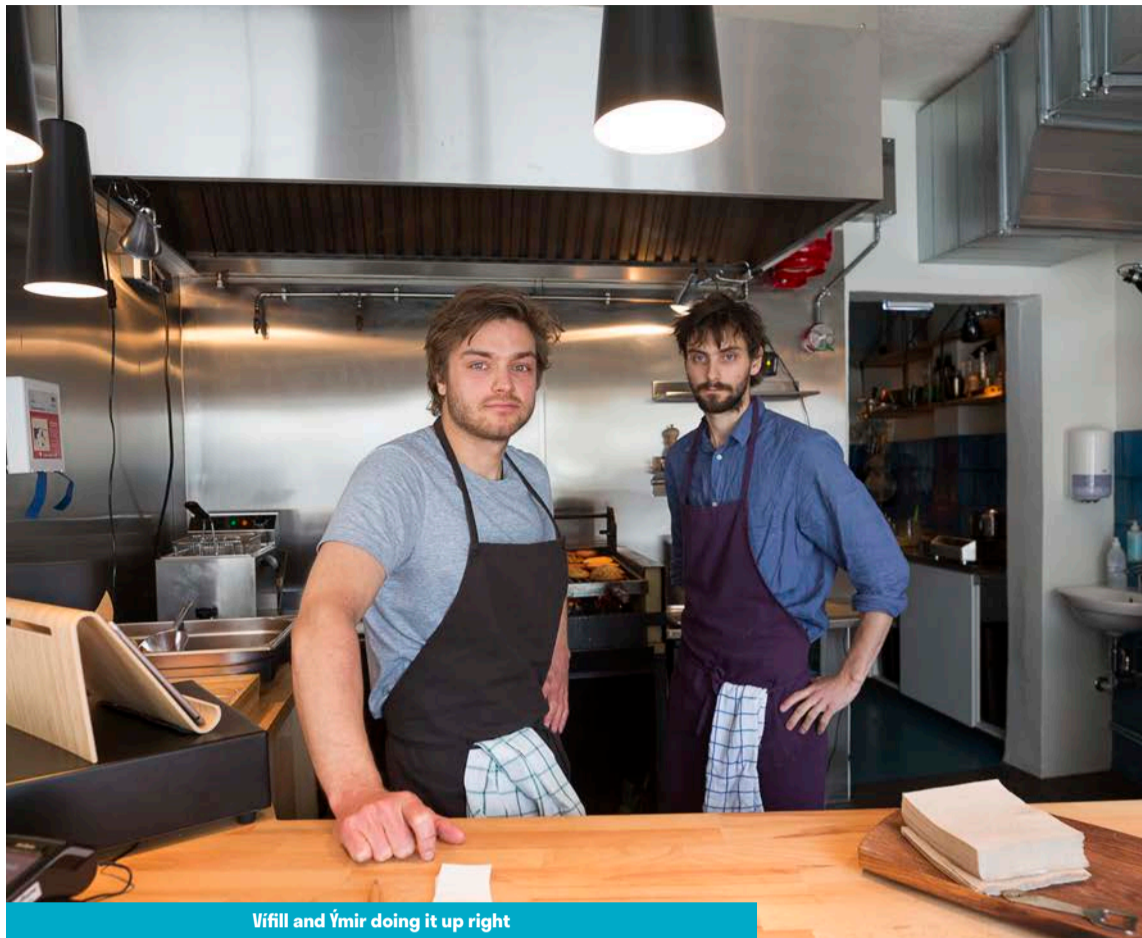
The Himalayan thakali (3999 ISK) is a sublime treat to all the senses. Served like a thali, the gleaming brass bowls with various vegetable and meat dishes are an array of delicious planets orbiting the star—a mound of perfectly steamed, fluffy basmati rice.

I stir together generous spoonfuls of the dal—slow-cooked whole moong dal, with nothing more than what I suspect to be a simple ghee tempering, with the rice. Bite down on a bit of mustard forward moleko achar (radish pickle) now and then. Is that an onion-rich home-style chicken curry there? Delicious. How about the simply spiced cauliflower and potato stir fry?

But the real star is the unassuming spinach, quickly blanched and stir-fried with nubs of golden-brown fried garlic. Why sawdusty kale is almost revered and velvety greens cooked this way sidelined I'll never understand. Each dish underlines the homeliness of this fare—heightened simplicity that belies their nuanced expression, something those who grew up with similar food will instantly recognise.

To palates and minds accustomed to spice-forward desi dishes, the subtlety of many of the dishes might seem like an anti-climax. But I urge you to go all-in with the entire experience. It certainly put a spring back in my step.

Like any city geared towards tourists, Laugavegur is full of traps. It is a relief then to find restaurants that strive for their voice and express it with attractively priced, wholesome fare. Gracious service sweetens the affair that much more. Himalayan Spice is far from being a tourist trap, rather it's a little Nepalese nook right in Reykjavik. 🍴



Vifill and Ýmir doing it up right

Buns and Bums at Reykjavík's Organic Eatery

Words: Ragnar Egilsson Photos: Art Bicnick

Bio Borgari

Vesturgata 12, 101 Reykjavík
bioborgari.com

After a rocky climb, brothers Vifill and Ýmir Eiríksson were finally able to fulfil their dream of opening Iceland's first committed organic fast food joint back in 2017. The pair is still going strong two years later, and expanding people's idea of "fast food" in the process by offering ingredients allowed to mature at their own pace, without artificial assistance.

More burgers?

Now, Iceland has no dearth of hamburgers. Hell, some months it feels like the humble burger joint is the only type of food business capable of sustaining itself in this small community—probably due to this handy American invention being, arguably, the first fast food to grace Iceland's shore (fermented shark qualifying as neither "fast" nor "food").

So who can blame the Eiríksson brothers for going with the perennial crowd-pleaser when setting out to discover new lands. After all, you don't want to rattle the skittish locals too much.

That being said, the burgers at Bio Borgari are hardly your grandma's meaty flapjacks. Everything at Bio Borgari is so organic that even my paper take-out bag fell apart at the first hint of rain (bring a tote!).

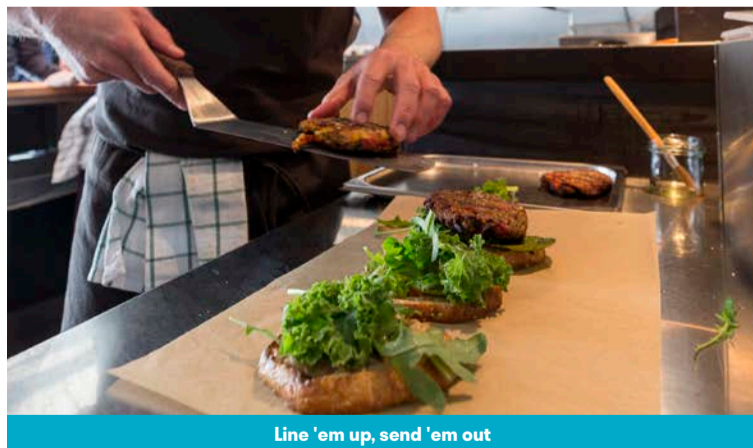
This extends to all the interiors. Beechwood benches, some reclaimed crates with stacks of climbing magazines and a wood-burning Asado grill doing its thing in the kitchen. My first im-

pression is how refreshingly tidy and hygienic the place is, without embracing the aseptic McDonalds look.

Show me what you got!

There's no point in analyzing the menu. There's basically three types of burgers—lamb, beef and veggie—that come with a side of organic soda and mixed root vegetable chips ("crisps" to you Brits). Which, especially considering the biological origin of the ingredients, comes to a very reasonable 1990 ISK lunch offer.

Their burger buns are made on the spot using a high-gluten variety of the heritage grain spelt along with a dusting of rye flour. This is then brought to life with a sour-



Line 'em up, send 'em out

dough starter the brothers have been using for at least five years.

Last time I visited, the buns were a sticking point for me as I felt they were simply too dense to chaperone a beef patty into my mouth but something pleasant has happened to the recipe since then. The current buns are still quite firm, but the flavour work in its fa-

vour—frankly, I found them to be a welcome break from sickly-sweet, mass-produced brioche buns you see everywhere else these days.

The buns are slathered with two types of sauces. Some ketchupy red sauce and a green pisto-like sauce made with Icelandic kale, fermented preserved lemon and oil. Both sauces are good but the pisto gets to be a bit much after a couple of bites.

Neither the organic beef and mutton is too densely-packed and have a nice sear to them. They could have used a touch more seasoning though. I, unfortunately, didn't get a chance to try the veggie burgers but I hear good things.

Will it save the planet?

Now, I may not subscribe to the thinking that organic food will solve all of the planet's very, very, immediate environmental problems. But I do find that the organic approach does often go hand-in-hand with food philosophies that I find commendable—such as slow food, fair trade and a probiotic diet.

Yes, I know that additive-free semi-fermented kale pisto on sourdough buns washed down with a glass of kombucha sounds like a bunch of pretentious goop; the kind of thing cooked up at a Waldorf kindergarten (I believe the owners both grew up in that environment, actually).



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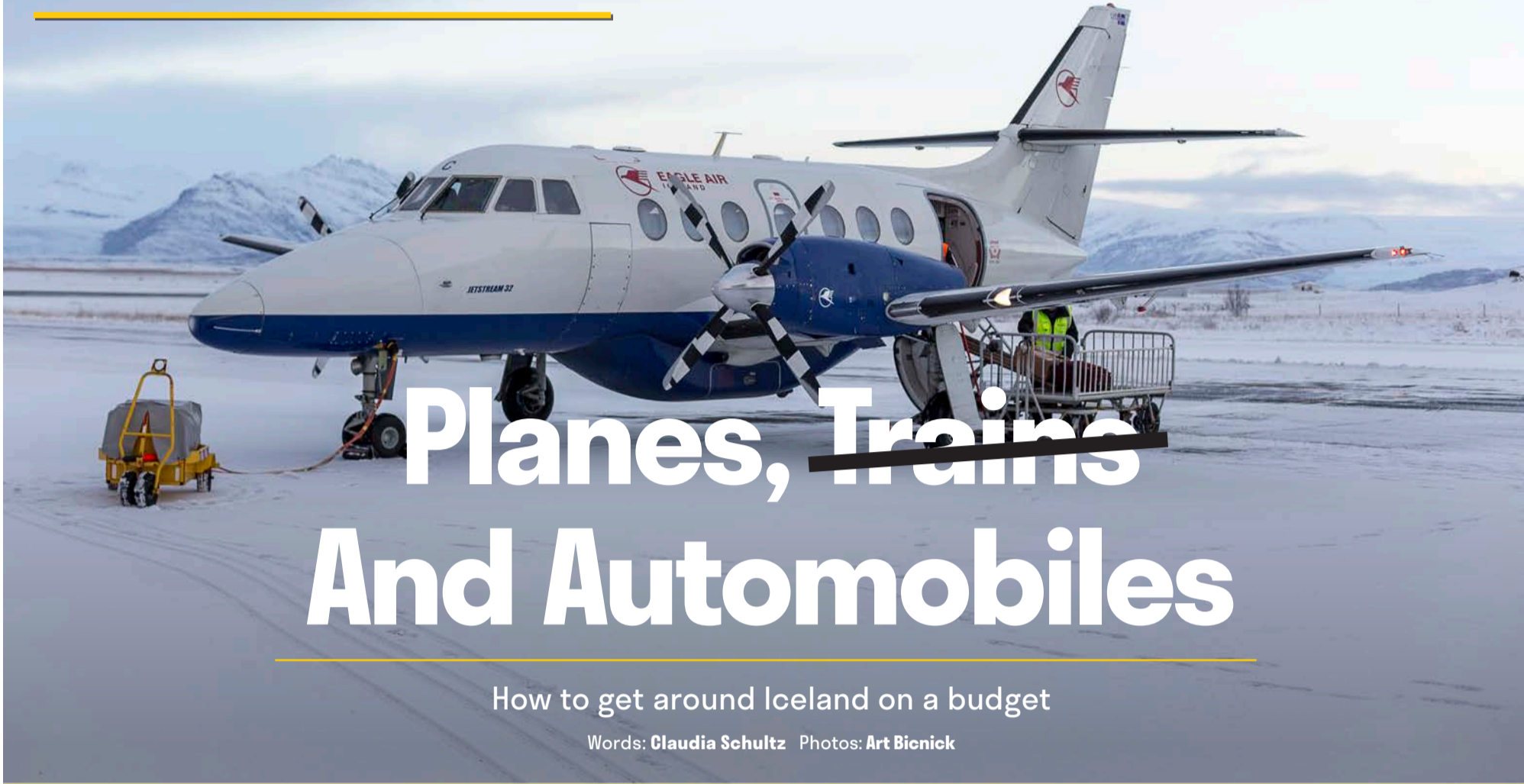
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Travel



Planes, Trains And Automobiles

How to get around Iceland on a budget

Words: Claudia Schultz Photos: Art Bicnick



Travelling is awesome, especially in a country like Iceland with its amazing scenery and picturesque little villages. Driving in another country, however, can be stressful, and you might not want to risk your relationship or health while trying to navigate, just to eventually get stuck on some “road” that leads to an awesome location you found on Instagram. You can do that, of course, but be prepared to be on the cover of a newspaper as yet another “dumb tourist” cautionary tale. If you’re dead set on avoiding that fate, however, here are a few alternatives to driving you can bear in mind.

A hitchhiker’s guide to Iceland

Relive your favourite movie, where some hipster dude with a cardboard sign travels the world and spends almost no money on transport. You, too, can do exactly that, getting to know kind strangers while sitting in their car—or, if it’s an unpleasant experience, while confined to a small space indefinitely with a weirdo. Either way, you’ll have a great story to tell. Hitchhiking is a dope way to get to know locals and can be very handy if you get stranded in some small town. Maybe, just maybe, you could even meet the love of your life.

Be prepared for a long, cold wait, though, because Iceland is remoteness overload. Some areas are so far off the beaten track that even if you get a ride there, you should start looking for a way out of all that beautiful solitude earlier than you think. Unless you want to set free your inner Bear Grylls, and you brought a load of energy bars, a parka, and a winter-proof outdoor survival kit with you.

Busses

Let’s take that trip down memory lane; remember running after the school bus, or waiting for it just to realise it won’t show up? It’s not like that in Iceland, don’t worry. Busses are actually a pretty neat way to travel the island. Strætó takes you to almost every ‘bigger’ town, such as Akureyri, Egilsstaðir, Vík, or Hólmavík. You can connect with other busses that take you a little further... you know how that works. If it’s summer, and you want to go to Landmannalaugar but can’t rent the clunky 4X4 vehicle needed to drive there, busses are your go-to. (Note: this area is closed completely in winter).

So far, so good—but life would be boring without a little ‘but.’ Let’s face it, it’ll take a looong time to reach your final destination, with toilet breaks and passengers loading on and off. But

then again, Iceland is pretty nice, so looking out of the window shouldn’t get too boring. Otherwise just play some car games, like counting sheep or spotting the tree (which will prove to be more difficult than you might think).

Also, bus rides aren’t dirt-cheap here, like in other countries with fancy rail options. Travelling from Reykjavík to Höfn (a gorgeous little town, an hour past the Jökulsárlón Glacier Lagoon) will cost you about 14,000 ISK per person one way—or, around €107. But at least you don’t have to pay for fuel, it’s more environmentally friendly, and you can take as many naps as you want. Win-win-win.

Flying

So, let’s consider the quickest, fanciest and—surprisingly—reasonably affordable mode of travel. Road conditions? Who cares about those. You’ll be up in the air, possibly flying over a glacier or a flock of sheep. And didn’t you always want to land on a really small <1km country field... I mean runway? Taking a plane from Reykjavík’s domestic airport is the best way to do exactly that. The prices could be a surprise, since—if you get lucky—you might find a flight for less money than you’d spend on a bus ticket, or refuel-

ling your rental car.

There are two airlines taking you to places like Akureyri, Egilsstaðir, Húsavík and Höfn. Air Iceland Connect gives you a lift up North, whereas Eagle Air goes South as well. A flight from Reykjavík to Akureyri for example can be as cheap as 11,000 ISK (around €87) each way; Egilsstaðir and Ísafjörður even less—we found flights for around 9,000 ISK (€68) each way. Friendly locals are sometimes up for giving you a ride into town, or just book a cab or tour pickup straight from the field... airport.

One of the flights you should definitely look into is the one to Heimaey in the Westman Islands. For ticket prices beginning at 16,000 ISK (€122) you can fly to one of the most magical places you’ll ever visit—a tiny volcanic archipelago. You’ll save money on the ferry, and it’s so small that you don’t need a rental car anyway.

So...?

Well, it’s up to you. There is something suitable for everyone, whether you want to rent a car or not, combine different possibilities (you can fly, and then rent a car at most airports, if you’d like), or just not take any advice. But one thing is for sure—examining all the options can take you a long way. 🍇

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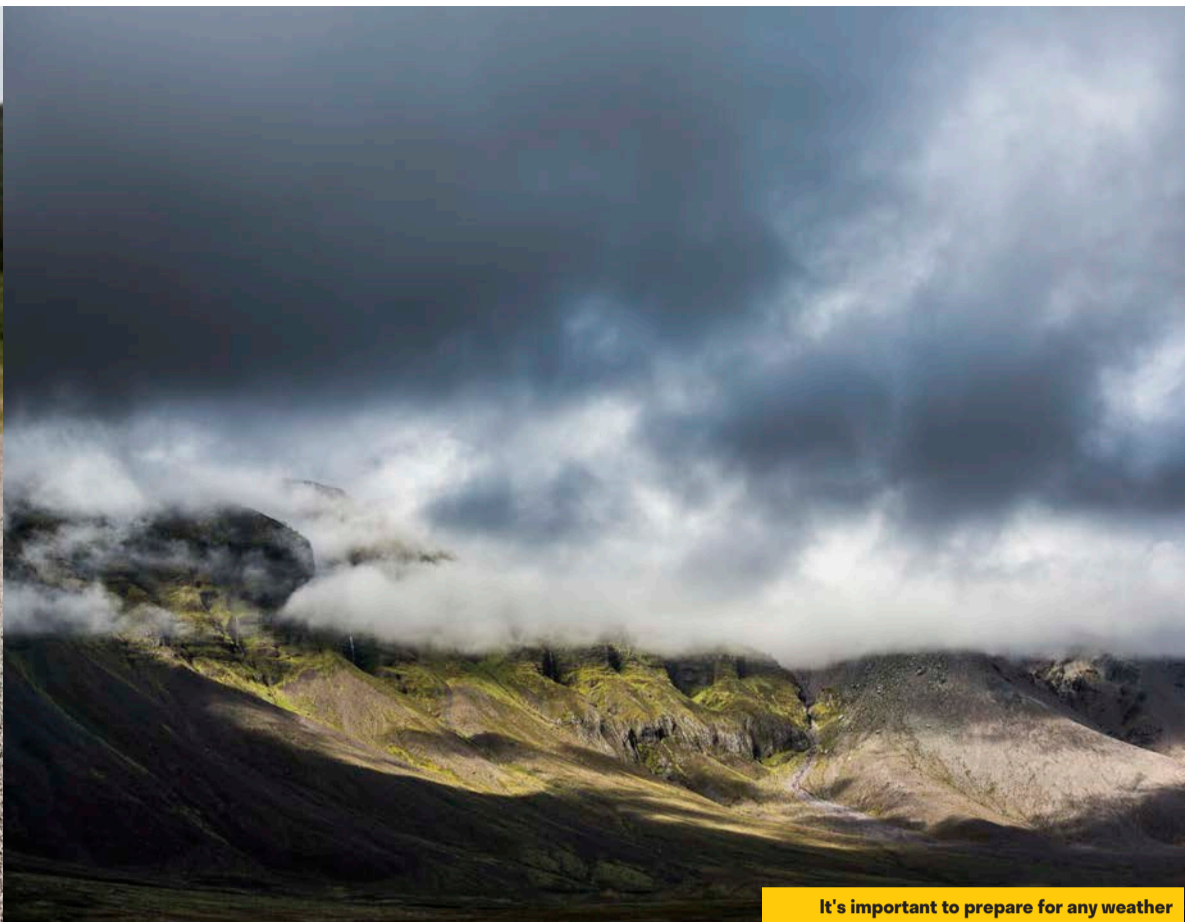
The capital area has a functioning bus system



Landmannalaugar, yesterday



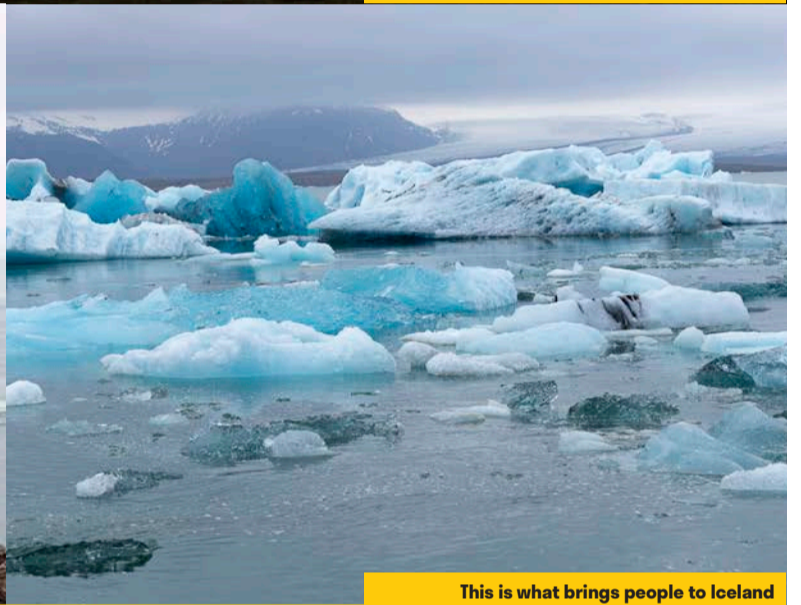
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Travel



Medieval Scholars and Hot Tub Enthusiasts

Words: Sam O'Donnell Photos: Art Bicnick



Distance from Reykjavik:
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How to get there:
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Summer is practically over. That means that the mild weather we've had will soon be replaced by cold winds, rain and, eventually, snow. For residents of Iceland, the long winter is traditionally a harbinger of extended stays indoors with books—stories to keep them warm while the rain, snow and wind blusters about outside. In days of old, books and stories were the primary source of recreation during the dark winter months (before the invention of skis). Today, Iceland has enough fantastic museums, libraries, old churches, restaurants and research institutes to entertain anyone. And of course, the brave traveller may walk outside in the wintry months to see the beautiful landscape of the country.

I am one such traveller. I am a lifelong bibliophile, and consider myself to be a history buff. One of my favourite activities is curling up with a good book during a cold night. Having fully embraced the dropping mercury, I set out with my favourite photographer, Art, to explore the famed Borgarfjörður. We started in Reykholt.

Borgarfjörður is for book lovers

Situated forty kilometres north of Reykjavík, Reykholt is a hub of cultural

history and the final resting place of renowned poet and politician, Snorri Sturluson. The large building that looks like a church also functions as a museum, library, and institute of research. Talk about a triple threat.

When I went inside, I saw walls and tables full of books. I felt more than welcome. Our guide, Sigrún Guttormsdóttir, greeted us warmly and gave us a brief history about Snorri. The man was a genius. While Genghis Khan was invading China, Russia and Poland, Snorri was writing the Eddic poems and Egill's Saga. While Francis of Assisi was founding the order of mendicant monks, Snorri was building himself a hot tub—which is still there. You can see it and even touch the water, which is still warm. But, trust me, the museum directors get very mad if you strip down to bathe in it.

Snorri also constructed a large fortress from materials imported from Norway, to house his library and residence. This was a man who liked to enjoy life and knew how to do it. He was also a prolific writer, a shrewd politician, and one of the richest men in Iceland at the time. If you want to get the whole story of his life—which I highly recommend—you'll have to visit Reykholt and have Sigrún

show you around.

From the museum, we went upstairs and visited the church. A relatively new structure, the church was finished in 1996. Beautiful stained glass windows loom over the sanctuary, casting the light of day over the congregation, and changing colour depending on the time of day and weather. A 500-year-old baptismal font stands in front of an artefact depicting the crucifixion of Christ, which is just as old as the font. The pedestal which holds the font is much newer, and was a gift from Norway to the institute, continuing Snorri's tradition of sourcing goods from our Nordic cousins.

The institute conducted excavations in 2008, which unearthed the ruins of Snorri's house and the plumbing which brought the water from the hot springs to his hot tub—plumbing which is intact to this day. The materials for excavation were (you guessed it) imported from Norway. It seems they are just as interested in the history of a man with strong connections to their nation as Iceland is.

Try the meatballs

After the taxing mental stimulation of Reykholt, our bodies required sustenance. At the nearby Brúarás cafe, Art and I refuelled with a cheeseburger and meat-

balls—two separate dishes, though I would totally eat cheeseburger meatballs—that were very clearly served with pride. The restaurateur runs a farm where she sources her meat.

You don't want to miss these falls

To cap off the excitement of the day, and to work off those meals, we walked around Hraunfossar and Barnafoss. The name of the latter translates to “waterfall of the children,” and is so named due to a tragedy that occurred long ago. The story is that two children from a nearby farm were playing around the falls when they tried to cross the natural bridge to the other side. Sadly, they never made it there. They fell into the falls, prompting their grieving mother to destroy the bridge, and the falls have been so named ever since. Hraunfossar, on the other hand, is a vast collection of creeks that come together and run down rocks that have been formed by lava flow. Hence its name, which translates to “lava falls.”

As far as autumn, or winter—hell, even spring or summer—road trips go, you can't go wrong with a drive to Borgarfjörður. 🍷

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Scraps from ancient history



Hraunfossar



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Where the cliffs will insult you right back

DESTINATION

Ásbyrgi

In The Footsteps Of Sleipnir

Words: Valur Grettiðsson Photo: Art Bicnick

There are few places in Iceland that Icelanders love as much as Ásbyrgi. The myth says that the unique area was made by the horse of Óðinn, Sleipnir, when he stepped down to earth and left a huge hoofprint on his travels. A more probable cause is that there were two massive floods that happened in the area and shaped the odd cliffs, the first around ten thousand years ago, the latter around three thousand years ago. Either way, it's an impressive sight, and it's unavoidable to think about Sleipnir and his six hooves when looking down at the area from the brink of the steep cliffs.

Yelling profanities

The humongous walls of the cliffs are made of ropy lava and, if you're loud enough, they will reverberate everything you say—something my two sons loved when walking in the area. Of course, I didn't do a good job raising those rascals,

so they yelled profanities in Icelandic, and laughed their asses off when the cliffs called back; "Asni!" "Hálfviti!" "Skithæll!". (You can Google Translate those terms, but they're not safe for work.) Of course, when I told them off, they answered; "It wasn't us, the cliffs just don't like you".

Hunting grounds

The area is quite big, and we had to walk for almost an hour to reach the small forest nestled in the canyon, although, it is possible to drive closer. The hiking route is easy enough for a five-year-old, with the forest lying around 3 kilometres from the campsite.

A short hike through the forest delivered my foulmouthed heirs and I to a small pond. And it was breathtaking. I was struck with a beautiful line from a poem by Elísabet Jökulsdóttir: Behind the end of the world, lies a small pond.

And the pond was, indeed, like from a fairy tale. It was completely still and transparent. We could see a rather large fish just roaming aimlessly in the tranquility of things, minding its own business, well, stepped off the designated walking platform, to see if they could hunt it with their bare hands (please don't ever do that). They couldn't, of course, but they did disrupt the peace when one of them accidentally stepped in the water.

At the end of the pond was a small waterfall drizzling down the black cliff that surrounded the whole area. It was utterly mesmerizing.

Choir of ancient beings

In 2006, Sigur Rós held a legendary concert in the area with approximately 4000 people in the audience—a huge crowd at the time given it's Iceland. The band included the performance in its fantastic music documentary, 'Heima' (Home). You can imagine the sound in the area with those singing cliffs all around echoing the rich sounds of Sigur Rós like a choir of ancient beings. If you want to get the vibe, you can look for it on YouTube, just search for "Ásbyrgi, Sigur Ros." Much like a visit to this enchanting place, the video will not leave you disappointed. 🍷

Island Life

News From The Icelandic Countryside

Words: **Andie Fontaine**

Humpback whales were spotted in Arnarfjörður, in the Westfjords, and there are apparently a significant number of them there. So if you want to see these majestic beasts, this would be the place to do it.

The best little town in Iceland, **Seyðisfjörður**, is going to have to personally address the climate crisis, as it has come to light that portions of the town are **in danger of being hit by landslides**. This will hopefully only involve setting up barriers on hills around town, which the townsfolk are already preparing to do.

Firefighters in Hvalfjörður were called to respond to a **barn full of chicken shit that burst into flames** due to overheating. Amazingly, none of the respondents wore respirators, thus proving Icelandic firefighters are braver than the Navy SEALs.

Best Of Iceland

The best cafés in the East from our Best Of Iceland travel magazine



Fjóshornið

When you have high coffee standards, sometimes you desire more than the basic drip variety, which is often the only option in the East. But at Fjóshornið, they know how to make the good stuff. The atmosphere is more than welcoming, you can sit either inside in a cosy "living room" or on the sunny terrace. The selection of homemade cakes is great, and the place is also a dairy farm, so you can take home some fresh skyr, cheese or meat.



Klausturkaffi

This curious little café worth a stop because of their outstanding cake buffet. You can eat as much of the delicious homemade cake and freshly fried kleinur as you please from the buffet table, and there are savoury delicacies on offer, too. The lunch buffet will fill you up for the rest of your road trip.



Álfacafé

Stop here for their famous fish soup, made with the freshest catch of the day. After the first bowl, you can always ask for a free refill. The ambience is great—the tables are stone plates, and the walls are decorated with historical pictures, reindeer horns and other interesting artifacts.



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

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

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EDDA RECAP

Hávamál

The sayings of the high one

Words: Grayson Del Faro Illustration: Lóa Hlín Hjálmtýsdóttir

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

This poem is a prime example of a massive problem that still plagues society today: men. If there is anything we've learned from the Me Too movement, it's that we (men) may be doing a much better job of talking the woke talk but most of us are not really walking the woke walk. Völundur was basically the ancient Scandinavian version of that guy you know who retweets celebrity women's clever clapbacks but then sues a woman when she goes public with the

fact that he date-raped her. Yeah, it goes there, so consider yourself warned.

My, what big teeth you have

So there are these three brothers who live way up in a Finnish valley, the name of which translates as "Wolfdale." One morning they go out to their lake to find three babes in swan-dresses. Unlike Björks iconic 2001 look, these actually allow them to transform into swans. Or, knowing Björk, maybe just like hers.

In any case, this means they are valkyries, the kind of magical women from Old Norse mythology who choose which warriors get into Valhalla. So naturally, the wolves in gentlemen's clothing marry these very fashion-forward swans. Seven winters

pass and suddenly the valkyries are like, "Listen up, losers. It's been real but we've got important supernatural shit to do. Byeeeee!" And off they fly.

The two older brothers go off to look for their birdly baes, but the youngest, Völundur, keeps his cool. Since he's a blacksmith, he decides to sit and make some dope-ass jewellery for his wife, Hervör, while he awaits her return. Sounds like a good dude, right? Like super understanding of women's autonomy? Thank again.

All the better to eat you with

Some random king hears that Völundur is alone in his castle, so he sends some dudes to kidnap him. They slash his hamstrings so he cannot walk and trap him on an island where he becomes a blacksmith slave to the king. But Völundur is ready for revenge.

He lures the king's sons to him with the promise of gold and decapitates them. He then covers their skulls in silver and makes earrings from their eyeballs, which he sends to the king's wife. He makes brooches from their teeth and sends them to the king's daughter, Böðvildur. Then he lures her to the island, gets her drunk, and rapes her. Then he randomly turns himself into a swan and flies off to tell the king what he has done.

The poem ends with Böðvildur lamenting to her father, "I didn't know how to struggle against him. I couldn't struggle at all." There is no joke here, just the sad reality that things haven't changed for women since the literal fucking middle ages.

Morals of the story:

1. Rape jokes aren't funny.
2. Let's get our shit together, dudes. Seriously. ♡



Dave Chapelle, time traveller from 2004

TV GODDESS

Chappelle, Chappelle, Chapeller

Words: Lóa Hlín Hjálmtýsdóttir

When you watch old comedy shows or stand-up, you forgive the performer many things because the jokes are often a child of their times. Many of them don't have the capacity to become classics because their ideas age badly. In his Netflix special, Dave Chapelle seems to not care how dated or poisonous many of his jokes are. Not that he ever cared, but the times have changed and, I guess, so has my personal tolerance.

The audience might be laughing, but I'd bet all the oil left in the ground that a huge portion of them had a weird pit in their stomachs when they walked out of the theatre. That being said, I don't think a comedian's job is being a model citizen or a beacon of political correctness; they can say what they want. I actually like it when someone has different opinions to me. It makes me realize that I actually have opinions. Side note: In my experience,

the people who are most vocal about the freedom of speech, are the first ones to start crying and moaning when someone criticizes them for being jerks.

Dave Chapelle talks about the difference between being broke and being poor and that poor is a state of mind while being broke is a financial situation. He never mentions being cheap, which is what many of his jokes are. It's easy to shock and say things a teenager says when he's trying to discover who he is by being contrary to everything. Comedians are, for the most part, smart people and Chappelle is obviously highly intelligent. That's probably the reason why this show bothered me. I don't get why a smart person would decide this was a great idea. I'm starting to understand my mother better now. In her words: I'm disappointed in you. ♡

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WELL, YOU ASKED



God Left Us Aeons Ago

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

Could God make a rock so heavy that even he couldn't lift it?

Woah, hold up there, cowboy/cowgirl/cowperson. HE? HE couldn't lift it? You fucking sexist. Anyway, everyone who is anyone subscribes to the Watchmaker analogy, popularised by Newton and Descartes, which suggests that an omnipotent designer created the universe and all living beings, before fucking off to let natural selection do its thing.

So, to answer your question: God left us aeons ago, so even if they could make a ridiculously heavy rock, they currently exist in a dimension far more complex than simple rocks and gravity, thus it wouldn't even matter. Read some philosophy, you nimwit.

What is the best cure for climate despair?

Sure, you could go vegan or reduce your plastic use, but if you really cared about the environment, you'd do your part to save the world from overpopulation and remove yourself from the equation. Woah—we don't mean kill yourself, we just mean go full Ted Kaczynski.

If I hear a song about drugs, is there a possibility I will start doing drugs after?

Interesting theory. To test this out, I listened to Marilyn Manson's 'Antichrist Superstar' album in its entirety. In the past 12 hours, I've sacrificed three virgins, done 13 lines of cocaine, and shot up three schools. And you say white people have no culture?

So, in conclusion: Yes. You'll probably start doing drugs. We at the Grapevine recommend staying away from loser drugs like meth and starting with cool drugs like ayahuasca—that seems to be what all the hip white people who write for VICE are doing nowadays anyway. 🍀

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

HORROR-SCOPES

Star-crossed Lovers

Star-ted from the bottom, now we here

Words: **Hannah Jane Cohen & Andie Fontaine** Image: **Kosmonatka**

In *HorrorScopes*, Grapevine's dedicated team of amateur astrologists breaks down your upcoming weeks based on shit like where an asteroid was when you were born.



Aries

In preparation for 'The Rise Of Skywalker,' you ordered a movie-quality recreation of Kylo Ren's completely impractical lightsaber, which some idiot at the post office named Gunnar dropped. There is no choice now but to join the Sith and kill not only all the post office men, but the women and children too.



Taurus

Taurus, put down the hamburger.



Gemini

Stop humble-bragging about how "privileged" you are. No one cares that your family sailed on the Mayflower.



Cancer

You're never going to get to space if you keep endlessly drinking in Kaffibarinn. Stop dressing like a bum, and start peeing into a tube!



Leo

Inspired by the original Bio Queen, miss Sylvia Nótt, you purchase some feathers for your hair. Congratulations, you have arrived. Yaas!



Virgo

We know it's not easy being painfully aware of how far from perfect everyone around you is, but maybe pay a friend an unexpected compliment. You can be judgmental the other 364 days of the year.



Libra

Stop telling people that you're disappointed by the new Taylor Swift albums and be proud about your obsession



A cancer, likely in the grip of a Scorpio

with "London Boy." It's embarrassing, but so is your hair.



Scorpio

Sorry, Scorps, but constantly referencing 'Fight Club' or 'Rick & Morty' is not a personality trait.



Sagittarius

You've always had a weird fascination with the drummer of Hatari, but trust us: He will never acknowledge your dumbass existence.



Capricorn

Stop spending so much time on TikTok and get

on God's clock!



Aquarius

You will see a meme about adopting pets on your Facebook timeline with the caption "I bet this won't even get one share". You will scroll past it, and then share it an hour later when the guilt overcomes you.



Pisces

If you know what's good for you, you'll bring your whole family to FlyOver Iceland ASAP. 🍀

CITY SHOT by Art Bicnick



An early autumn stroll in Reykjavik

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LAST WORDS

Obituary For Listastofan

Words: **Grayson Del Faro**

Listastofan will pass away not so quietly on September 19th, 2019. It was born on October 12th, 2015 to Martyna Daniel and Emma Sanderson, who clearly had no idea what they were getting themselves into. Since its youth, Listastofan cultivated strange taste in art and even stranger taste in artists and, worse, in poets. It acted as a co-working space, exhibition gallery, movie theater, music studio, laboratory, unlikely nightclub, and possibly a clandestine spot for drunken hookups. It lived a complex life full of paint, sawdust, ceramic genitalia, ramshackle photobooths, piles of literal trash, uncomfortable performances, teenage diaries, and more photos of Icelandic landscapes than there are actual landscapes in Iceland—all in the name of art.

Listastofan is survived by its original co-founders, Martyna and Emma, and three later co-directors: Emmanuelle, Lina, and Gabi. Other survivors include the twelve-ish in-house artists who'll now have to draw, compose, build, and do whatever other weird things they call art in their mothers' garages because they probably live with their mothers anyway. Also grieved are all the broke students who especially enjoyed the free wine at openings. On the subject of survivors, if you believe Listastofan owes you money, please take it up with your lawyer. They can't do anything but it might make you feel better. If you believe Listastofan may be the father of your child, please take the results of the paternity test to your grave.

A celebration of Listastofan's life will be held on September 19th at Listastofan and later at Iðnó, with musical performances, awkward goodbyes, and, in the style of Listastofan, branded underwear. Although it lasted unusually long by Reykjavík's standards, its life was still tragically short for any space as simply fucking special as Listastofan. At only four years old, Listastofan will finally be taking its own advice: "Be young and shut up." 🍷

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