

Love  
Will  
Win

(If We  
Want  
It)



While trans people in Iceland enjoy legal protections, social acceptance is a whole other story. Can voices of hate be resisted before they come to power?

### Volcano!!!

Breaking news: It's all heating up

### Sunsets

Views: Forget waterfalls, chase sunsets instead

### Laufey

Track-by-track: The TikTok star's debut album

### MEh-sja

Travel: Test your luck with this misty mount



COVER PHOTO:

Photo: Art Bionick

Our August issue celebrates Pride in Iceland, whilst also highlighting the challenges that queer—and in particular, trans—individuals continue to face. To illustrate our main feature on trans rights, model and activist Žarko Urošević poses on Reykjavíkurtjörn while dressed in the colours of the trans flag.

# First



07: Our Very Own Soda  
11: Fringe Winners  
12: Do It Together



15: Design All Day  
18: Messy Music  
20: A Rainbow Thread



27: Icelandic Cooking  
28: Local Gourmet  
31: Port And Starboard

## EDITORIAL



# Be Loud, Be Proud

Like many of the Nordic countries, August is pride season in Iceland. It's unclear to me why it falls so late in the year, compared to the US for instance, which celebrates Pride Month in June, although it's not entirely surprising that Icelanders might leave things to the last minute.

This year's Pride events, however, can not come soon enough. A bewildering and concerning tide of queer- and transphobia has reared its ugly head in recent months, shocking those of us who deeply wished to believe that in 2022 we are living in a tolerant and egalitarian society. But for the LGBTQ+ community this did not come as a surprise. In particular, trans people have been flagging the scorn, disgust and hatred aimed at them via 'opinion' pieces in certain media outlets for years now, desperately trying to tell their so-called 'allies' that everything isn't all rainbows and unicorns just because some banks stick a Pride flag on their Facebook profile once a year. For those who are the targets of this wave of hatred it is just the tip of the iceberg of the multiple aggressions—both major and minor—that they face in a society that is still entirely designed around straight, cis people.

Like our (happily holidaying) editor-in-chief, Valur Grettilsson, pointed out in his last editorial, the backlash has in cases been violent and extreme, with two people killed and a further 21 injured in a shooting during an LGBTQ+ festival in Oslo in June. But it's important to remember that anti-trans

and queer bigotry is a killer even without guns and weapons. Suicide rates for LGBTQ+ people are far higher than in the general population. A young person recently died by suicide in Iceland after a sustained campaign of queerphobic bullying, leading The National Queer Organisation (Samtökin '78) to raise concerns about growing widespread harassment of queer people.

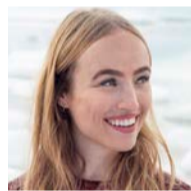
All-in-all, things feel a little bleak. But there are reasons to be hopeful: the National Church, long seen as holding backwards views on LGBTQ+ people, has aligned itself with queer and trans people in reaction to recent events, including anti-gay graffiti that was sprayed on a Pride flag painted outside Grafarvogur Church. In general, the backlash to the queerphobic actions has been strong, vocal, and angry, and allies across the country are asking themselves, "what can we do better?" For those looking for answers to that question, our cover article, which features interviews with members of the trans community, offers some ideas about where to start.

We often hear the phrase "Pride is a protest," to the extent that it has become cliché. This year's Pride should serve as a reminder that this protest is needed more than ever, and that bigotry, in any form, can never be tolerated.

**Josie Anne Gaitens**  
Acting Editor-In-Chief



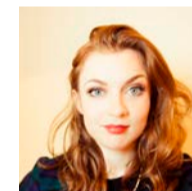
**Joana Fontinha** is an Aries baby expressing her soul through photography. She's been obsessed with Icelandic culture since her teens, so much that at 20 she threw herself head-first on a plane to her long-time dream country, Iceland. Driven, energetic and unable to be still, she clumsily moves like a flash and suffers from a serious fast-talking condition.



**Kim Wagenaar** has been here long enough to forget why she even got here in the first place. If she's not busy being a music manager, she's accidentally bumping into things or drinking bubbles somewhere laughing at her own jokes. Someone's gotta do it.



**Emma Ledbetter** was once the only person on a group tour of Iceland's south coast, which made her fall in love—a little bit with the guide and a lot with Iceland. She has a microbiology degree from WSU, so she is legally obligated to say "Go Cougs" to anyone wearing crimson and gray, and morally obligated to tell you she loves bacteria.



**Josie Anne Gaitens** is an arts worker, musician and writer from the Scottish Highlands. She was once erroneously referred to as the Queen of Scotland by a Malaysian newspaper and has been falsely using that title ever since. In addition to her Grapevine duties, she is currently on a mission to have a pint in every bar in 101.



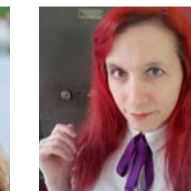
**Iryna Zubenko** is a Ukrainian who has been working on the cross-section of media and technology for the past five years. While she is still figuring out what to do in life, this time her love for travelling, unspoiled nature and Scandi design has brought Iryna to Reykjavik. One day she'll write a non-fiction book.



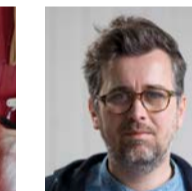
**Catharine Fulton** is a writer who has been involved with the Grapevine for many years—possibly too many—serving as journalist, food editor and news editor before settling on copy editor. When not wielding her red pen she's often found opining on Canadian politics (professionally), and bitching about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



**Asha Edmondson** studies and takes on just about everything back home in the States. From communications to dance to psychology to sailing, there is almost nothing she hasn't tried. An intrusive thought of "What if I spent my summer in Iceland?" turned into reality, bringing her to the Grapevine.



**Andie Sophia Fontaine** has lived in Iceland since 1999 and has been reporting since 2003. She was the first foreign-born member of the Icelandic Parliament, an experience she recommends for anyone who wants to enjoy a workplace where colleagues work tirelessly to undermine each other.



**Valur Grettilsson** is an award-winning journalist, author and playwright. He has been writing for Icelandic media since 2005. He was also a theatre critic and one of the hosts of the cultural program, 'Djöflaeyjan' on RÚV. Valur is not to be confused with the dreadful football club that bears the same name.

A LOCAL FAVOURITE FOR OVER 20 YEARS



OUR KITCHEN IS OPEN FOR

## LATE NIGHT DINING

until 23:00 on weekdays  
and 24:00 on weekends



BOOK YOUR TABLE

TAPASBARINN | Vesturgata 3B | Tel: 551 2344 | [tapas.is](http://tapas.is)





Summer is here

Keeping Iceland warm since 1926

[66north.com](http://66north.com)

# Stay like a local

[ 8 HOTELS, RESTAURANTS & SPAS IN THE HEART OF REYKJAVIK ]



We love lava as much as the next person, but don't get too close

## What Are Icelanders Talking About?

You've got the time, we've got the headlines

Words: **Andie Sophia Fontaine**

Photos: **Emma Ledbetter & Wikimedia Commons**

**NEWS** As this is being written, Icelanders are all talking about earthquakes and volcanoes. This is because we're in the midst of a swarm of tremors extending from just southwest of Reykjanes peninsula and up through Fagradalur. Over one hundred quakes of a magnitude of three or greater were recorded over the first weekend of August in this region alone, with some reaching as high as four or five. One point of interest: a 4.7 that struck on August 2nd at 02:27 was so close to Reykjavík (and to the surface of the earth) that it shook Hallgrímskirkja, briefly ringing its bells.

If all of this sounds familiar (except maybe the church part), it's also sounding familiar to our country's geologists. Well, familiar pre-conditions became familiar results when Meradalir erupted in the afternoon of August 3rd. Like Fagradalsfjall the year previous, this is also a fissure eruption of a very photogenic nature. It is, however, still a volcano, which means you have to be careful when approaching it. More on that later

in this issue! The Reykjavík domestic airport is back in the public discussion again. For the unfamiliar: people who live in Reykjavík generally loathe having a giant airport right in the middle of the city, as it's loud and takes up a lot of real estate that could be used to alleviate our town's housing shortage somewhat, if developers were allowed to build there.

By contrast, people living in the countryside love having the airport where it is, because wherever they are in Iceland, they can pop right into the centre of town, which is virtually unheard of in any other European city.

Whether to move the airport or keep it where it is comes up in the discourse every few years or so, and this time, it's because someone did the math and figured out that it's actually cheaper to park a private jet at Reykjavík Airport than it is to park a car downtown. Fortunately, this seems to be one issue that Icelanders all over the country can agree on—i.e. that it absolutely should cost more to park a plane than a car—but downtown airport opponents are also using this fact as yet another reason to move the airport out to the suburbs somewhere. 🇮🇸



Park your jet for (relatively) cheap at the domestic airport



Published by Fróken ehf. Hafnarstræti 15, 101 Reykjavík  
[www.grapevine.is](http://www.grapevine.is)  
[grapevine@grapevine.is](mailto:grapevine@grapevine.is)

Member of the Icelandic Travel Industry Association  
[www.saf.is](http://www.saf.is)

Printed by Landsprent ehf.

**PUBLISHER**  
Hilmar Steinn Grétarsson  
[hilmar@grapevine.is](mailto:hilmar@grapevine.is)  
+354 540 3601  
[publisher@grapevine.is](mailto:publisher@grapevine.is)

**EDITOR-IN-CHIEF**  
Valur Grettisson  
[valur@grapevine.is](mailto:valur@grapevine.is)

**NEWS EDITOR**  
Andie Sophia Fontaine  
[andiesophia@grapevine.is](mailto:andiesophia@grapevine.is)

**CULTURE EDITOR**  
Josie Gaitens  
[josie@grapevine.is](mailto:josie@grapevine.is)

**PHOTO EDITOR**  
Art Bicnick  
[art@grapevine.is](mailto:art@grapevine.is)

**COPY EDITOR**  
Catharine Fulton

**INTERNS**  
Asha Edmondson  
[asha@grapevine.is](mailto:asha@grapevine.is)  
Iryna Zubenko  
[iryna@grapevine.is](mailto:iryna@grapevine.is)  
Joana Fontinha  
[joana@grapevine.is](mailto:joana@grapevine.is)  
Emma Ledbetter  
[emma@grapevine.is](mailto:emma@grapevine.is)

**WRITERS**  
Shruthi Basappa

**PHOTOGRAPHERS**  
Elin Guðmundsdóttir  
Emma Ledbetter  
Gemma Warren  
Gosverksmiðjan  
Grzegorz Bieńko  
Heiðis Guðbjörg  
Joana Fontinha  
Kristinn Ingvarsson  
Óskar Hallgrímsson

Omen's Eye  
Photography

**SALES DIRECTORS**  
Aðalsteinn Jörundsson  
[adalsteinn@grapevine.is](mailto:adalsteinn@grapevine.is)  
Helgi Þór Harðarson  
[helgi@grapevine.is](mailto:helgi@grapevine.is)

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

**CONTACT US:**  
—> **Editorial**  
[editor@grapevine.is](mailto:editor@grapevine.is)  
+354 540 3600  
—> **Advertising**  
[ads@grapevine.is](mailto:ads@grapevine.is)  
354 540 3605  
—> **Distribution & Subscriptions**  
[distribution@grapevine.is](mailto:distribution@grapevine.is)  
+354 540 3604  
—> **Press releases**  
[events@grapevine.is](mailto:events@grapevine.is)  
—> **General Inquiries**  
[grapevine@grapevine.is](mailto:grapevine@grapevine.is)

*The Reykjavík Grapevine is published every month by Fróken Ltd. Nothing in this magazine may be reproduced in whole or in part without the written permission of the publishers.*

*The Reykjavík Grapevine is distributed around Reykjavík, Akureyri, Egilsstaðir, Seyðisfjörður, Þorgarnes, Keflavík, Ísafjörður, and at key locations along Iceland's route 1. It is also available at all major tourist attractions and information centres around the country. You may not like The Reykjavík Grapevine, but at least it's an independent publication. None of our editorial is directed by sponsors or advertisers, and all opinions expressed are the writer's own.*



center hotels



# NATURALLY DELICIOUS

## ICELANDIC LAMB - BEYOND COMPARE

The taste of Icelandic lamb is unrivaled. Our pure bred lambs graze free in the pristine wilderness of Iceland, eating luscious green grass, berries and wild herbs such as red clover, Arctic thyme, sedge, willow, thrift and angelica. The end result is a tender fine-textured meat that is both naturally rich in Omega-3 and iron and infused with the flavor of nature.

Icelandic lamb is a taste experience beyond compare.

[www.icelandiclamb.is](http://www.icelandiclamb.is)



## Here We Go Again!

Yet another volcano

**Words:** All through the last week of July and the first week of August, southwest Iceland began experiencing a series of earthquake swarms clustered around Fagradalsfjall and Reykjanesrygg, both of them on fault lines and the former of which, as you likely know, is already the site of a volcanic eruption.

**Photo:** Art Bicnick

These quakes began to increase in both frequency and intensity as the first week of August drew on, giving many people, including Iceland's earth scientists, the impression that another volcanic eruption was coming. And then, in the afternoon of August 3rd, Meradalir erupted in a curtain of

lava. There's a lot that's the same about this eruption and the previous one at Fagradalsfjall. For one, it's also a fissure eruption, meaning a curtain of some very pretty lava is spewing into the air, but with little to no ash (fortunately). What makes it different is that there's a lot more lava than there was at Fagradalsfjall.

What does this mean for us? Well, the good news is it's far away from infrastructure and residences, so no one is in any immediate danger. The bad news is, more lava means more gas—deadly gas, like sulphur dioxide, which even at non-lethal levels is not good for your lungs and very irritating. Not much of a problem when there's wind—and if there's one thing Reykjanes Peninsula has a lot of, it's wind—so long as you're upwind of the volcano.

That said, Civil Defense is advising people that no matter how pretty the volcano is, it is still a dangerous, potentially deadly site. Caution is very much advised.

So dress warmly, head out early, bring food and a fully-charged phone. And when you approach the site, stay upwind and a bit further away than you would think might be absolutely safe (which, frankly, is probably further away than you'll see a lot of people being).

The wonder and majesty of a volcano is indisputable, but there have already been injuries there, and the eruption is barely 24 hours old at the time of this writing. Live to enjoy the memories. Do it for us. 🇮🇸

ASK AN EXPERT

### Q: Why Do Icelanders Switch Their 'W's And 'V's In English?



Words: Asha Edmondson  
Photo: Kristinn Ingvarsson

*If you've spent time speaking English with an Icelander, you may have noticed some of their letters get mixed up. Somehow 'vikings' become 'wikings' and 'west' becomes 'vest.' We were curious if there is a scientific—or better yet, linguistic—answer to this consonant switching madness. We sought out the help of linguist Hanna Óladóttir, an Assistant Professor at the University of Iceland, to answer our question.*

"First of all, we don't have ['w'] sound in our sound system," Hanna explains. "When you're learning or speaking a second language, the sound system of your native language can take over."

Hanna adds that the consonant confusion is so prominent that English teachers make a point to address it in courses.

"I remember our English teacher used to make us say 'very' and 'visit,' so we wouldn't pronounce them incorrectly. We don't have the sound for 'w' in Icelandic, so you might hear Icelanders say 'very' instead of 'very' because we start to confuse them!" Hanna says.

The 'w' and 'v' switch does not happen with every word, instead it's almost like an overcompensation due to confusion of which consonant to use.

Hanna also clarifies that words which have recently come into mainstream discussion—such as 'vaccines'—may be more at risk of having their consonants swapped.

"[Vaccine] is a new word. It's a word that you're not used to using and then suddenly, because of the pandemic, everybody is using it. And people think 'ah okay it's an English word, it probably has a 'w' instead of a 'v'!" Hanna says. "If you know you should be attentive to something, you question yourself and get confused."

LOST IN GOOGLE TRANSLATION

## Music Sickness?

If you're looking for an Icelandic meal to give you food poisoning this summer, boy do we have the article for you! A piece ran in RÚV recently with the headline "Sex Sjúklegar Íslenskar Sumarplötur," or "Six Sickly Icelandic Summer Plates," so we can only imagine what kind of recipes the national news is recommending. Maybe some svið (boiled sheep head)? Or a little hákarl (fermented shark)?

But wait! Why is this article filed under RÚV's "Tónlist" or "Music" section? Why would anyone want to listen to "sickly plates"? Did RÚV mix up when categorising the article—or did Google Translate mess up once again?

Fortunately for those of us with weak stomachs, the article has nothing to do with food sickness and everything to do with great albums. Damn it Google! We thought we could trust you this time.

The word "sumarplötur" actually means "summer albums," not summer plates. This resolves the article categorisation confusion. While Google was correct that "sjúklegar" means "sick," it was incorrect with the usage. Google believed the author is saying the summer album has an illness or is sickly. In reality, the author is saying the album is cool or rad.

Turns out RÚV just wanted to share some sick summer albums for our listening pleasure. Feel free to check out these recommendations or better yet, bypass the translation confusion and check out the Grapevine's own music recs, already in English...

But wait. When we went to grab a screenshot of the mistranslated title, it suddenly corrected itself to the right wording, defeating the purpose of this entire article. Google: 1, Grapevine: 0. AE 🇮🇸

### Six sick Icelandic summer albums

Image: hilarycl - Morquefile

---

### Sex sjúklegar íslenskar sumarplötur

# SMASHED BURGERS AND NASHVILLE-STYLE HOT CHICKEN IN DOWNTOWN REYKJAVIK

HAFNARSTRÆTI  
101 REYKJAVÍK



GREAT MOMENTS  
IN ICELANDIC  
HISTORY

NEW MUSIC PICKS



**Laufey**  
**Everything I Know About Love**  
**Release date: August 26th**  
Laufey is back with her debut full-length album, "Everything I Know About Love." This new output shows a more fleshed out character, a young woman developing both musically and emotionally—and all the better for it. With 'Everything I Know About Love,' Laufey has taken another step firmly in the direction of superstardom. Watch this space. **JG**



**Jelena**  
**Rome**  
**Release date: August 26th**  
Rich with emotion and powerful vocals, this song is giving us major sad girl vibes. It's like if you crossed any of the softer ABBA songs from "Mamma Mia!" with your favourite indie pop band. Steep a cup of tea, stare out the rain-streaked window, and have the main character moment you deserve. **EL**



**GusGus (ft. John Grant)**  
**Bolero EP**  
**Release date: August 5th**  
The irrepressible GusGus are at it again with their infectious brand of 80s-influenced techno/electro/dance delights. This time they have teamed up with Michigan-born, Reykjavik-based John Grant for a curious little three-track EP. The synths are heavy, the vibes are strong. It's some serious after-party shit, the sort of music that only hits just right at 3am when everything feels possible. **JG**



# Klettagos

For about 8 months, we had our own Icelandic cola

Words:  
**Andie Sophia**  
**Fontaine**

Photo:  
**Gosverksmiðjan**

In December 2010, a newly minted beverage company called Gosverksmiðjan Klettur launched Klettagos, an Icelandic soft drink that looked and tasted much like internationally-available dark colas like Coke or Pepsi. They boasted being able to sell the soda for less than Coke or Pepsi, and their bottle came with hip labelling, featuring young Icelanders singing, laughing and playing guitar.

By August 2011, the factory shuttered its doors. By December of that same year, they were officially ruled bankrupt in Reykjavik District Court, with losses totalling some 330 million ISK.

What the heck happened? To understand that, you need to understand Ölgerð Egils Skallagríms and Vífilfell, two Icelandic beverage giants, who

control domestic distribution of Pepsi and Coke, respectively.

These two companies not only sell soft drinks. They make contracts with bars and restaurants for the rights to sell them, and they have agreements with shops dictating how much shelf space they get for their products. As such, Ölgerð Egils Skallagríms and Vífilfell are pretty much the only game in town, producing a lot of other more localised Icelandic beverages—such as the ubiquitous Applesin—and subsuming others.

This is exactly what Gosverksmiðjan contended was their demise, and the Icelandic Competition Authority agreed. In a 2020 ruling, the Competition Authority found that Ölgerð Egils Skallagríms and Vífilfell deliber-

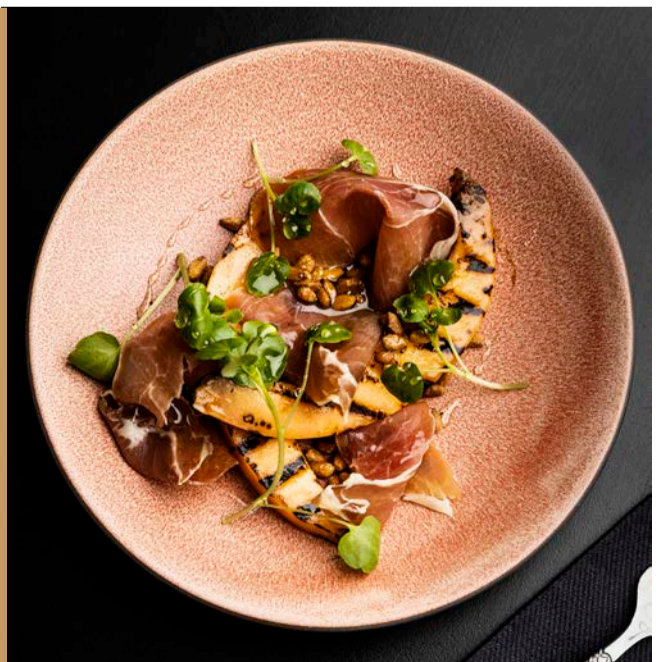
ately took up an inordinate amount of shelf space and set their own products more prominently, in some instances dispatching their employees to remove Klettagos bottles altogether.

In the end, Ölgerð Egils Skallagríms paid 20 million ISK in fines, and Vífilfell paid 17 million ISK. A far cry from the 330 million Gosverksmiðjan lost, but the real loss is still felt to this day by the Icelandic people. Klettagos didn't just die; it was murdered. Where for one shining moment, we had our own homegrown, caramel-coloured, caffeinated beverage, today it is merely a warm memory of a simpler time. **🍷**

UNFORGETTABLE FOOD AND  
DRINK EXPERIENCE

HÉDINN | KITCHEN & BAR

Seljavegur 2, 101 Reykjavík, www.hedinnrestaurant.is



# Breaking The Wave: Transphobia In Iceland

While trans people in Iceland enjoy legal protections, social acceptance is a whole other story. Can voices of hate be resisted before they come to power?

WORDS: Andie Sophia Fontaine PHOTOS: Art Bicnick

**O**n June 25th, a man walked into the London Pub in Oslo, Norway, pulled out a gun, and started shooting. He would repeat this at two other locations, killing two people and wounding 21 before being arrested. He was expressly motivated by his hatred of queer people.

A few days later, Iceland's queer community and allies gathered in front of Parliament to hold a rally in solidarity with the survivors in Norway. Many speakers talked about the need for education to prevent such an act from happening in Iceland.

However, Norway is, like Iceland, one of the most queer-friendly countries in the world. In both countries, same-sex marriage is legal, hate speech and discrimination against queer people is forbidden, polls show most people support queer rights, and queer education can be found in many levels of schooling.

That said, Iceland and Norway also share in common a disturbing trend: a rise in anti-trans rhetoric, in print and in broadcast media, which is making life decidedly more dangerous for trans people in these countries.

It is clear that the law can only go so far in protecting marginalised people. As one example, the United Kingdom has also legally enshrined many of the same protections for queer people that Norway and Iceland have, but the virulent and repeated anti-trans sentiment—printed in columns, splashed across headlines, broadcast over national television—is already leading to a rise in violence against trans people in the UK.

With this in mind, the Grapevine spoke with the president of Iceland's largest trans organisation, an academic, an activist, and a lawmaker to ask: what effect is Iceland's media having on general public attitudes towards trans people? Where is transphobia most and least prevalent in Icelandic society? And, most importantly, what can people do to stop hate in Iceland before it reaches more dangerous levels?

## What is Icelandic transphobia like?

While there have always been people in Iceland who hate trans people, it has not

been until the last few years that hate for trans people has ramped up.

For example, there does indeed exist an Icelandic branch of the anti-trans hate group LGB Alliance, now calling itself Samtökin 22, which formed a few years ago, albeit in small and nebulous numbers. In addition, disgraced former Prime Minister and current chair of the Centre Party Sigmundur Davíð Gunnlaugsson has recently had a sudden interest in what a woman is.

Within the media, both Morgunblaðið and Vísir have printed anti-trans columns under the guise of “opinion” pieces, nationally broadcast television show Ísland Í Dag hosted Jordan Peterson to hold forth on many, many falsehoods about trans people, and last May news magazine Stundin published an ill-conceived “expose” on health care for trans youth with so many inaccuracies that former Trans Ísland director Uglya Stefania Kristjónudóttir Jónsdóttir's rebuttal had a word count that rivalled the original (which, to the magazine's credit, was also published by Stundin).

What gives?

## The double-edged sword of visibility

Viima Lampinen, president of Trans Iceland, believes visibility plays a part in this backlash.

“In my personal opinion, I feel like because trans topics are now everywhere, more than they were even just four years ago,” they tell us. “The raised awareness is, in my opinion, functioning in a twofold way. One is that it's likely that more people are now aware of trans trends, topics, and issues. This also includes nonbinary topics.

“Most people are positive, at least when encountering trans and nonbinary people in person. But when it comes to what they may personally think, in the comfort of their own homes, and especially online, when they don't have to actually see people eye to eye, they don't have that emotional accountability that they would need to always have when you're encountering another person.

“So, in general, I feel like there is more awareness and therefore, people are more used to trans and nonbinary people, but at the same time, those harsher, more negative views of transphobia are also more common now. Because more people are aware of these issues.”

“I think we're certainly more aware of more negative attitudes [towards trans people] today than five years ago,” Íris Ellenberger, a historian and assistant professor at the University of Iceland School of Education, tells us. “But it's hard to tell how much of that is people changing their minds and becoming more negative to trans people, and how much of it is people being more open about their transphobic views and finding that they are more free to express their transphobic views. So I'm not too sure that the attitude changes itself, but it seems that at least people feel more free to express their negative attitudes and hatred towards trans people.”

Why these people might feel more comfortable to express themselves now than only a few years ago can likely be attributed to Icelandic transphobes taking cues from their ideological allies abroad: they will use the same talking points, the same dog whistles, and even cite the same sources in their writing. That said, Íris sees another possible explanation.

“Trans people are openly challenging some truths,” Íris says, such as that there are only two genders. “To a large extent, or at least, I think, one of the reasons that gays and lesbians became so accepted at the time was the message was, ‘We only want to be like you, the rest of the population. We want to marry and have children. We are not here to kind of shake up your realities, we want

these are people that actually care about my well being or if they just think I'm a freak, in a way. Or if they don't take me seriously. And it doesn't help when you've had all this leaked information from the doctors group.”

Here Elí refers to screenshots leaked earlier this summer from a closed Facebook group for doctors wherein a post shared an article advocating “detransitioning” trans people. This article was “liked” by over 60 doctors in Iceland's health care system, with numerous doctors in the comments thanking the poster for sharing it.

“It's probably a really big portion of doctors working in Iceland [who feel the same],” Elí says. “So that makes you feel really unsafe.”

Viima also cites the healthcare system, and emphasises the importance of education on trans health issues as a means to help assuage the situation.

“When it comes to the individuals working there, the attitudes are also changing,” they say. “But we're at a point where the health care providers basically need more education on trans healthcare. It's 2022, we have so much more research and information on what trans people want and what it is like, when it comes to our health care; what needs to be considered.

“It's not their fault, in a way,” Viima continues. “They're not given enough means to do their best. I think in that

“I think we're certainly more aware of more negative attitudes [towards trans people] today than five years ago.”

to keep things as they are, we only want access to everything, like stuff that you all hold dear. We don't want to change all that much.”

## Where is transphobia most (and least) prevalent?

When asked which sectors of society harbour the most, or the least, transphobia, the medical community was cited repeatedly.

“I don't feel safe in the healthcare system,” says Elínborg Hörpu- og Öundurbar (Elí for short), an activist who is trans themselves. “I wonder if

sense, their education, the politics of it, is letting them down. And then that results in... Well, basically, trans people are not getting adequate health care.”

When it comes to sectors that are particularly welcoming of trans people, Elí cites the teaching department at the University of Iceland, of which they say, “they're kind of doing their best to create quite a safe environment. There's a big diversity of people both teaching and studying at this department. So I feel it could be a place where you could feel at home, if that makes sense. To feel included, actively included.”

However, if there's one sector that is having a complicated impact



on how the general public perceives and responds to trans people, it's the media.

### The role of the media

As mentioned earlier, a lot of the transphobic voices in Iceland are finding a platform in its national media outlets, more often than not under the guise of “opinion” pieces rather than news stories. As with media outlets in many other countries, what constitutes an “opinion” follows a very broad definition. Rather than being solely a matter of subjective taste or personal speculation where evidence is lacking, an opinion piece in the Icelandic media can also include expressing beliefs based on misinformation or even falsehoods. This is especially the case when it comes to the subject of trans people, for example by contending—despite scientific evidence to the contrary—that it is impossible to change one's gender, and that only two exist.

“I think they have a really large impact, like on this kind of negative turn towards trans people in the last maybe one or two years,” Íris says of Icelandic media outlets. “The way it has become a venue for us to find negative voices. I think that matters a lot. That is something you see happening with various groups: that people are being used, kind of as a way to get attention and get clicks, to get more money from advertisers.”

At the same time, Elí says that individual reporters have gotten better in terms of how they cover trans people.

“I feel like they always check what name to use in articles, what pronouns to use, and they use mostly the correct and respectable terminology around trans people issues—in my experience, after a lot of work on behalf of trans activists,” they say. “I feel like it's a pretty recent development.”

At the same time, Elí also points out a lack of diverse representation, saying, “I don't feel like there's a lot of representation of trans people in the

media doing something other than being trans. “If they even get space in the media at all.”

For their part, Viima believes that the small size and density of Icelandic society means that any topic reported on by the media will spread to many people quickly.

“There's not a day that goes by where trans topics are not discussed, on the radio, in the newspapers, in magazines,” they say. “The thirst for people to know more, and to read about us seems to be unquenchable. Which is, in a way, amazing, but at the same time, it is a little bit, I would say, even unhealthy. A bit voyeuristic. It makes me uncomfortable sometimes. But yes, it has had an enormous positive effect, just making ourselves visible. That we are listened to sometimes now. Not all of the time. But a lot of time.”

Just as there is a double-edged sword to visibility, though, there is also another side to the Icelandic media's reach.

“We're also served on a silver platter,” Viima says. “Hate speech is not just hate speech; it is a form of violence. I am sometimes concerned for those individuals who take part, who decide to share something of their own experiences or who speak out publicly. Trans people and nonbinary people are still marginalised groups in society and in danger of hate crimes.”

### What about the law?

On the subject of hate speech, Iceland does have a law forbidding it, although it is seldom enforced. While the law cannot protect marginalised people completely, it can go a long way towards doing so, and Pirate Party MP Andrés Ingi Jónsson believes the government should be doing more.

“We're seeing pushback surface,” Andrés says. “And it's a bit frightening when it comes to the open hostilities people are facing in the streets. The things we're seeing in the news these days—it's a bit worrying that it seems

that the authorities haven't taken any proactive steps to make sure these things wouldn't happen. Rather, we've been waiting for individuals to be in actual danger before reacting in a situation I think we shouldn't have had to find ourselves in.”

Andrés was instrumental in the elimination of the so-called “trans tax”, the 9,000 ISK fee that used to be charged if someone wanted to change their name or gender marker at the National Registry. Within six months of calling for the fee to be dropped, it was officially stricken. Did he get much pushback from his colleagues or from the public?

“Extremely little,” he says. “For my colleagues, I think they were mainly annoyed because this seemed like a technical thing. And those that needed persuasion, they just didn't realise that this actually was an issue. But there were no actual negative feelings within Parliament. Very little from outside Parliament.”

While Andrés believes there is more legal work that Parliament could be doing to protect trans people, he sees the passage of this bill as a part of his role as an ally to marginalised people, saying, “I'm a white, male, cisgender individual in a position of power. So basically, I'm everything that's not discriminated against. When I look over the shoulders of my female colleagues or people in different positions, the reactions they are getting both openly and privately, I usually see things that are so far from anything I would ever experience.”

### What can an ally do?

When it comes to being an ally to trans people—to push back against the rise of anti-trans hate in public discourse—our interviewees had some helpful pieces of advice.

Paramount in that advice was to not accept that bigotry against trans people is merely a “debate” or “a matter of opinion”.

# A Timeline Of Queer Rights In Iceland

Words: Andie Sophia Fontaine

Iceland is often cited as an example of a nation that has embraced various queer rights, sometimes well ahead of countries many times its size. This history of queer acceptance is the backdrop to the growing anti-trans rhetoric in Iceland and may make the increased vocal intolerance towards trans and other LGBTQIA people seem perplexing. However, as our feature shows, legally encoded rights for marginalised people do not necessarily lead to automatic acceptance. That said, this history can also provide hope: Iceland is a country with tolerance as a core value, and that is a powerful tool for fighting hate.

**1940:** Iceland repeals a law that outlawed homosexual activity. Nonetheless, being openly gay was still very taboo, with public figures such as musician Hörður Torfason attesting to being subject to homophobic abuse well into the 1980s.

**1978:** The creation of the National Queer Organisation, Samtökin '78.

**1982:** Samtökin '78 begins organising first protests for queer rights in Iceland.

**1992:** Age of consent equalised for everyone, regardless of gender or sexual orientation.

**1996:** Laws prohibiting discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation passed, making it illegal to deny goods and services on this basis. Iceland's hate speech laws are amended to include sexual orientation. Same-sex unions are recognised.

**1999:** Iceland holds its first official Pride march, attended by 1,500 people.

**2000:** Same-sex couples are allowed to adopt stepchildren.

**2006:** Same-sex couples allowed joint adoption, and have equal access to IVF.

**2010:** Same-sex marriage is legalised.

**2012:** Iceland relaxes its laws regarding gender identity.

The National University Hospital of Iceland begins to create health services for transgender people, including an 18-month evaluation process, hormone replacement therapy, and gender affirming surgery.

**2015:** The National Church of Iceland allows same-sex couples to marry within its churches.

**2016:** The town of Hafnarfjörður creates an education programme regarding same-sex relationships, taught to those starting in eighth grade (about 14 or 15 years old).

**2018:** Anti-discrimination law on the basis of employment includes sexual orientation and gender identity.

**2020:** Parliament passes comprehensive gender determination act, allowing trans people to change gender marker without surgery, allowing minors to do the same with parental consent, and allowing for a third “X” gender marker for nonbinary people.

**2022:** Men who have sexual relationships with men (i.e., gay, bisexual and pansexual men) may donate blood after a 4-month deferral period.





natural part of the environment.”

Eli adds that the “debate” framing is hardly anything new, either, saying, “That’s how a lot of civil rights have been framed in the past. And that’s civil rights that we find super natural to have right now.”

Andrés points out that one does not need to be a member of Parliament to be able to exact change for the better.

“Even if you’re not in Parliament, you’re probably in a position of privilege, compared to the trans community,” he says. “So whatever you do will probably be a million times easier than then for an actual trans activist to do it. What we need are more voices. I mean, there’s many of us in Parliament or society in general, talking about these issues. Whenever they come up, we do get backup from a bunch of people, but I

people,” they say “You need to have those difficult conversations in person and sometimes online, that it’s not okay to hate your neighbour just because they happen to be not cisgender.”

### The tide can turn

Anti-trans rhetoric is still very young in Iceland. All of the people we spoke with on why it’s here and how to stop it share in common the belief that Icelandic society is especially suited to spread misinformation amongst the population quickly, to provide platforms for hate that will reach many people with great speed.

At the same time, Iceland’s smallness and the density of its society means that education can spread just

“You need to have those difficult conversations in person and sometimes online, that it’s not okay to hate your neighbour just because they happen to be not cisgender.”

“I don’t feel like there’s a lot of representation of trans people in the media doing something other than being trans.”

“It shouldn’t be a debate,” Íris says. “My colleagues in Norway, for instance, the first thing they brought up after the shooting was that the responsibility of the media is huge, because they dehumanise people when they put people’s lives and existence up for ‘debate.’ It isn’t a debate and you don’t always have to participate in the debate.”

Íris emphasises that wherever you might hear or see transphobia, allies should always push back against it, no

matter who the speaker is.

“When you hear somebody saying something transphobic, even if it’s your own family or co-workers or something, never let things slip by without questioning what people are saying. Never allow it to become something natural or something like that. Ruin Christmas dinner. Or maybe the dessert after Christmas. Basically don’t allow it to become something that is not questioned. Just don’t allow it to become a

think we need to sort of build a stronger choir in society. To be the background to whatever’s happening.”

In terms of allyship, Eli recommends that those with the means donate money directly to trans rights organisations, and also brings up the advice to push back against transphobic speech, adding that allies should also “show up when you’re needed” at demonstrations and protests supporting trans rights.

Viima believes allyship begins with examining one’s self.

“It starts with just changing yourself, because all of us have grown up to discriminate,” they say. “We have learned to live in these worlds that have discriminatory mechanisms.” As such, educating one’s self is important, but also the recognition that we are fallible.

“If you make mistakes, it’s human—we all make mistakes,” they say. “Correct yourself and continue life and just smile.”

Viima also echoes Íris’s points, saying that it is important for allies to take on the burden of challenging discussions. “There are only a limited number of trans and nonbinary people. We can’t be expected to have those difficult conversations with those who are ill informed, who may even have a hateful attitude towards trans or nonbinary

as quickly. Allyship can spread quickly. If the 2008-2009 protests, or the 2016 Panama Papers protests, are any indication, organised action can also be catalysed quickly. That said, human rights are never won once and for all.

“The trans allies and trans people are winning right now, but I think it’s really important to keep in mind that it’s never a straight line,” Íris says. “It’s always one step forward, two steps back or the other way around. And I think that’s really important to keep in mind: that these attitudes towards trans people are probably going to change for the better or for the worse continually, and if you want the forces of good to win, that is something that we have to be constantly working on. I’m not sure how it will go. But I think it’s going to be a constant flux. So I think we have to be really active in trying to make it so that trans people can live free.”

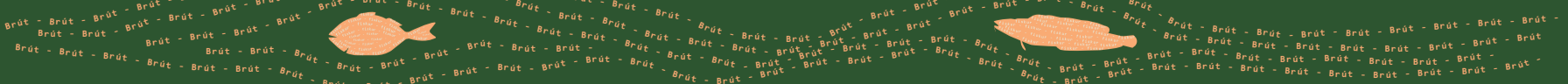
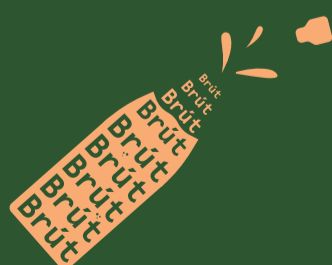
Pósthússtræti 2

Brút

+354 537 2788

Book a table on brut.is

Best Newcomer\*  
Best Seafood\*  
Best Brunch\*



# Happening

Find today's events  
in Iceland!  
Download our free list-  
ings app - APPENING  
on the Apple and  
Android stores



## Come and fight for pride rights Reykjavik Pride Parade

August 6th - Hallgrímskirkja - Free

Perhaps known as the centrepiece for Reykjavik's ever-growing pride festival, the parade winds through downtown and ends at Hljómskála Park with an outdoor concert. Organisers would like to remind participants that LGBTQ+ people are still fighting for their rights, and marches such as this are part of the longer struggle. **ft**



## Drive for your life! The Mario Kart Tournament

August 28th - Arena Gaming Ísland - 2,990 to 3,900 ISK

Are you ready for Iceland's first ever Mario Kart Tournament? Convinced he is the best player in Iceland, organiser Adam Scanlon has decided to find out in the best way possible—a full competition party with pizza and of course prizes! The icing on the cake is that all money raised goes to charity, so you can chuck mushrooms at people to your heart's content, knowing that it's all for a good cause. **JG**

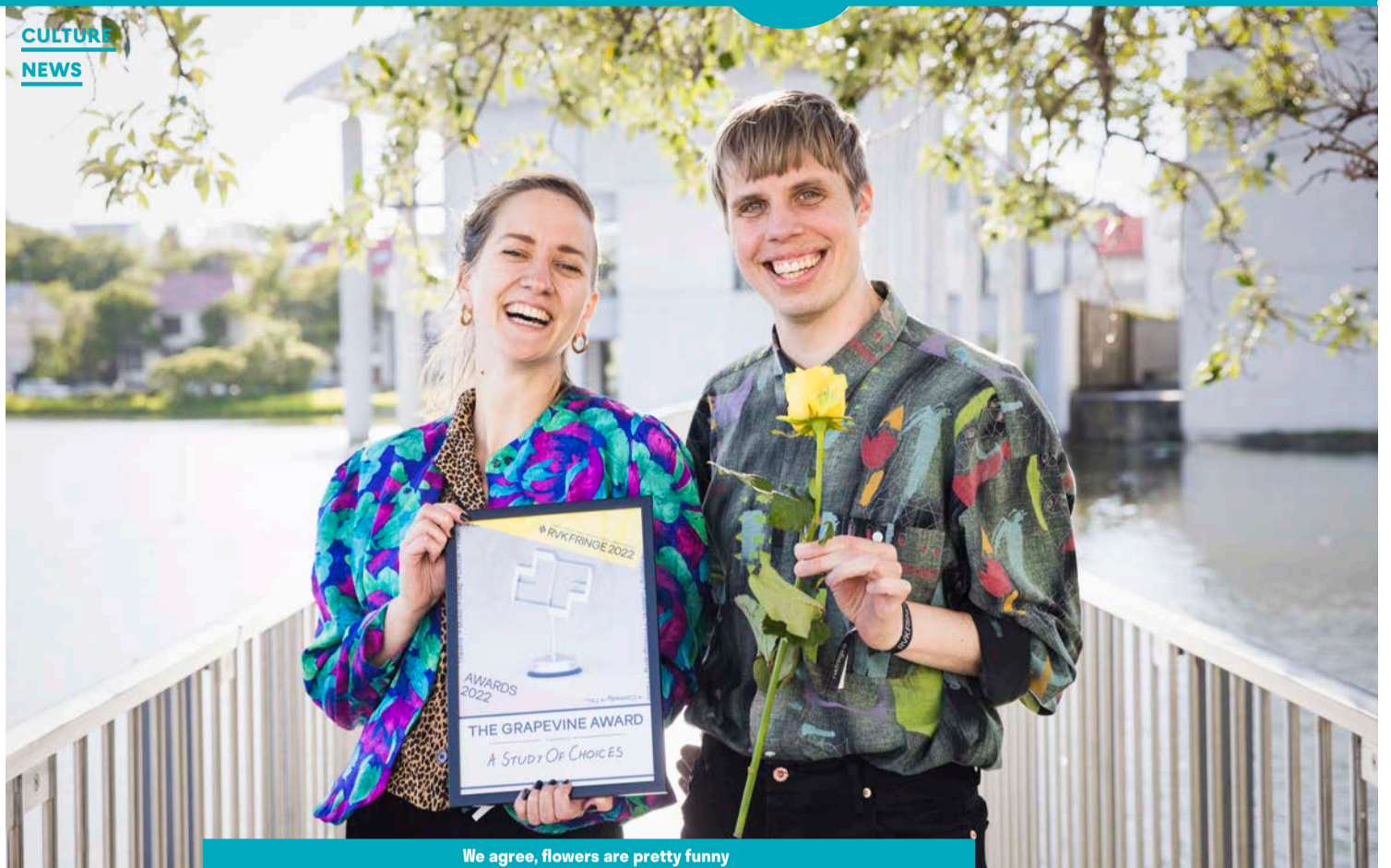


## Fun for the whoooooole family! Garden Party

August 13th - 13:00 to 22:00 - Laugardalur - 2,000 to 3,900 ISK

The Garden Party is designed to be a safe and family friendly space. There will be bouncy castles, food stands, a bar, a champagne tent (they got your back, parents), and a great line up with music by Briet, Friðrik Dór, Reykjavíkurdóter, Hipsúmhaps and Mezzoforte. Kids under 18 unaccompanied by an adult won't be allowed, just so you know. I'm not sure if we are either, cos alcohol and bouncy castles sound like a combination that could be too good to be true. **KW**

## CULTURE NEWS



We agree, flowers are pretty funny

# Choose Wisely

## 'A Study Of Choices' Wins The RVK Fringe Grapevine Award

Words:  
**Josie Anne  
Gaitens**

Photos:  
**Elin  
Guðmundsdóttir**  
&  
**Omen's Eye  
Photography**

Reykjavik Fringe is over for another year: the hubbub around Tjarnarbió has died down, the flurry of wrist-banded guests marching around 101 have dispersed. Multitudes of posters advertising shows flap impotently in Iðnó. But even with the dust settled, there is still one last act to make a song and dance about: the winner of the 2022 Reykjavik Fringe Grapevine award!

This year, said award was presented to 'A Study Of Choices,' a performance piece that predominantly features contemporary dance, but is so much more than that. We caught up with Swedish creators Linda Wardal and Gustav Lejelind to find out more about their award-winning show.

"The idea was basically to make instructions and place three dancers on stage hearing those instructions for the first time, and for the audience to see those three dancers simultaneously," Linda says, explaining the basic concept behind their work. "We realised during the process that what we were working on was choices."

The piece unfolds as thus, with the dancers—who are completely naive to the show—standing on stage. Linda and Gustav sit in a corner, clad in matching jumpsuits, observing. A warm soundscape swells into reality and with it Linda's recorded voice, inviting the dancers to follow simple instructions: "Touch your knee. Try the other knee. Which one feels better?" She asks. The dancers move in the space following the directions—and their own intuition. The words are the same but the motions are different. "Don't be afraid," Linda says kindly. "There is no way to fail."

"We have so much fun doing this," Gustav says, of working with his artistic partner. Gustav is responsible for the music and sound for 'A Study Of Choices,' whereas Linda, a choreographer and dancer by training, wrote the majority of the script. However the pair worked in close collaboration for the entirety of the process, feeding back on

and adding to each other's contributions.

"Maybe it has to do with my musical background, that with playing an instrument I'm used to making music with other people," Gustav says on what drew him toward creating art in this way. "I kind of brought that into working with other other fields—working with other visual artists or dancers. I like what happens when I do my thing but it meets something else."

"It was completely collaborative," adds Linda, of their process. "We met every Wednesday evening over a long period. We have really had the time to think about this for a long time."

At some point during this lengthy creative origin, the artists realised that they were constantly being faced with different choices, both within and outside of their work. "We kept sitting down and trying to decide different

things, how should this be, et cetera, and then we started seeing these choices in a different light," Gustav says. "Suddenly, we start asking, should we do this, or that? Should we have some dinner now? Or should we do something else? We started seeing everything through the lens of choices."

"You question yourself so much as a dancer, asking yourself, 'is this enough?'" Linda adds. "Maybe that's where I also question my choices all the time. So then, this way of giving the instructions quite fast [in the show] is also a way of saying it doesn't matter, that this doesn't have to be your best choice, but just make a choice now. There's something about that, I think, that is important."

The outcome of the choices Gustav and Linda ultimately made play out for audiences in 'A Study Of Choices'—until the lens finally switches to focus on the audience themselves. The dancers sit on stage, observing the audience as they are invited to touch their knee, or to try the other knee if they prefer. Nervous suppressed giggles reveal the slight awkwardness of the crowd, but the atmosphere is warm. Once again, Linda's voice rings out: "there is no way to fail." **👉**

**"Don't be afraid. There is no way to fail."**



You do you, bestie



Feeling the musical energy in Borðeyri

# Hátíðni: A Space For Those Without One

From a small gathering of friends to a music festival

Words: **Asha Edmondson & Emma Ledbetter** Photos: **Joana Fontinha**

Cowboy hats, fisherman’s sweaters, retro sneakers, and denim—so much denim—mark Hátíðni as a music festival that’s alive with mismatched cohesion. It’s a wear-what-you-want and do-what-you-want sort of event. Organisers, musicians, and guests are one and the same, sharing responsibilities like preparing meals and picking up trash.

Those who come to Hátíðni—whether it’s their first time or fourth—are here to be part of the Post-dreifing family, bound by the underground arts collective’s love of art and community. Ranging from the more traditional singer-songwriter style to heavier screaming and a lot of experimental pieces, this festival features just about every genre imaginable.

## Friends through music

Snæbjörn Helgi Arnarsson Jack—Snæi Jack to his friends—planned the first Hátíðni as a party. Little did Snæi know, this small party would turn into an annual festival bringing together all of his friends, new and old.

“In 2017 I had just moved into this awful basement that had only one window. It was super hot and there were flies everywhere—it was

just the worst place ever! But I really wanted to have a party, so I decided to rent a community centre in the west of Iceland and invite everyone,” Snæi says.

Unfortunately, many of Snæi’s friends didn’t show up. But this turned out to be a blessing in disguise and paved the way for what we now know as Hátíðni.

“I was working at Stofan Café at the time...most of the other people working there were artists and they wanted to come and play,” Snæi explains. “All the bands showed up, but very few of my friends came. And so now, my friends are the people from those bands.”

Snæi and his new friends keep coming back to the festival year after year, gradually expanding the group to welcome more like-minded people.

Though Snæi has an undeniable role in starting the festival, everyone shares responsibility for organising it. The ‘do it together’ mindset is evident—you don’t have to look far for help and even first timers are willing to lend a hand.

## A subculture

Walking into Hátíðni is overwhelming. You quickly realise that it isn’t your average festival. Instead, it is

more like a homecoming for a large group of friends.

In addition to the music, workshops are offered during the day allowing people to tap into a different side of their creativity. Whether in feminist self defense or creative writing, participants are encouraged to express themselves in whatever language or manner they feel comfortable.

This dynamic is a stark contrast to what many may expect when they hear the word “festival.” Despite the warm welcome from those involved, the close community environment can at times appear exclusive. Unless you are familiar with Post-dreifing or their organisational style, it’s easy to feel like an outsider at Hátíðni. And yet, this feeling is set against a backdrop of unwavering acceptance, encouragement, and support. You might feel like you don’t belong, but at the same time you know you absolutely will not be judged.

## Bonded together

Ironically, though, the strong sense of fellowship that can leave outsiders feeling distant, is the same thing that strengthens the internal community’s bond, enabling each person to fully embrace themselves

and their art.

The opening act, performed by “one-gig-wonder” band SOFT-FISKUR, provided the perfect summary of what to expect from the weekend. Truly an experimentalist’s fantasy, their set included techno beats, artistic autotune, and poetic screaming. But even if that sounds enticing, you’re already too late—this is the band’s first, and likely only, performance.

“Maybe it’s because we are so involved in the scene and the festival itself,” says band member Simón. “But it’s the perfect festival to try something new. We also encourage new bands to play for the first time, so it felt perfect. It’s not intimidating, we know that we can have fun, and people appreciate pretty much everything.”

Another performer, Áslaug Dungal, used the festival to perform songs from her new album. Even though Áslaug is new to the Hátíðni and Post-dreifing scene, she really values the experience.

“I think it’s awesome. I really like the town and the venue,” beamed Áslaug. “I like the idea of camping and having a festival. Also, everybody is just helping everybody.”

## Community Abroad

A number of foreign performers joined the festival this year, bringing their unique sounds with them. Artists came from across the world,

from Finland to Argentina.

For some, performing at a festival abroad was nerve-wracking, but they recognized that Hátíðni is the ideal judgement-free place to try it out.

“Even with this festival, I’ve only performed maybe four times,” says Lilly Montague, known by their stage name Monty, who is visiting Iceland from the UK. “Applying to play at a festival abroad is something you’re like, ‘I’ll do that when I’m a bigger musician.’ But I thought I may as well try.”

Lilly said they felt comfortable performing at the festival because their friends always talked about how welcoming and encouraging everyone is at Post-dreifing.

## Safe spaces

Hátíðni takes pride in ensuring its community members feel secure and have the spaces they need. Hátíðni provides a room called “Safer Space,” where people can go for any reason if they need to escape the festivities.

Beyond tangible safety and inclusivity measures like the Safer Space, Hátíðni has spent time and energy ensuring the atmosphere is safe as well. Volunteers wearing neon vests were available at all times to help anyone needing support.

Organiser Bjarni Daníel mentions that when it comes to managing safety and wellbeing, the festival owes a lot to grassroots political organisation, Andrími.

“[Andrími has] many different techniques to make sure that people feel safe, especially because they’re working with a lot of minorities,” says Bjarni.

“Everybody is just helping everybody.”

“They have this safer space policy and communication rooms, so these are things we took influence from when we were starting.”

Overall, Hátíðni is a festival that really cares about its community and ensuring the inclusion of people who may not otherwise have a dedicated space to socialise, make music, and be themselves. While it may be difficult to find your place at first, it’s impossible to deny the value of the community, and what they can achieve together. Almost everyone interviewed wanted to encourage readers to “come to Hátíðni next year!”—if you’re looking for a new creative clan, then you definitely should. 🍷



Coffee & Sandwiches

The most special coffee from specialists in speciality coffee.

Hafnarstræti 11

Instagram icon kaffi\_o\_le

# Farmers Market

ICELAND



OUR STORES IN REYKJAVÍK: FARMERS & FRIENDS



Laugavegur 37



Hólmastóð 2 / Grandi

[WWW.FARMERSMARKET.IS](http://WWW.FARMERSMARKET.IS)

# Best of Reykjavík



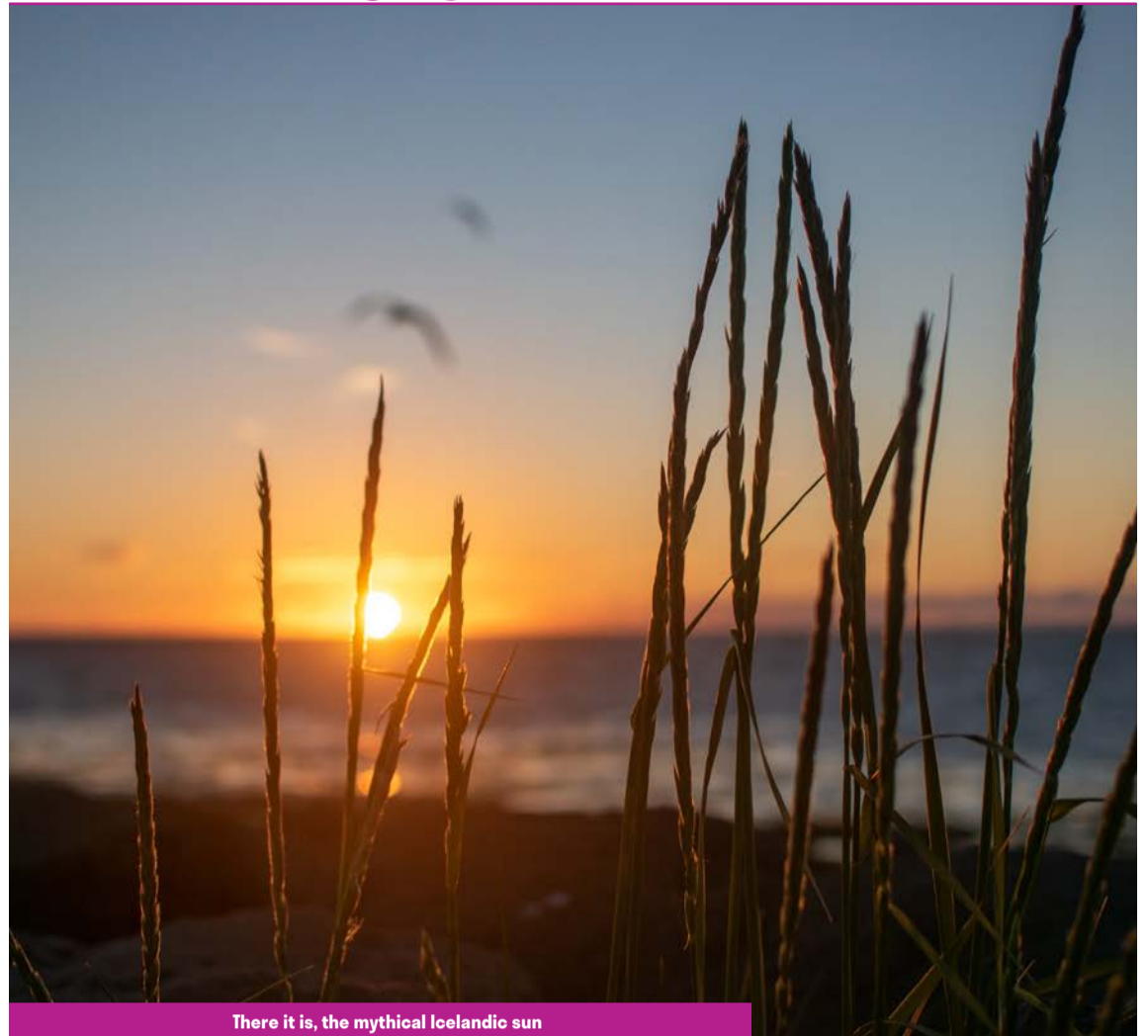
THE FIRST DUMPLING  
HOUSE IN ICELAND

DRAGONDIMSUM.IS



BERGSTADASTRÆTI 4,  
REYKJAVÍK

EYRAVEGUR 1,  
SELFOSS



There it is, the mythical Icelandic sun

## Spot The Sunset!

If you're blessed with good weather, here's where to watch the midnight sun

Words: **Emma Ledbetter** Photos: **Emma Ledbetter**

Sunsets in Reykjavík offer something otherworldly to the beholder, whether you're a die-hard sunset chaser (like me) or simply can't adjust your sleep schedule to the extended daylight hours (also like me). Of course, the nights don't actually get dark during Icelandic summers, but if you're willing to stay up until midnight and adjust your plans to the unpredictable weather, you'll be rewarded with a long-lasting flare of color reflected over the beautiful North Atlantic. We've compiled a few of the best places in Reykjavík to watch the sunset—perfect for solo adventures, gatherings with friends, or a romantic rendezvous.

### Gróttá Island Lighthouse



This is a popular spot any night of the week, so don't expect solitude. However, it's popular for a reason—you'll be treated to a sweeping westward view of the ocean and far-out peninsulas, plus Mount Esja and the city skyline over your shoulder. Be warned that the island is closed for most of the summer for bird breeding, and even when the path is open, you need to be aware of the tides so you don't get stuck. Don't let this discourage you, though, because the view from the parking lot is still quite lovely.

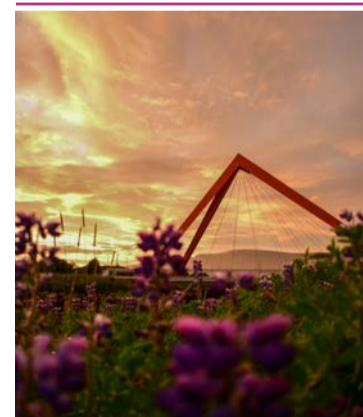
### Viðey Ferry Terminal



For the people-averse among us, the ferry terminal may offer the solitude you crave. Situated at the

northeast end of Reykjavík's shore walk, you'll find an unobstructed view of the ocean, pockmarked only by the occasional boat. Mount Esja is to your right, hovering over Viðey. If you want to get closer to the water, a staircase leads to a small beach (Skarfaklettur) with a whale-sized boulder. If you're more inclined to see a city skyline, this is not the place—but other than that, this spot is pretty perfect.

### Red Steel Pyramid Bridges



Far from downtown, this spot gets less traffic than others on this list. Park at the Geirsnef dog park and walk along the path toward the ocean. You won't have a full view of the horizon, but the two red steel pyramid bridges by Teiknistofan Tröð add some man-made drama to the landscape. Lupines, in season through early summer, accent the shoreline. This isn't your traditional sunset viewing spot, but it's still worth a trip.

### Reykjavík Harbour and Harpa



You'll never be alone around Harpa, but I'm always surprised to see only a handful of teens and tourists lingering for sunset here. Walk the short distance out to Ingólfsgarður Lighthouse, and you'll be treated to a number of sea-worthy sights: fishers casting off, boats coming in for the night, and the fluffy green Þúfa. The nautical objects serve as a reminder of Iceland's maritime history as you watch the sun dip below the horizon of Faxaflói bay. While you're at it, you can walk along the shore walk to Sólfar—an artistic reminder of the nation's Viking past.

### Perlan



Situated on a hill overlooking downtown Reykjavík and the waters beyond, Perlan offers a panoramic view of the sunset, though it feels rather distant when you aren't right by the shoreline. Head behind the iconic dome and you'll find a network of walking trails, some leading to mysterious underground bunkers. Standing just above them you'll spot the University of Iceland, Hallgrímskirkja, and several looming construction cranes. For you visiting city folk, this is probably as close to a metropolitan sunset as you'll get. 🍷

# VARMA

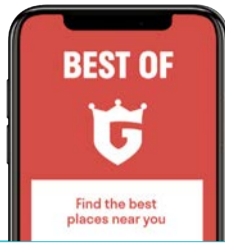
MADE IN ICELAND

VARMACLOTHING.COM



August 5th—September 1st

# In Your Pocket



Reykjavík Map

Places We Like

Best Of Reykjavík

## Perfect Day

Dance, jive & have the time of your life



Words: [Iryna Zubenko](#) Photo: [Emma Ledbetter](#)

### Valdís Steinarsdóttir

*Valdís Steinarsdóttir is an experimental designer from Reykjavík. Winner of the 2020 Formex Nova award—Nordic Designer of the Year—Valdís is best known for her projects repurposing organic materials. Among her most acknowledged works are food packaging made of animal skin and bones, and jelly clothing made of natural liquid material. Valdís loves all things design, so it's no wonder her perfect day includes many of the cultural and artistic delights Reykjavik has to offer.*

### Slow morning pancakes

I usually start my mornings by drinking coffee in bed and answering emails. On days where I have more free time I love to treat myself by making pancakes and baking Kryddbrauð (a traditional spiced bread, usually sweet) in the morning.

### Time to work

After breakfast, I go to my studio at **Gasstöðin**, which is at Hlemmur. Gasstöðin has become a creative space for a versatile mix of creatives. My studio is on the top floor and on the first floor there's a kitchen where we sometimes eat lunch together, talk about design, gossip and drink way too much coffee.

### Exhibition break

I would go to **Reykjavik Art Museum Kjarvalsstaðir** to have a nice lunch and see the current exhibition *Spor og Þræðir*, or Stitches and Threads—a display of embroidery works by contemporary Icelandic artists.

On a perfect afternoon, I would have nothing else on my agenda than to jump between different art and design exhibitions all day. I would, for example, start by going to **Hönnunarsafnið** to check out the *Sund* exhibition on the Icelandic bathing culture, then

**Ásmundarsalur** (a tiny gallery paired with one of the Reykjavik Roasters coffee shops), and end downtown by going to **Hafnarhúsið** and small urban gallery, **i8**.

### Dance-off and natural wine

I would love to go out to dinner with all my friends to **Matur og Drykkur**. Afterwards, we would all go to **Gamla Bió** where Bjartar Sveiflur would be playing. Half of the group would go on stage to play and the other half would start a dance battle on the floor. When the boys are done playing we'd all go to **Mikki Refur** for a winding down drink.

### Hot tub relax

I'd like to end my perfect day in a swimming pool, preferably **Árbæjarlaug**—but not to swim. I just go to relax in a hot tub to reflect on the day's events. ♡

## EXPLORE UNSEEN ICELAND

ON THE ULTIMATE FLYING RIDE



**FlyOver**  
ICELAND

OPEN EVERY DAY | [flyovericeland.com](http://flyovericeland.com)



VEGHÚSSASTÍGUR 9A

OPEN TUESDAY - SUNDAY  
16:00 - 23:00

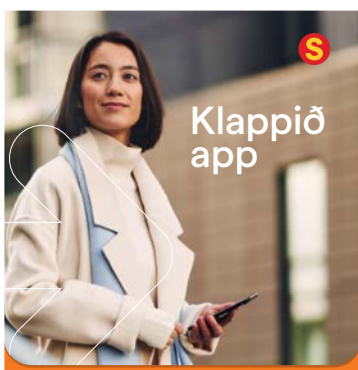


# MAT BAR

Hverfisgata 26

[matbar.is](http://matbar.is) | +354-788-3900





**Klappið app**

The official ticketing app for public buses in the Reykjavík capital area

Search for "Klappið" in the App Store or on Google Play.

KLAPP



**STEREO**

Cocktails  
Craft Beer  
Vermouth Menu



**PHOTOS FROM ICELAND**

Skólavörðustígur 22



**Wine bar & food**

VINSTÚKAN  
TÍU SOPAR

# The Map

The City Map presents a selection of restaurants, bars and shops that received the 2022 "Best Of Reykjavík" award curated by our stringent panellists. Get the bigger, more detailed version of The Reykjavík Grapevine City Map at your nearest hotel or guesthouse.

## Dining

### 1. Le Kock

Tryggvagata 14

The craft burger OG has never been better. No one toasts potato buns to crisp perfection like they do, or cooks patties to such medium rare goodness. Everything is made from scratch, including the condiments! This is gourmet fast food, with all of the attention to detail and none of the sacrifice on fun and flavour.

### 2. Flatey

Grandagarður 11

Educating a country beyond their diet of pizza-chain pies is no small feat, but that's exactly what Flatey sought to do when they burst onto the scene, and for that we applaud them. The Margherita continues to be a panel favourite; who can argue with milky mozzarella and tomatoes?

### 3. Fine

Rauðarárstígur 33

A panel favourite, Fine is a no nonsense, no frills, Sichuanese Chinese restaurant that steadfastly opens Reykjavík's mind's and palates to the regional cuisine. The Mala Chicken is a tingling explosion of flavour, literally, thanks to the sichuan peppercorn. For something simple yet exciting, we recommend the Hot and Sour Potatoes.

### 4. SONO matselíjor

Sæmundargata 11

Sono overlooks a wild-flower meadow and a spectacular view of the Reykjavík skyline. Languorous and idyllic, the menu too is shaped for slow savouring. The chefs look beyond Iceland for inspiration, while still showcasing seasonal, local produce in all its colourful glory. Foraged herbs, berries, fruits, stems, and flowers all feature on the menu, resulting in a fun affair that serves as a reminder that good vegan food goes beyond batter fried cauliflower.

### 5. Laundromat

Austurstræti 9

Laundromat offers a cool '50's-diner-meets-maximalist-library vibe, decorated with bright furnishings, maps and colour-coded books. It's great for families in general, but teens in particular like the fun decor, burgers and milkshakes. We especially love their vocal support for breastfeeding, as well as the fact that you can actually do laundry here!

### 6. Deig Workshop

Tryggvagata 14

Deig's 'poor man's offer' is as good as it gets on this abnormally expensive island. For 1100 ISK, you can choose from a handmade bagel with a filling of your choice, any doughnut or pastry from their selection, and a simple drink (coffee, juice or kokomjól, basically). Even better, they open at 7 a.m., and the offer is valid every weekday, for as long as the bakery is open.

### 7. Sushi Social

Pinghóltsstræti 5

If you are a group of friends looking for a fun night about town, Sushi Social is the place to be. The menu is ideal for sharing—although, who'd want to share something as delectable as langoustine tempura. Order one—or several—of those colourful drinks with names that recall a tropical holiday to make a fun night even more festive.

### 8. Sumac Grill + Drinks

Laugavegur 28

Sumac is one of the few places that cooks lamb with none of that sous-vide nonsense. An unpretentious lamb rib, cooked on the grill, kissed with smoke and licked by flame is pretty hard to top. Sumac serves it with blistered grapes, fried almonds, a splash of thinned down muhammara and lentils. It's a dish you can't get enough of, and thankfully the restaurant hasn't dared to take it off the menu.

### 9. Borg 29

Borgartún 29

This is one of the more comfortable food halls to be at, with a wide variety of choices to please most anyone. "Almost every place makes small plates, which is excellent for sharing," observed one panellist. She's right, one can choose from sushi at Umami, to burgers at Yuzu, to grilled meats at Bál, to healthy skyr bowls at Svala.

### 10. Fish Company

Vesturgata 2a

For the definitive seafood experience in Reykjavík, you'd be hard pressed to find a better spot than Fiskfélagið. Their tasting menus are a great way to try the best Icelandic waters have to offer, from Atlantic cod served Japanese style, to harissa wolf-fish. The sushi platter makes for a great lunch while their fish of the day is usually a generous pan-fried dish with a luscious sauce.

### 11. Prir Frakkar

Baldursgata 14

This cosy, tucked-away restaurant has not let anything sway them from tradition—you'll spot everything from foal, to blackbird, to cod throats to plökkfiskur on their menu. Opened in 1989, the restaurant has been run by chef Úlfar Eysteinnsson and his family ever since. A visit to this place underlines that good old-fashioned Icelandic cooking can be all kinds of memorable.

## Drinking

### 12. Röntgen

Hverfisgata 12

This place has it all. "It's crazy how it's continued to dominate the bar scene in Reykjavík," one panellist raved. "But it's just got so many elements. It works for every vibe, which is so rare for a bar." Despite only appearing on the downtown scene a few years ago, the place has already cemented itself among the nightlife legends.

### 13. Jungle Cocktail Bar

Austurstræti 9

"Jungle's vibe naturally caters to an early night crowd. It's stylish and airy, and, of course, they have the most innovative and delicious cocktails in the city," enthused one panel member. The panel also praised the bar's diversity—noting how attendees spanned all ages and demographics.

### 14. Kaffibarinn

Bergstaðastræti 1

Let's be real: there's a reason that Kaffibarinn is still here and full of dedicated regulars. At night, you'll find the crowd gets rowdy, the convos get interesting and the dance floor gets sweaty in the most wonderful way. "It's the obvious choice," said a panellist. "Who doesn't have some crazy story from closing time in the smoking area at Kaffibarinn?"

### 15. Gaukurinn

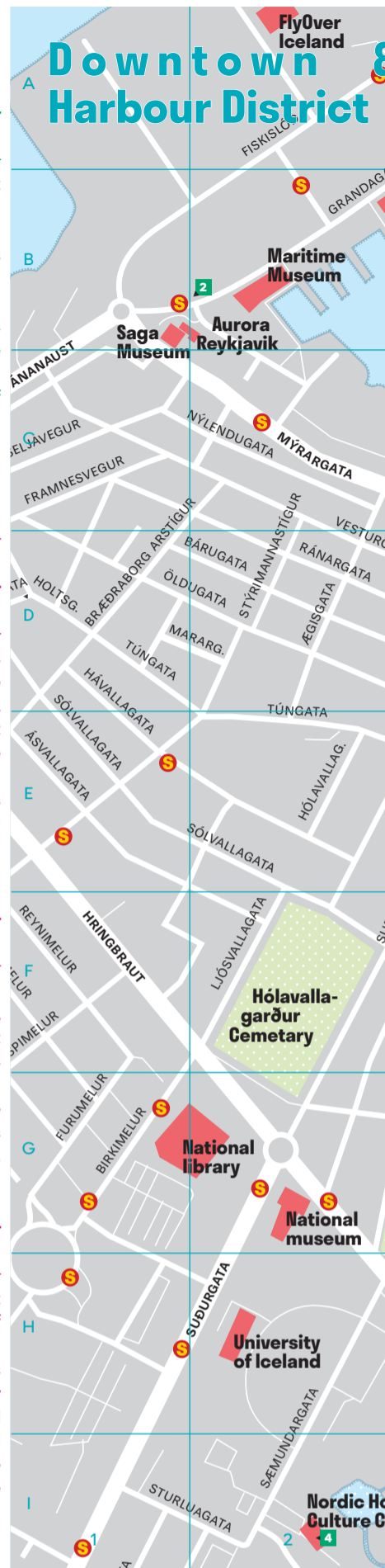
Tryggvagata 22

With dim lights, leather sofas, gender-neutral bathrooms and free tampons, this bar/venue is the preferred hangout for the unorthodox Reykvikingar. So if you're looking for like-minded peeps in the alt and queer scene, there you go. From heavy metal fests to quieter indie shows, this second floor haunt does it all.

### 16. Bravó

Laugavegur 22

Bravó: a dark room with amber-toned light, simple furniture, and cosy bohemian pillows. Their happy hour—perhaps the most prolific in the city—starts at 12:00 everyday and lasts until 20:00. Located in the



heart of Laugavegur, it's also a prime people-watching spot.

### 17. Óðinstorg

Óðinstorg

It's decided: Óðinstorg is the best outdoor drinking spot in Reykjavík. The new square was previously a parking area, but is now an open, airy, designed-for-those-lazy-summer-days paradise. You have good sun, good seating, Snaps, and Bodega, and serious mainland European vibes.

### 18. Session Craft Bar

Bankastræti 14

With its minimal appearance, stainless steel bar backed with dozens of taps and fridges full of beers canned and



**ICELANDIC Fish, Lamb & Chicken in original PAKISTANI curries**

**SHALIMAR**  
PAKISTANI CUISINE

AUSTURSTRÆTI 4, 101 REYKJAVÍK ☎ 551 0 292

www.shalimar.is

Tandoori dishes & Nan breads  
Kebabs, Samosas & Vegetarian specialities





### New In Town ☆



### Tres Locos

Hafnarstræti 4, 101 Reykjavík

A new restaurant just dropped a stone's throw away from Grapevine's office, and it's a true gem. Tres Locos is a vibrant Mexican restaurant offering over 50 types of tequila and mezcal, along with traditional Mexican dishes—quesadillas, tacos, tostadas, and fajitas. The menu also features Icelandic ingredients, so you'll find delicacies like arctic char tostada on offer. Tres Locos is a bit pricey, but everyone deserves a day of spoiling themselves with delicious margaritas and nachos! **12**

## D 12 Tónar

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

Open every day of the week



Skólavörðustígur 15

## E



MAIKAI  
REYKJAVÍK  
ORGANIC  
FAIRTRADE  
WHOLE SOME

HAFNARTORG | SMÁRALIND  
@MAIKAIREYKJAVIK WWW.MAIKALIS

## F



**SMASHED BURGERS AND HOT CHICKEN IN DOWNTOWN REYKJAVIK**

HAFNARSTRÆTI 101 REYKJAVIK

SSS STÉL

bottled, Session is a place that, while cosy enough, is made for serious craft heads. Whether you're hankering for a lip-puckering gose, or an IPA packed with more flowers than a funeral, Session has got your back.

### 19. Skuggabaldur

Pósthússtræti 9

A weekday bar is all about atmosphere. You want something lively but cosy, bustling without being jam packed, and above all else, full of good vibes. Skuggabaldur has perfected this delicate combo, with the best of Reykjavík's jazz scene showing up nightly to entertain patrons and make even a Wednesday memorable. Despite only opening last year, the bar has quickly become

a favourite with everyone from downtown artists to suburban folk.

## Shopping

### 20. Yeoman

Laugavegur 7

2021 saw Yeoman being donned by international celebrities while also continuing her reign as the primary fashion tastemaker for Reykjavík women. "To talk about modern Icelandic style is to talk about Yeoman," one panel member said.

### 21. Lucky Records

Rauðarástígur 10

Lucky Records is the one-stop-shop for anything Icelandic music. They've got it all; new titles, CDs, rarities, vinyl, cassettes, second hand 12", 7" sections, you name it! Notably, the store is very in touch with the local underground. Basically any Icelandic release—no matter how big or small—will be sold there, and trust and believe, their shopkeepers will know them inside and out.

### 22. Hringekjan

Pórunnartún 2

Similar to a consignment shop, Hringekjan is a space where people can rent out spaces to sell their own clothes and accessories. It's the most eco-friendly way to keep your closet fresh, which, in light of our current world, is something

we should all be thinking about. "I don't know how they get such chic people to sell their clothes there," laughed one panel member. If you want something groovy this is the place to go."

### 23. Apótek Atelier

Laugavegur 16

Apótek Atelier is quite new on the scene, but this small boutique has already made quite a splash. Created by designers Ýr Prastardóttir, Halldóra Sif Guðlaugsdóttir and Sævar Markús Óskarsson, Apótek Atelier blurs the line between studio and store, functioning as both the designers' workspace, as well as the place where one can purchase their wares.

## I

### KAFFIBARINN

Happy hour until 19:00 All days  
Cocktail hour all days between 20:00 and 23:00  
DJ's all Weekends  
www.facebook.com/kaffibarinn

## H

**WASTELAND**  
SECOND HAND CLOTHING  
Ingólfsstræti 5  
101 Reykjavík

**WASTELAND**  
SECOND HAND CLOTHING  
Ingólfsstræti 5  
101 Reykjavík



When one door closes, another opens

## Life's A Mess

Relationship lessons from musician una schram

Words: Asha Edmondson Photo: Joana Fontinha

The title of una schram's new EP, "mess mixtape," perfectly describes the collection of emotions the 22-year-old sings about. Half break-up album and half soul-searching coming-of-age revelations, una lets us in on her emotional journey. Iceland's own Amy Winehouse-inspired pop R&B artist may have just released the musical version of emotional empowerment we always needed.

### Hard break-ups, good music

Reeling from her first major heartbreak, una dealt with her emotions in the only way she knew how: songwriting. Starting at only 10 years old, una has been writing music for the greater part of her life. Always performing and singing, it seems natural that the easiest way for her to deal with emotional pain is through song.

"I always had fun with it. It was also a way for me to express what I was feeling, which I think a lot of musicians can relate to," una shares. "Some people just have a way of being able to put their feelings into words that rhyme."

Fortunately for us, una has that talent. In "mess mixtape" she weaves a tapestry of emotion that carefully explores young heartbreak and finding yourself. In doing so, una manages to pinpoint these common and deeply human experiences, articulating them with refreshing accuracy.

### Growing pains

Between studies at the British and Irish Modern Music Institute, the pandemic, personal life, and the process of songwriting, the album took three years for una to finish. Even though heartbreak and moving on are timeless topics, una can tell she has progressed from this period in her life.

"It's quite interesting for me to be releasing it now," una says, adding, "all of the situationships and feelings are long gone, so it's weird that now I'm getting out all of these feelings that I'd kind of forgotten I'd had. I'm trying to relate back to my old self to release this project."

The stark difference in personality between "pre-mess una" and "post-mess una" almost prevented her from releasing the work. She was worried about the public's reaction to her personality, fearing that people would conflate the emotions in songs with her present self.

"It's sometimes very difficult when you release music because it's so personal. I feel like when you let people in like that they will make assumptions and have opinions about you, which are not necessarily an accurate representation of where my head is at now," una shares, explaining her understanding of her personal growth.

"There was also sort of a battle with myself whether or not to release the project," she adds. "I

was a little bit afraid that it would come across juvenile or adolescent because it's a younger me that's being represented in this mixtape. But I have a lot of love for my past self, so I thought, 'fine, I can let people just take it where they want it, I have no control over what

people think anyway.'"

### We're all the same

Ultimately, una realised that while she may no longer be in the same emotional place as she was three years ago when she first started

writing "mess mixtape," the emotions she felt at the time are shared by everyone.

"I don't necessarily relate to the lyrics that I wrote anymore, but some [people] will because we all have these very similar experiences when it comes to relationships and love," una says thoughtfully.

"I think it's a beautiful thing to be able to give yourself away [to someone], but you also need to put yourself first," she continues. "I hope [people] relate, but more on a level that is in hindsight. They listen and think of situations they've had that are kind of similar, where they've also come out of it with a different outlook and more control."

### The road ahead

Back living in Reykjavík with a BA under her belt, una clearly has a long and invigorating road ahead of her. She's hoping to experiment more with her music, including potential songs in Icelandic, genre shifts, and untraditional vocal techniques. If "mess mixtape" is any indicator of the future, we are dying to hear the next musical emotional journey una has in store for us.

"I'm very excited to just explore my musical identity, I guess, and see where I can go," una finishes hopefully. ✨

## EVENT PICKS



### ★ Reykjavík Jazz Festival

August 13 - August 19 - Harpa & other - 7,990 to 24,000 ISK

Just as we're trying to get out of our post-festival slump, another amazing one pops up! Reykjavík's annual Jazz Festival is the second longest-running festival in Iceland, celebrating its 22nd birthday this year, and has built up quite the reputation. Together with Iceland's

leading jazz musicians, acclaimed international players will be treating us to a week of pure joy (if you're into jazz, that is). This seven-day-long festival hosts a variety of styles, ranging from big band to gospel, from contemporary to Latin jazz, blues to fusion... You name it, they've got it!

The majority of the festival takes place at the beloved Harpa, but other venues such as Skuggabaldur and Hallgrímskirkja are also participating. Check out their full schedule at [reykjavikjazz.is](http://reykjavikjazz.is). **KW**



### ★ Ásgeir

August 27th - 20:00 - Harpa - 7,990 to 14,990 ISK

This year marks the 10 year anniversary of Ásgeir's album 'Dýrð í dauðapögn' and why not celebrate it with a big concert in Harpa? Together with a big band and strings, the album will be performed in its entirety, and we also know he will treat us to some brand new material. Isn't that just the perfect combo? Now score those tickets before it's too late! **KW**



### ★ Seigla Festival

August 5 to August 7 - Harpa - 4,200 to 14,700 ISK

Founded in 2012 by the Icelandic Schumann Society, this annual classical music festival is centred around 'lied' and chamber music with emphasis on bringing a wide array of classical music to the city. The festival takes place at Harpa and if you're not sure about attending the full festival, tickets for individual shows can be purchased as well. **KW**



### MUSIC NEWS

Menningarnótt is back! After a two year hiatus, the city-wide culture festival will take place on the 20th of August, celebrating art, music, dance, and more in Reykjavík. The City of Reykjavík and Landsbankinn recently announced the 22 projects that will be in receipt of grants to run events during the festival. The successful applicants will receive a total of 4.5 million ISK in funding from the Menningarnótt grant pool. The grants were awarded to a variety of different groups and acts, including sustainability projects, workshops, outdoor concerts, and improv shows that will all be open to the public to experience. More information about the line-up is available online at [menningarnott.is](http://menningarnott.is). **EL**

## August 5th—September 1st

# Upcoming Events

Send details of your event to: [events@grapevine.is](mailto:events@grapevine.is)

This month is packed with so many great events that we can't possibly fit them all! Check them out on [events.grapevine.is](http://events.grapevine.is) and don't hesitate to add yours!

### Friday August 5th

**The Rocky Horror Picture Show - Sing-a-long Party Screening!**  
21:00 Bío Paradís  
**Apocalypstick Pride Edition show**  
20:00 Gaukurinn  
**DJ Luana**  
22:00 Sirkus  
**Opening Recital: Your Silent Radiance**  
20:00 Harpa  
**Holdris X Vögel X Blóraböggull**  
20:00 Húrra

### Saturday August 6th

**Pride Party feat. Drag Royalty**  
20:00 Gaukurinn  
**Simon fknhdsm**  
23:00 Kaffibarinn  
**Organ Summer Concert**  
12:00 Hallgrímskirkja  
**Albumm concert series: Elli Grill (Live) & Vibes (DJ sets)**  
21:00 Sirkus  
**Spanisches Liederspiel**  
13:00 Harpa  
**Scenes from Childhood**  
16:30 Harpa  
**Strings and Piano on a Sunlit Evening**  
20:00 Harpa

### Sunday August 7th

**Pride Movie Night (NO MAKEUP screening)**  
20:00 Gaukurinn  
**Duo IsNord**  
16:00 Hallgrímskirkja  
**Organ Summer Concert**  
17:00 Hallgrímskirkja  
**Married Bliss**  
13:00 Harpa  
**Hallelujah Junction**  
16:00 Harpa  
**★ Seigla Festival's Final Recital**  
20:00 Harpa

### Monday August 8th

**Museum Summer Concert**  
20:30 Sigurjón Ólafsson Museum  
**Minimal Monday X Tada Ersha**  
21:00 Bravó

### Wednesday August 10th

**Concert: Fræbbblarnir, Æð og Ekkert**  
20:00 Gaukurinn  
**Icelandic Sagas - The Greatest Hits**  
20:00 Harpa  
**Party Karaoke**  
21:00 Sæta Svinið

### Thursday August 11th

**LaFontaine (DJ Set)**  
21:00 Sirkus  
**DJ Steindór Grétar**  
22:00 Kaffibarinn  
**Hausar Drum & Bass**  
21:00 Bravó

### Friday August 12th

**King Lucky & Jesper Lemke (DK) - Presents: Soul Sirkus vol.3**  
22:00 Sirkus  
**The Women Who Rode Away**  
20:00 Tjarnarbío  
**Silja Glömmi**  
23:00 Kaffibarinn

### Saturday August 13th

**★ NOR feat. Jorge Rossy (DK/IS/ES)**  
20:00 Harpa  
**★ Jonathan Kreisberg Quartet (US)**  
21:15 Harpa  
**Organ Summer Concert**  
12:00 Hallgrímskirkja  
**The Backpack of Wings: Sensory Networks - Free Workshop**  
10:00 Nordic House  
**Monsters and Ghosts of the Far North - Free Workshop**  
16:00 Nordic House  
**Disco Dream - Svala Björgvins & Haffi Haff**  
23:45 Pablo Discobar  
**KGB DJ Sett**  
22:00 Sirkus  
**Tu Ha? Tu Bjö!**  
20:00 Skuggabaldur  
**The Women Who Rode Away**  
20:00 Tjarnarbío  
**DJ Frimann**  
23:00 Kaffibarinn

**Ottoman, Aragruí & Flesh Machine**  
21:00 Húrra

### Sunday August 14th

**Radical Kitchen Strikes Back!**  
18:00 Andrymi  
**Organ Summer Concert**  
17:00 Hallgrímskirkja  
**HJAL Quartet**  
12:00 Jörgensen  
**Museum Summer Concert**  
20:30 Sigurjón Ólafsson Museum  
**MÍT Showcase**  
20:30 Skuggabaldur

### Monday August 15th

**BERG (IS/DK)**  
17:00 Rádhús  
**Reykjavík Jazz Jam 22**  
20:30 Skuggabaldur  
**Karaoke Night**  
20:00 Gaukurinn  
**BÖSS**  
20:00 Skuggabaldur

### Tuesday August 16th

**★ IKARUS (CH)**  
21:15 Harpa  
**★ Ingibjörg Turchi (IS)**  
20:00 Harpa

### Wednesday August 17th

**Party Karaoke**  
21:00 Sæta Svinið  
**★ Jakob Bro / Óskar Guðjónsson / Skúli Sverrisson**  
21:15 Harpa  
**Klaki (concert)**  
20:00 Kálfatjarnarkirkju (Vogar)  
**★ Guitar Islancio & Unnur Birna**  
21:45 Harpa

### Thursday August 18th

**Döbbskúrin**  
21:00 Sirkus  
**★ Arild Andersen Group (NO)**  
21:15 Harpa  
**Klaki (concert)**  
20:00 Kálfatjarnarkirkju (Vogar)  
**DJ Z**  
22:00 Kaffibarinn

### Friday July 19th

**Madonna Truth or Dare - Par-tyscreening!**  
21:00 Bío Paradís  
**DJ Hotmail & Dj G-Mail**  
22:00 Sirkus

### Saturday August 20th

**Organ Marathon**  
14:00 Hallgrímskirkja

**Tonik Ensemble (Live), PAUL ILEA (RO), Leon S Kemp (DJ set)**  
21:00 Sirkus  
**DJ Katla**  
23:00 Kaffibarinn

### Sunday August 21st

**Hilary Baird Piano Concert**  
14:00 Harpa

### Monday August 22nd

**Minimal Monday X Tada Ersha**  
21:00 Bravó

### Tuesday August 23rd

**Stand up Comedy - The Dirty Immigrant**  
20:00 Húrra

### Wednesday August 24th

**Party Karaoke**  
21:00 Sæta Svinið

### Thursday August 25th

**DJ Óli Dóri**  
22:00 Kaffibarinn  
**Evening Walks: The Shore**  
20:00 Harpa  
**Extreme Chill Showcase: Aristokrasía (Úlfur Eldjárn) Live - Skurken (Live)**  
21:00 Sirkus

### Friday August 26th

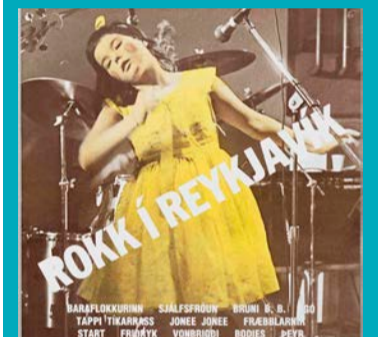
**Muriel's Wedding - Party Screening**  
21:00 Bío Paradís  
**Rex Pistols, Gods of the New Age, Black Mist, ROHT**  
20:00 Gaukurinn  
**Orang Volante (DJ Set)**  
22:00 Sirkus  
**Drag-Súgur: Swan Song**  
21:00 Þjóðleikhúsið  
**DJ BenSöl**  
23:00 Kaffibarinn

### Saturday August 27th

**Albumm Concert Series: Skelkur í Bringu + DJ Silja Glömmi**  
21:00 Sirkus  
**Drag-Súgur: Swan Song**  
21:00 Þjóðleikhúsið  
**DJ Yamaha**  
23:00 Kaffibarinn  
**Wix Collina (PL) All Nighter**  
00:00 Bravó  
**★ Ásgeir**  
20:00 Harpa

### Sunday August 28th

**The Mario Kart Tournament**  
16:00 Arena Gaming Ísland



July saw the announcement of the lineup for 'Rock In Reykjavík', a concert celebrating the 40th anniversary of Friðrik Þór Friðriksson's well-known documentary. However, the news quickly sparked controversy, as the poster promoting the event featured 50 male musicians. It became clear that no female—or LGBTQ+—performers would be featured in the show. The organisers of the event have been quoted as saying it wasn't possible to find female musicians and bands who met the criteria, despite the fact that some of Iceland's most successful rock acts are female fronted or composed entirely of women, including Mammút, Kælan mikla, and Vök. Since the backlash it has been announced that Rokk í Reykjavík's "guest of honour" will be Ragga Gísla, who was a member of Grýlurnar. Because adding one woman to the lineup totally fixes the issue... **JG**



Extreme Chill Festival is hands down the greatest Icelandic music festival you've never heard of. The festival has been a hidden gem for those that like festivals like Sonar and always offers the most cutting edge experimental electronic music in Iceland. Extreme Chill will be held on the first weekend in October but they've just recently announced part of the lineup, including Sóley, who received a Reykjavík Grapevine Music Award in January for the best album of last year, 'Melancholia'. There will also be foreign artists performing, such as Fennesz from Austria, and the ambient musician KMRU to name but a couple. **VG**



**Alicja Kwade**  
*In Relation to the Sun,  
to Sequences of Events,*  
i8 Grandi — 22.01.22–22.12.22

09.06.–18.09.2022

# Stitches and Threads

Agnès Ársælsdóttir, Anna Línadal, Anna Andrea Winther, Eirún Sigurðardóttir, Erla Þórarinsdóttir, Guðrún Bergsdóttir, G.Erla – Guðrún Erla Geirsdóttir, Guðný Rósa Ingimarsdóttir, James Merry, Kristinn G. Harðarson, Kristín Gunnlaugsdóttir, Loji Höskuldsson, Petra Hjartardóttir, Rósa Sigrún Jónsdóttir



KJARVALSSTAÐIR



**Kjarvalsstaðir**  
Flókagata 24  
105 Reykjavík  
+354 411 6400

**Open daily**  
10h00–17h00  
artmuseum.is  
#reykjavikartmuseum



Flying the flag for queer rights

## Weaving Through Time

‘A Rainbow Thread’ serves to remind us that queer people have always played a role in history

Words: **Josie Anne Gaitens** Photos: **Emma Ledbetter**

“Who belongs to the Icelandic nation?” the opening page of ‘A Rainbow Thread’ asks. The pamphlet is the physical version of a guide created by the National Museum of Iceland in collaboration with Samtökin ’78, The National Queer Organisation of Iceland. In seeking to answer that first question, it offers a queer reading of the museum’s permanent exhibition, ‘Making of a Nation—Heritage and History in Iceland.’

“It opened in 2018, for the fortieth anniversary of Samtökin ’78,” Anna Leif Auðar Elidóttir, who is in charge of the museum’s education programme, explains. “It was an idea that came from the grass-roots of the organisation.”

### Strong language

‘A Rainbow Thread,’ which in addition to the booklet is available as a free downloadable audio guide, seeks to challenge the incorrect assumption that queer identities are only a feature of modern life. With thoughtful and questioning text, the guide encourages visitors to re-examine the artefacts and exhibits in front of them from a post-heteronormative perspective.

“It’s interesting because the National Museum is an institution—it’s part of the establishment,” Anna says. “But the guide uses very courageous words.”

“It uses the F-word,” her colleague, Communications Manager Steindór Gunnar Steindórsson, adds. “It struck me a little bit because I wasn’t expecting it. But I thought, ‘wow, this is great.’ This is progress.”

“I’m quite proud of it,” Anna says with a smile. “It’s a conversation starter.”

### “Silence”

The guide traces Icelandic queer history from the beginning of settlement, right up to present day. However, there are significant and notable absences, and unlike other readings of the past, ‘A Rainbow Thread’ confronts them head on. A section of the guide is simply

“That’s what museums are for: to be a part of the community that we live in”



called “Silence,” and it discusses how a lack of research and representation mean that little is known about queer lives and identities between the middle ages and the 19th century.

“There were centuries where the creators of the guide didn’t have anything to talk about,” Anna says. “But they didn’t want to leave a gap, they wanted to acknowledge the silence. It also speaks to the absence of queerness as a decision of governments in some countries.”

### A gay national hero?

Also mentioned in the guide is the fact that some evidence suggests that one of the first curators of the museum, Sigurður Guðmundsson, was himself queer. Sigurður was a hugely influential figure in Icelandic culture, and is responsible for designing the Icelandic national costume. Despite his respected position in society, there were always rumours that he was effeminate and possibly attracted to men.

“They don’t have definite proof that he was gay,” Steindór says. “But there are signs. He sent drawings of a penis in a letter to his friend, for instance. He was into dresses and known for not being a particularly masculine man—he was in touch with his feminine side.”

“We don’t know for sure how he identified,” Anna adds. “This is based on rumours. Perhaps he was just ahead of his time,” she laughs.

### Starting a conversation

Both Anna and Steindór are delighted with the response they have received to the exhibition so far, and hope to see the project continue and develop over time.

“This is just the start of something,” Steindór says enthusiastically. “We will probably add to it—hopefully Samtökin ’78 will come back to us with fresh ideas and updates.”

“But we are also looking forward to other kinds of collaboration,” adds Anna. “Not only with people from this organisation but from different groups in society too.”

“It’s very important,” she continues. “And that’s what museums are for: to be a part of the community that we live in. A neutral place for different conversations.”



Thready or not

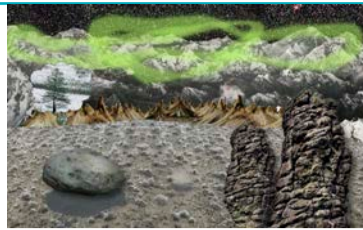


★ FROM THE SHORE TO THE MUDPOOL

Until August 31st - Verksmiðjan - Hjalteyri

A 'desire path' represents the shortest route between origin and destination. The exhibition, curated by SPIT Collective, places the concept of desire paths in the context of Queer ecology. Referring to NYC's waterfront pier's

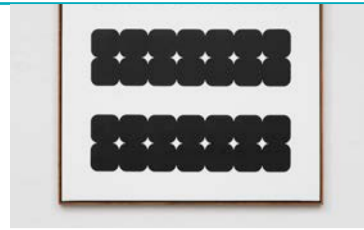
popularity among the queer community of the 70s as origin, and the old factory in Hjalteyri as destination, the artists explore how their practices are linked to 'cruising' by reclaiming spaces through wandering and showcasing different mediums of work such as performances, writings, readings, and walking to create a dialogue with the space. The show's ultimate intention is to launch discussion and research, exploring the place of outcasts within today's society, and the perception of public spaces related to the queer community and women, referencing NYC's waterfront community of the 70's as archetype for human and artistic expression. **KW**



★ Voyage

Until September 18th - Glérhúsið

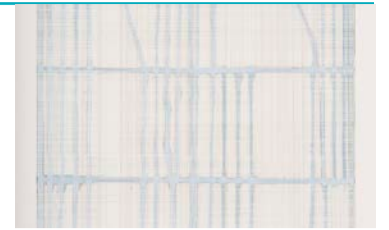
Glérhúsið is a new exhibition space that recently opened on Vesturgata 33b in downtown Reykjavík. Berghall are Olga Bergmann and Anna Hallin and their most recent collaboration includes video work called "New Wilderness", accompanied by various sculptures and drawings. "Voyage" aims to inspire an active dialogue between art and its environment. Open on Sundays. **KW**



★ Some Recent Work

Until October 2nd - National Gallery of Iceland

The museum showcases a selection of new works that were gifted over the past four years, reflecting the complexity of contemporary Icelandic art. While many topics are explored through various media, systems and repetitions are the selection's guiding principle. **KW**



★ Drawings

Until September 10th - Hverfisgallerí

The gallery's founding member Edda Jónsdóttir displays 50 framed pictures created over the last two years. With paper, watercolour and pencil, she experiments with how drawing the same image can have different outcomes and hide different meanings when touched by repetition, emotion and everything else life has to offer. **KW**

August 5th—September 1st

Art Exhibitions

Gallery openings, happenings, showings and pop-up exhibitions all around the capital region.

Send details of yours to: [events@grapevine.is](mailto:events@grapevine.is)

Ongoing

REYKJAVÍK ART MUSEUM - HAFNARHÚS

Erró: The Power of Images

Erró is undoubtedly Iceland's best-known visual artist. The Reykjavík Art Museum is custodian of nearly 4,000 pieces of the artist's work after he began donating them in the 1980s, and this exhibition of more than 300 of them is the most extensive showing of Erró's works ever seen in Iceland. Videos, graphics, and collages—with larger works in public spaces, and paintings of all scales—showcase Erró's eclectic appropriation of imagery from every possible domain. • Runs until September 29th

ÁSMUNDARSALUR

Essentially untitled

The multidisciplinary French artist Claire Paugum's exhibition focuses on questioning. With common rules and representations in mind, she confronts sensitive experiences, demonstrating the unstable nature of images. Exploring themes of shapelessness, entropy, disorder, and letting go, her art lives in the space as living beings would. Some crawl on the floor and walls, some become fluid matter, integrating seamlessly into the space yet challenging the spatial perspective. • Runs until August 14th

WESTFJORDS

NR. 4 Umhverfing

"Akademia Skynjunarinnar", which can be translated to "Academy of Perception", is hosting their fourth edition of their annual "Umhverfing" art journey. The aim of the project is to promote local culture through art in both traditional and unconventional ways and spaces, stimulating discussions about art and life with the local community.

For this year's edition they established collaborations with 125 artists who will showcase their work. All have roots leading back to these locations, thus reconnecting artists with origin. The exhibition takes the viewer on a literal journey through art, culture and nature with the help of GPS points. More information about the diverse programme can

be found on their website.

• Runs until August 27th

MUSEUM OF DESIGN & APPLIED ART

Bathing Culture

The outdoor geothermal pool is the most interesting public sphere in Iceland. A place where strangers cross paths and acquaintances meet, it is a source of wellbeing and a major part of everyday life for many. This exhibition traces the development of Icelandic bathing culture, showing how architects and designers, pool staff and the public have together shaped the story. • Runs until September 25th

Virtual waters

Taking a philosophical approach to the Iceland bathing culture, Hrunn Atladóttir describes diving into water as entering another dimension full of contradictions. In connection with the museum's current 'bathing culture' exhibition, this work challenges viewers to dive into this dimension through virtual reality and experience the effect water can have on perception. • Runs until October 23rd

REYKJANESBÆR ART MUSEUM

Orbit/Ellipse

Gabriela Friðriksdóttir and Björn Roth approach the world of colouring books from a philosophical and creative perspective, musing on whether having to draw within the lines influences a child's creativity negatively. The artists created their own colouring book that doubles as the exhibition catalogue and is available as a numbered art work. Breaking free from having to draw within the lines, they present their own coloured-in versions to explore boundaries by crossing them. • Runs until November 13th

i8 GRANDI

In Relation To The Sun

i8 Grandi is a new exhibition space, the unique concept of which is to focus on year-long shows by single artists. The exhibitions will evolve while on view, allowing their creators to reflect how the passage of time alters their work and encourage repeat viewings to observe

those changes. This inaugural exhibition by Alicja Kwade encompasses installation, sculpture and work on paper. Its title—initially "In Relation To The Sun"—will change as the nature of the pieces on display evolves. • Runs until December 22nd

NATIONAL LIBRARY

Sir Joseph Banks - Iceland Expedition

Joseph Banks joined Captain James Cook on his first voyage around the world. Barely a year after they returned, he led the first British scientific expedition to Iceland in 1772, exactly 250 years ago. The National Library opens up an exhibition to celebrate the anniversary of his voyage. • Runs until November 20th

HAFNARBORG

In the Depths of Your Own Awareness

This retrospective exhibition features works spanning Gunnar Örn Gunnarsson's almost 40-year career. His first exhibition raised existential questions regarding modern society and set the precedent for what would be his lifelong inspiration: human existence. This retrospective exhibition features works spanning his career, embodying the artist's spiritual search. • Runs until August 28th

HVERFISGALLERÍ

Inner Space

Three-dimensional wall works, reliefs, and a colour palette ranging from untreated wood, to principal colours, to neon. Belgian artist Jeanine Cohen's solo exhibition explores the effect colours and shapes can have on our spatial experience. While each piece is a stand-alone work of art, she uses the exhibition space to stimulate a collaborative dialogue between them. • Runs until September 29th

KJARVALSSTAÐIR

Stitches and Threads

Local artists explore and confront social issues, the poetry of everyday life, and the tenderness of nostalgia through embroidery and use of needlework. The exhibition focuses on this sub-discipline within textile art, and where some honour its heritage traditionally, others approach it via progressive mixed media experiments. • Runs until September 18th

Heads from Clouds

Jóhannes S. Kjarval, one of Iceland's most beloved painters, is known for his portraits and artistic interpretation of Icelandic nature. He started

his career in 1923 and won the heart of the nation when he started depicting the "common people". The connection he establishes between his portraits and Icelandic nature is something he is still known for today. • Runs until September 28th

REYKJAVÍK ART MUSEUM - ÁSMUNDARSAFN

Spatial Infractions

Rósa Gísladóttir exhibits her work in conversation with that of Icelandic sculpture pioneer Ásmundur Sveinsson. Rósa is best known for her creations in the medium of plaster, but she often references architecture in her work and here will use Ásmundarsafn, the museum building itself, as a sculpture. • Runs until August 7th

NATIONAL GALLERY

Liðamót / Ode to Join

Margét H. Blöndal's exhibition honours connections. The title refers to the result of movement when three or more joints come together. Ode to Join consists of drawings made with powdered pigments and oil, and three-dimensional works that were made within the space of the museum. Each individual work of art is intended to work in combination with the surrounding pieces, becoming almost a symphonic poem where all are joined together. • Runs until October 2nd

Jewellery of Dieter Roth

Mostly known as a visual artist, musician, poet, thinker, and trailblazer, Dieter Roth's creation of innovative jewellery is often overlooked. This exhibition showcases his unique and experimental approach to jewellery-making and bears witness

to his unconventional methods that make him the versatile artist he is known as today.

• Runs until September 23rd

REYKJAVÍK MUSEUM OF PHOTOGRAPHY

Light Space - Shadow Space

Ester Jóhannesdóttir's work explores how abstract forms and shadows can be transformed into clearer, graspable imagery through photography and the use of natural light. The exhibition displays her photographs of buildings, shot both inside and outside at different times of day, exploring the relationship between opposites as darkness retreats with increased natural light. • Runs until August 16th

GERÐARSAFN

We can talk

This exhibition marks the end of a collaboration between prominent cross-disciplinary festivals and institutions located in five Nordic countries, initiated by Platform GÁTT. Nine artists showcase their work, reflecting on what it means to be part of the Nordic Region and exploring both the positive and the negative aspects of a shared identity. • Runs until September 4th

ALDA

Challenging the boundaries between visual arts and dance, ALDA draws upon the history of women's collective physical labour through repetitive movement and song in order to initiate an intimate convergence. ALDA is the result of a collaboration between choreographer Katrín Gunnarsdóttir, designer Eva Signý Berger, and Baldvín Þór Magnússon. • Runs until September 4th

MUSEUM OF DESIGN AND APPLIED ART      GARDATORG 1 210 GARDABÆR

EXHIBITIONS

BATHING CULTURE    UNTIL 23.10.

TIDY UP    UNTIL 31.12.

HRUND ATLADÓTTIR  
VIRTUAL WATERS    UNTIL 23.10.

HÖGNA SIGURÐARDÓTTIR  
ARCHITECTURAL MODELS  
UNTIL 31.08.

OPEN TUE—SUN 12—17  
[WWW.HONNUNARSAFN.IS](http://WWW.HONNUNARSAFN.IS)

[Instagram](#)   [Facebook](#)   [honnunarsafn](#)

- 1 Post cards — *Signý Þórhallsdóttir*
- 2 Ceramic — *Aldís Bára Einarsdóttir*
- 3 Tarot candle — *Þórunn Árnadóttir*
- 4 Pillow case — *Signý Þórhallsdóttir*

RAMMAGERÐIN, ÍSLAND 1940



Reykjavík ó Reykjavík  
*Signý Þórhallsdóttir fyrir Rammagerðina*



2

A great selection of design and local craft



3



4

Reykjavík ó Reykjavík  
*Signý Þórhallsdóttir fyrir Rammagerðina*

Skólavörðustígur 7  
Skólavörðustígur 12  
Kringlan  
Harpa  
Flugstöð Leifs Eiríkssonar

RAMM  
ACER  
ÐIN *Ísland*  
1940

WWW.RAMMAGERÐIN.IS



Director Monika Konarzewska

## 'No Makeup'

Exploring Characters On And Off Stage

Words: **Iryna Zubenko** Photo: **Grzegorz Bieńko**

Monika Konarzewska film debut 'No Makeup' highlights the lives of foreign-origin characters in drag culture

"People and system restrictions," says film director Monika Konarzewska about her main sources of inspiration. Straddling the line between documentary and performance, her debut film 'No Makeup' takes a close look at queer life in Iceland through the eyes of expat drag queens and kings. The film was named 'Best LGBT Documentary' at the Berlin Documentary Film Festival, and Monika has received the 'Best Director, Documentary' award at Berlin Indie Film Festival for her work.

### Freedom of expression

"I was so moved by how easily drag artists can talk about private traumas and then completely turn the topic into something funny," Monika explains. "Drag gives a space to express all secrets with no shame, through different mediums and in an exaggerated way."

'No Makeup' guides viewers through intimate stories of local drag performers—Faye Knus, Morning Starr, Hans and Gala Noir. Each of them has different reasons for why they ended up in drag, and different meanings for the performance itself. Monika agrees that it was key to show diversity. "It's a documentary about foreign people living in Iceland and finding their place to express themselves in the way they want to," she shares. "The

way they felt like they should act but couldn't do so in their homeland."

### Every drag is different

An immigrant herself, Monika believes that Iceland is a country that welcomes people from all places and backgrounds, allowing them to be themselves. "Including me," she says. "Since childhood, I was taught that God loves everyone unconditionally. But then you hear that some people are more equal and some less deserving to be loved." Monika shares her story of growing up in Poland, a country where religion still plays an important role in people's mentality.

"I think most of the hatred comes from the lack of knowledge," she says. "That's why in this documentary I wanted to share people's stories to 'un-taboo' harmful stereotypes about them." One of 'No Makeup's' goals is to give people who don't know anything about drag culture a chance to see it through the characters behind the stage makeup.

"That's why 'No Makeup' was made—to show that we all have similar struggles and at the same time we are very different and that's okay," says Monika. "We know

drag mostly as entertainment, but there is no single definition of what drag is, it's above any rules."

### First-time challenges

Shooting the documentary was quite a process, Monika says. In total, it took two years with breaks, followed by an extra year of post-production. "It wasn't easy because at the same time I was working three jobs in Reykjavik and the project was made without any financial support," she says, adding that because of Covid-19, getting funding in Iceland became impossible.

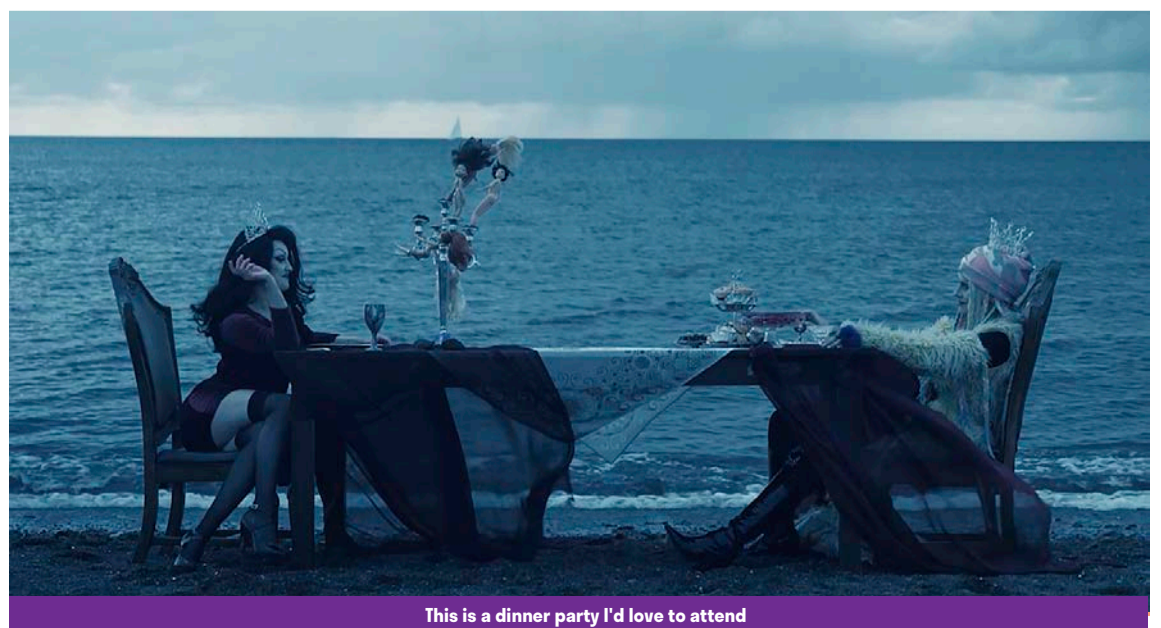
When asked what was the most challenging part of making 'No Makeup', Monika is confident it was post-production. "In documentaries, you don't write a script," she says. "It's not the same as

plot-based films because you have to deal with the footage you have; you can't plan it. It was hard but at the same time one of the best moments in my life."

### Going forward

Without disclosing many details, Monika says her next movie will talk about someone who is on the autism spectrum. "I strongly believe that when you are doing something from the position of your heart, you will be heard," she says. "It's just the beginning of my directing path and I hope it will be easier after 'No Makeup.'" 🍷

'No Makeup' is screening at Gaukurinn on August 7.



This is a dinner party I'd love to attend



Sick new Slagtog album dropping soon

# Fighting back with feminism

Slagtog empowers participants with verbal and physical skills to combat violence

Words: **Emma Ledbetter**

Photo: **Emma Ledbetter**

As participants leave their first feminist self defense workshop, there is a palpable shift in the room as quiet strangers become empowered individuals, united by their autonomy, knowledge, and strength. This is the mission of Slagtog, a women and queer-led feminist self defense organisation dedicated to combating gender-based violence with tools participants can use in any situation.

“When I did my first Slagtog workshop before becoming a member, I remember I was standing so tall and I felt so grounded,” says Meeri Mäkinen, one of the organisation’s newest trainers. “I really wish everyone could experience that.”

## Reversing the stigma

Elínborg Hörpu- og Önundarbur, a self-defense trainer and one of Slagtog’s founders, says they had previously tried self defense classes aimed

at women that were anti-feminist because they perpetuated the stigmas surrounding gender-based violence. Instructors told women what not to do, such as don’t go to parties alone or get in a car with strangers. While these seem like reasonable suggestions, and Elí encourages people to approach situations with logic, basing self defence training on platitudes like this takes away a women’s agency.

Slagtog instead equips people with tools for any situation they may find themselves in. “Our focus is on empowering the participant in all senses of the word, starting by reinforcing the basic knowledge that our body is ours, and we have the right to bodily integrity and autonomy,” Elí says.

Violence does not happen because of something a victim does, but rather because of the person who acts violently toward them. Slagtog teaches participants that they can respond in a number of ways to de-escalate the situ-

ation: removing themselves, responding verbally, or fighting back physically. Self defense is often advertised as martial arts, but physical techniques are only part of what participants learn in feminist self defense, says Mariam Arnedo Moreno, a trainer and one of Slagtog’s founders. “We also talk a lot about how we are socialised in this world as women, so it puts gender-based violence in that context,” Mariam explains. “But the physical parts are very accessible. It’s about defending yourself through any means, not about mastering a technique.”

## Starting from “no means no”

The idea to found Slagtog came from a French book called “Non C’est Non,” or “no means no.” The author, Irene Zeilinger, has been teaching feminist self defense for 30 years and now equips trainers.

After being in contact with Irene, Elí says they wanted her to come to Iceland to teach the principles of feminist self defense. The founders of Slagtog, in cooperation with a Romanian youth organisation, received a grant to bring the program to their respective countries.

The process of becoming a trainer is intensive, usually lasting eight hours a day for two weeks with six months in between sessions so trainers can practise what they learned. Trainers not only practice physical manoeuvres, but they also learn theories behind violence, trauma, and feminist pedagogy. Trainers also choose a specialisation, allowing them to work with girls and transgender youth, migrant women, or the LGBTQ+ community.

## The emotional toll

Trainers invite participants to share their success stories of defending themselves. “Any type of story where people managed to stop the violence or get away from it is a success to us,” Mariam says.

Despite the success stories, training can be emotionally difficult. Most of the trainers were activists before starting on their feminist self defense journey, Elí says. Thus, they have some coping skills to work with vulnerable and marginalised populations, but Slagtog also hopes to provide more formal therapy for their trainers soon.

“Sometimes someone will open up about a difficult situation that they are in, and there’s not much you can do. You can refer them to organisations where they can get help or try to give advice if they want it, but in the end you don’t control what they do and you know they might be going back to a really violent situation,” Elí says. “This is one of the most challenging parts of being a trainer.”

Everything is worth it, the trainers agree, when they see participants leave with their heads held high.

“Every time I’ve been part of a training, the participants have been so happy. There’s a lot of emotions, and sometimes there’s crying and anger, but at the end I feel like everyone walks out feeling quite strong and powerful,” Elí explains. “They really are strong, but they’ve now had the opportunity to explore that and feel it in the unique way feminist self defense has to offer.”



# EXPLORE UNSEEN ICELAND

ON THE ULTIMATE FLYING RIDE

**FlyOver**  
ICELAND

OPEN EVERY DAY | [flyovericeland.com](https://flyovericeland.com)



# BEST PIZZA IN REYKJAVÍK 2022

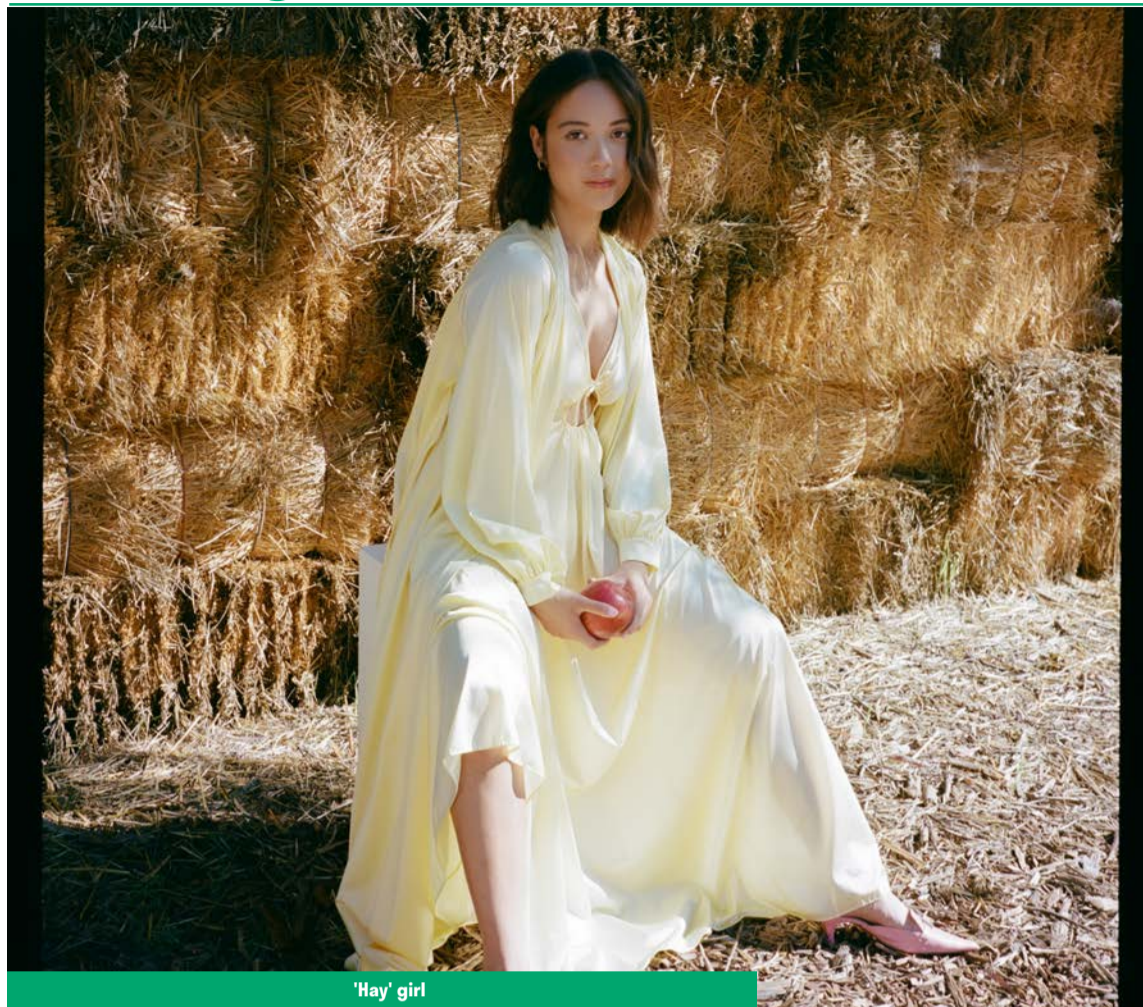


GRANDI • GARÐABÆR • HLEMMUR • SELFOSS  
@FLATEYPIZZA WWW.FLATEYPIZZA.IS +354 588 2666

FLATEY

## Track By Track

The Reykjavík Grapevine 24  
Issue 08—2022



'Hay' girl

## “Everything I Know About Love” by Laufey

An album for hopeless romantics

Words: Laufey Lín Jónsdóttir & Josie Anne Gaitens Photo: Gemma Warren



### Info

*Laufey's star is rising so fast we can barely keep up. From being lauded by Billie Eilish to performing on “Jimmy Kimmel Live!”—all at just 23 years old—it's fair to say that the singer-songwriter has made quite an impact since bursting onto the scene with her first single in 2020. With her debut album, “Everything I Know About Love” set for release this month, we sat down with Laufey to find out what love's got to do with it. Here's how she describes the album, track by track.*

### Fragile

I grew up very protected and sensitive to love. I often felt like I lived in a case of glass. Fragile is the story of the first time someone shattered that case around me. I was very influenced by cinematic scores and Bossa Nova in this song.

### Beautiful Stranger

Beautiful Stranger is about a handsome man that I saw on the tube in London. We glanced at each other a couple of times but never spoke. I came to my stop and stepped off the train, went home and wrote this song.

### Dear Soulmate

I wrote this song for my future soulmate. I'm fascinated by the idea of my soulmate walking around somewhere out there and maybe I know them, maybe I don't.

### What Love Will Do To You

This song is about that hazy crazy feeling you get when you first develop a crush on someone. I wrote it about an experience I had stumbling back from a first date. It was recorded with a live band in the studio—I wanted the jazzy arrangement to transport the listener into an old movie scene.

### I've Never Been In Love Before

Never Been In Love Before begins and ends acapella. I recorded live with a band in one take—it's one of my favourite jazz standards about falling in love for the first time and how strange it can be.

### Just Like Chet

I tend to fall in love too easily, like the Chet Baker song states, hence the title! I wrote the song about a guy who strung me along for months and I often wished I would've never met. The song showcases cello along with trombone and trumpet of course—my homage to Chet Baker.

### Everything I Know About Love

This song is about all the magical things that I was told love was like but that I've never gotten to experience. I've tried many times but fail every time. Turns out, I don't

know anything about love! The intro composed by Bach is played by myself on cello, and my mother and sister on violin.

### Falling Behind

I wrote Falling Behind because I felt like all the people around me were falling in love and I couldn't help but feel like I was falling behind.

### Hi

Hi is about moving to a new city and missing your hometown love. I wrote Hi when I moved to LA, felt lonely and missed a certain someone. I wanted to text them but didn't dare to, so I wrote this song instead.

### Dance With You Tonight

This song was born on a late night out when I found an old piano in the back of a bar. A sweet boy asked me if I wanted to dance with him but I was a bit too tipsy to do so.

### Night Light

Night Light is a tale of packing up my childhood bedroom, it was quite the emotional experience! With sweeping strings and epic harmonies, I set out to illustrate the significance of childhood bedrooms and how many experiences and memories they hold.

### Valentine

Valentine is about being in love for the first time and not quite knowing how to react to it. That electrifying and shocking feeling that you get when you realise that someone loves you back. I wrote it on Valentine's Day last year and posted it on TikTok for fun—the response was way beyond what I expected and after going viral I decided to finish the song and record it! I worked with producer Spencer Stewart to get the song to the finish line with magical harmonies and piano flares. ✨

“Everything I Know About Love” is available for worldwide release on August 26th.

PERFUMERY & BOUTIQUE

**FISCHERSUND**

ILMGERD & VERSLUN



If your bar has a happy hour, email us on [events@grapevine.is](mailto:events@grapevine.is) with the details

A selection from

# Every Happy Hour

in 101 Reykjavík

Get the complete Happy Hour listings!

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



**BASTARD BREW**  
Every day from 16:00 to 19:00.  
Beer 600 ISK,  
Wine 750 ISK.

**BÍO PARADÍS**  
Every day from 17:00 to 19:00.  
Beer 850 ISK,  
Wine 850 ISK.

**BREWDOG**  
Wed-Sun  
14:00 to 17:00.  
Beer 990 ISK,  
Wine 990 ISK.

**BRUT BAR**  
Every day from 16:00 to 19:00.  
Beer 700 ISK,  
Wine 600 ISK.  
2F1 on wine and beer on tap

**COOCOO'S NEST**  
Tue-Sat from 15:00 to 18:00.  
Beer 1000 ISK,  
Wine 1000 ISK.  
Discount or a free appetiser.

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

**FJALLKONAN**  
Every day from 15:00 to 17:00.  
Beer 790 ISK,  
Wine 990 ISK.

**FORRÉTTABARINN**  
Every day from 16:00 to 18:00.  
Beer 800 ISK,  
Wine 900 ISK.

**GAUKURINN**  
Every day from 16:00 to 20:00.  
Beer 800 ISK,  
Wine 800 ISK.

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

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

**JUNGLE COCKTAIL BAR**  
Every day from

16:00 to 18:00.  
Beer 900 ISK,  
Wine 1000 ISK  
Cocktails 1600 ISK.

**KAFFI LÆKUR**  
Every day from 16:00 to 19:00 & 22:00 to 23:00 on Tue-Sat  
Beer 950 ISK,  
Wine 1050 ISK.

**KOFINN BAR**  
Every day from 12:00 to 19:00.  
Beer 600 ISK,  
Wine 1000 ISK.

**LOFT**  
Every day from 16:00 to 20:00.  
Beer 860 ISK,  
Wine 950 ISK.

**LÓLA FLORENS**  
Every day from 15:00 to 18:00.  
Beer 1000 ISK,  
Wine 1000 ISK.

**LUNA FLORENS**  
Tue-Sat from 15:00 to 18:00.  
Beer 1000 ISK,  
Wine 1000 ISK.  
Discount or a free appetiser.

**PRIKID**  
Every day from 16:00 to 20:00.  
Beer 700 ISK,  
Wine 1000 ISK.

**PUBLIC HOUSE**  
Every day from 15:00 to 18:00 then 23:00 to 01:00  
Beer 890 ISK,  
Wine 890 ISK

**PUNK**  
Every day from 16:00 to 18:00.  
Beer 850 ISK,  
Wine 850 ISK.

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

**RÖNTGEN**  
Every day from 16:00 to 19:00.  
Beer 800 ISK,  
Wine 900 ISK.

**SÆTA SVÍNID**  
Every day from 15:00 to 18:00.  
Beer 990 ISK,

Wine 990 ISK.

**SKÚLI CRAFT**  
Every day from 12:00 to 19:00.  
Beer 900 ISK,  
Wine 900 ISK.  
Happy hour includes four selected tap beers

**SLIPPARINN**  
Every day from 15:00 to 18:00.  
Beer 500 ISK,  
Wine 800 ISK.

**SÓLON**  
Every day from 15:00 to 18:00.  
Beer 800 ISK,  
Wine 800 ISK.

**SPILAKAFFI**  
Every day from 17:00 to 19:00.  
Beer 850 ISK.

**STÚDENT-AKJALLARINN**  
Everyday from 16:00.  
Beer 650 ISK,  
Wine 850 ISK.

**SUSHI SOCIAL**  
Sun-Thu from 17:00 to 18:00.  
Beer 645 ISK,  
Wine 745 ISK.

**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.



## FEATURED DRINKING HOLE

**JUNGLE COCKTAIL BAR**  
**AUSTURSTRÆTI 9**  
16:00 - 18:00 EVERY DAY  
BEER: 900 ISK  
WINE: 1000 ISK  
COCKTAILS: 1600 ISK

It's a widely known fact that Iceland doesn't have a lot of trees, so whenever there's a place that has alcohol and the word "jungle" in it, we're there before you can say "wait, I gotta do my hair". This fancy yet accessible

cocktail bar offers not only great happy hour prices (cocktails included, halló!), but also a very green and casual-chique environment. Whenever you want to escape the grey sky, go for a top-notch cocktail in this green oasis. It's located at a very central place so there's no reason to not check it out during your downtown party shenanigans. **KW** 🍷

# PERFECT FOR A ROAD TRIP

ARI H.G. YATES

**ICELAND**

THE BIGGEST LITTLE COUNTRY ON EARTH!

(A 100% ICELANDIC PUZZLE BOOK ABOUT ICELAND)

53 PUZZLE PAGES ABOUT ICELAND!

Chock-full of exciting facts about Icelandic history, nature, culture, celebrities, artists and more.

Insanely funny puzzles and quizzes for the whole family!

Perfect for a road trip!

Insanely funny puzzle book for the whole family.

Full of exciting facts about Icelandic history, nature, culture, celebrities, artists and more.

**ICELAND'S LARGEST BOOKSTORE**  
Forlagið bookstore | Fiskislóð 39 | [www.forlagid.is](http://www.forlagid.is)  
Open weekdays 10-18 | Saturdays 11-17

# Cheap Food

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

## 1,000 ISK And Under

**Hard Rock Café** -1,000 ISK  
Every day 15:00 -18:00  
Nachos, wings & onion rings - 990 ISK

**Dominos**  
All day Tuesday  
Medium sized pizza with three toppings

**1,500 ISK And Under**

**Deig / Le Kock**  
Week days-All day  
Doughnut, coffee & bagel -1,300 ISK

**Hamborgara-búlla Tómasar**  
All day Tuesday  
Burger, french fries & soda - 1,390 ISK

**Gló**  
All day, every day  
Bowl of the month - 1,290 ISK

Vegan option

**Shalimar**  
Monday - Friday  
12:00 - 14:30  
Curry - 1,290 ISK  
Vegan option

**Sæta Svinið**  
Every day  
15:00 - 18:00  
Chicken wings - 1,190 ISK

**Lemon**  
Every day  
16:00 - 21:00  
2f1 Juice +

sandwich 1,095 ISK  
Vegan option

**Uppsafir**  
Every day  
11:00 - 14:00  
Burger & fries - 1,390 ISK  
Vegan option

**Noodle Station**  
Every day  
11:00 - 22:00  
Vegetarian noodles - 1,100 ISK

**2,000 ISK And Under**

**Matarkjallarinn**  
Monday - Friday

11:30 - 15:00  
Fisherman's fish soup -1,990 ISK

**5,000 ISK And Under**

**Apótek**  
Every day  
11:30 - 16:00  
Two-course lunch -3,390 ISK  
Three course lunch - 4,390 ISK

**Brút**  
Weekends  
12:00 - 16:00  
Bottomless brunch - 4,900 ISK

Skuggabaldur

BEST NEWCOMER  
BAR 2021

THE REYKJAVIK  
GRAPEVINE

LIVE JAZZ  
EVERY NIGHT  
FREE ENTRY

DELICIOUS FOOD

FINE WINES AND  
GOOD VIBES

TASTY COCKTAILS

@skuggabaldur



## Books



"Daughters of Iceland" is close to Nína Björk's heart

## Empowering Children Through History

Nína Björk believes every child has potential to change the world

Words: **Emma Ledbetter** Photos: **Joana Fontinha**

The Icelandic sagas tell the stories of the strong and courageous people who settled on the inhospitable shores of this island. But for author Nína Björk Jónsdóttir, the women of history always seemed to be overshadowed by their husbands and fathers, even though their stories are just as daring and dramatic. She wants children to know that, in reality, women played a powerful role in settling and shaping the country we know today and that they, too, can shape history.

"History is often taught through the men," Nína Björk says. "We learn that the first settler was Ingólfur Arnarson, and Hallveig Fróðadóttir is just referred to as his wife, if she's mentioned at all. There's a statue of him downtown where he overlooks the centre of Reykjavík, but she was there as well. There's only a small street named after Hallveig that leads off a bigger road with Ingólfur's name."

This was the motivation behind Nína Björk's children's book, "Daughters of Iceland," which was recently published in Icelandic and as an abridged English version. She felt Iceland was lacking a book like this: one that chronicles the lives of not just the most well-known Icelandic women, but other important "firsts" in Icelandic history.

### Written with children, for children

Nína Björk is herself a woman marked by the Icelandic spirit—full of ideas she is compelled to

put into words, and with a passion for gender equality that manifests both in how she writes and how she raises her children.

She has lived abroad for almost a third of her life but always values coming home to Iceland. Nína Björk has two children, and when they lived abroad with her, she felt it was important to teach them about Icelandic history since they weren't learning it in school.

"Both of my children have been with me throughout this journey," Nína Björk says, of writing "Daughters of Iceland." "They had some ideas and suggestions; when my son was learning about history, he came home and said, 'mom, I learned about a really strong woman today!'"

Nína Björk hopes the stories in the book will empower her children and others to be anything they want to be, knowing there were many powerful Icelandic women that paved the way for them.

### Uncommon accounts

Of the 44 women featured in the original Icelandic book—cut to 23 in the English version—Nína Björk says she could not choose a favourite. "I love them all dearly," she explains. "There are many more that I would have loved to include."

Nína Björk says she wanted to cover women from a variety of backgrounds and regions, especially ones that aren't often covered in the media, so she read dozens of books, magazine articles, and historical accounts. Her descriptions delve beyond the surface of these women's lives, telling how

they grew up and achieved great things.

"I was trying to focus a bit on their childhood, to show kids that we all start small," Nína Björk says. "Everybody who is famous or doing great things today was a child at one point. For example, Björk went to the same school as my kids today. I thought that was empowering for children."

Tattoo artist and illustrator Auður Ýr Elísabetardóttir created the images for the book, which feature the daughters dressed in period-specific clothing, holding items they likely would have used in their daily lives.

"I think the pictures bring the book to life," Nína Björk says. "There's a lot of respect for the women, but they're also sweet and have a bit of humour."

### Where no woman has gone

When Nína Björk was only five years old, Vigdís Finnbogadóttir became the fourth president of Iceland, and the first female head of state in the world. Nína Björk says this impacted her generation and every generation after as more women assumed leadership roles in parliament and other sectors.

"It made me think, 'what could I be that no woman has done or been before?'" Nína Björk says. "Just to have the liberty to think that it's allowed and okay to think so big, that's what she gave to Icelandic children."

Nína Björk says her book is not just for Icelanders. Everyone can learn something from "Daughters of Iceland".

"These Icelandic women have a message for the whole world," Nína Björk explains. "You can be anything. Everybody starts somewhere. If you have big dreams and you pursue them and don't stop at the first obstacle, you can achieve whatever you set your mind to." ☘

*Daughters of Iceland* is available for purchase in our online store: [shop.grapevine.is](http://shop.grapevine.is)



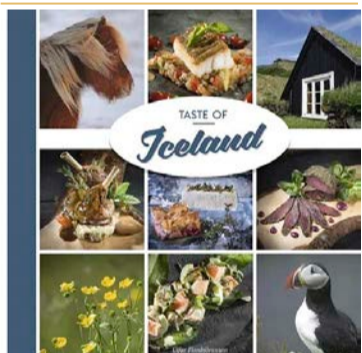
# Cook to impress—the Icelandic way

Think Icelandic cookery is all sheep heads and fermented shark? Think again!

Words: **Asha Edmondson**, **Emma Ledbetter** and **Josie Anne Gaitens**

## Taste of Iceland

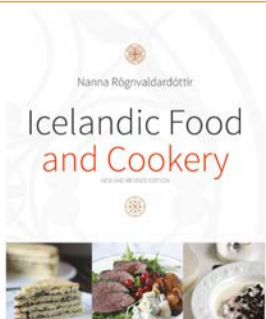
Author: **Úlfar Finnbjörnsson** and **Lárus Karl Ingason**



Created by famous and award-winning Icelandic chef Úlfar Finnbjörnsson, “Taste of Iceland” feels like a coffee table photography book that just happens to include recipes. The cover features photos of flowers, wildlife, and some of the delicious looking dishes you can make. Each recipe is accompanied by a professional photo that looks straight out of a 5-star restaurant. Don’t let the pictures and daunting names fool you, though, the impressive images come with simple instructions that can transform even the most novice cook into an accomplished chef. **AE**

## Icelandic Food and Cookery

Author: **Nanna Rögnvaldardóttir**



Acclaimed cookbook author Nanna Rögnvaldardóttir ensures you’ll learn your history and eat it, too, with this concise yet thorough overview of Icelandic cuisine. Starting with a short history of Icelandic cooking, she explains the intricacies of staple recipes—such as how geothermal heat was—and still is—used to bake hverabrauð (literally, hot bread). The adventurous chef may endeavour to make one of Nanna’s party dishes, like langoustine soup or smoked herring, or any number of other recipes sorted into categories including meat, seafood, vegetables and desserts. **EL**

## Slippurinn

Author: **Gisli Matt**



This one’s for real food nerds. The Slippurinn cookbook is a delicious deep dive into the incredible ingredients Iceland—Vestmannaeyjar in particular—have to offer. Chef Gisli Matt’s name has become synonymous with cutting edge cookery in Iceland, and his first cookbook teaches readers that much can be achieved with simple ingredients as unassuming as moss and seaweed, if one treats them with curiosity and proper technique. Beautifully presented, this tome can function solely as a source of inspiration and appreci-

ation. But for those armed with a trusty dehydrator and the enthusiasm to give Gisli’s recipes a try, we whole-heartedly salute you. **JG**

## Simbahöllin Cookbook

Author: **Janne Kristensen** and **Isobel Grad**



When Janne Kristensen and Isobel Grad first bought Simbahöllin in Þingeryri the building was little more than a run down shell. After extensive renovation it is now a cosy community-focused cafe, famous for its homemade jams, waffles, and warm welcome. With their cookbook, visitors can now take a piece of the Westfjords home with them, with easy-to-follow, homey recipes that are simple to replicate. Full of beautiful pictures of both the food as well as the scenery around Þingeryri, “Simbahöllin” makes for a lovely gift or memento of a special trip. **JG**

Find all these books and more in our online shop: [shop.grapevine.is](http://shop.grapevine.is)



Tres Locos is a new fun & lively Mexican restaurant located in Hafnarstræti 4, Reykjavik



We’re loco about tacos, tostadas, fajitas, quesadillas and other Mexican delicacies, made with fresh Icelandic ingredients.



We love Margaritas and tropical cocktails and offer a crazy selection of Tequila and Mezcal - over 50 types.



Enjoy an explosion of flavors at Tres Locos

Our address:  
Hafnarstræti 4  
101 Reykjavik

Book your table:  
Tel. +354 454 0333  
treslocos.is

NATIONAL MUSEUM  
OF ICELAND



# WELCOME TO THE NATIONAL MUSEUM OF ICELAND



The National Museum of Iceland  
Suðurgata 41, 102 Reykjavík

Summer opening  
Daily 10-17

www.nationalmuseum.is  
+354 530 2200  
@thjodminjasafn

## Food



Looks good enough to eat!

## Restaurant Review: Óx

Óx has been quietly pushing the envelope of fine dining since its opening five years ago; its efforts have now been recognised globally with a Michelin star.

Words: **Shruthi Basappa** Photos: **Heiðdís Guðbjörg**

“No, no, no, you can’t go in there yet!” a harried waitress stops me in my tracks as I approach the doors to Óx. I must be early, I think to myself, now seated at the bar at Sumac. I’m amused by the intense reception, a far cry from my first visit to Óx five years ago when the restaurant was only whispered about in hardcore food-loving circles and the welcome a lot more laidback.

Your first taste of things to come at Óx might be their website that—like many fine dining restaurants—doesn’t really reveal a menu, but sets the tone for what to expect. An other-worldly, whimsical site full of magical creatures that seem to belong to land, sea and sky all at once, scamper and disappear along the moss-green landing page. References are made to adventures, trav-

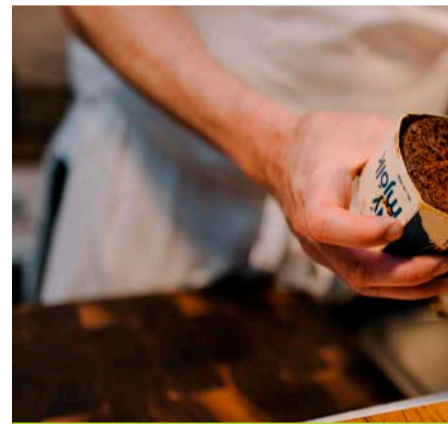
els and leaving the familiar behind.

Since its opening, the restaurant has risen from quiet obscurity—nestled as it is at the back of Sumac, chef/owner Þráinn Freyr Vigfússon’s other venture, in a black timber house. Replete with a salvaged kitchenette that Þráinn’s grandfather built, Óx is the clear realisation of a long held dream. Now, it boasts of being the Nordic White Guide’s only Global Master restaurant in Iceland, and a recently awarded Michelin star at the 2022 Nordic awards furthers its global standing.

### Who’s coming to dinner?

You walk into Óx through Sumac, and the bustling market-like hubbub of the latter is drowned out as the black door opens and chef Þráinn Freyr warmly welcomes you into his truly humble abode. A high, omakase style bar wraps around an old, lovingly restored kitchen, and just 11 seats await expectant diners. To complete that picture of homely nicety, the chefs in their crisp white jackets stand smiling, like the genial hosts they are.

Once seated, you have a perfect view of the entire room. Multiple mise en place abound on the countertops below—there are hand-carved walnut platters cradling secret ingredients, whisper-thin blown glass bowls by Carissa Baktay that mysteriously merge with Icelandic lava stone, and creamy ceramic cups and plates. Wines are



Not sure what this is, but it's probably delicious!

**sumac**  
GRILL+  
DRINKS+



Laugavegi 28  
537 99 00  
sumac@sumac.is  
sumac.is

Sumac Grill + Drinks

tripadvisor

Sumacgrilldrinks



Eat your greens, kids!



made hangikjöt tartalettur”, arrive as dainty hors d’oeuvre of nickel-sized discs of intensely smoked lamb. They pair wonderfully with the champagne, and also set the tone for the evening—updated Icelandic culinary traditions, without being too New Nordic-y.

### Hits and highlights

Unlike a traditional restaurant setting, the omakase style theatre allows the chefs to truly engage with the room, as if we are in their home, and dinner progresses as it might in our own kitchens. Head chef Rúnar Pierre Herivaux and sous chef Agne Petkeviciute are particularly adept at introducing dishes interspersed with fun behind-the-scenes nuggets and easy to understand technical know-how.

Over 16 courses, and with drinks to match several dishes, the progression at Óx is expertly tempered.



Small, flavour-packed dishes lead to generous bites that allow for breathing room to take in the expanse of culinary alchemy in front of you. One particular favourite on this occasion is a fennel pollen speckled fabric of beet, draped over cubes of grown-up gummy-bear-like rehydrated chewy beets, beet paté and house-smoked Tindur cheese with crowberry. The veritable explosion of texture in every bite has the whole room sighing with pleasure.

Dishes that don’t quite hit the high notes are the ones where the kitchen reaches beyond Iceland for inspiration and then bafflingly abandons the original spirit in favour of dainty plating. Like the chawanmushi topped with caviar: what could’ve been a decadent act of plunging into wobbly, barely-set, warm savoury egg custard is somewhat lost due to the thin serving, with even the caviar a poor cover-up.

Where Óx triumphs are its ode to the island dishes, like the hand harvested princess scallops from the Westfjords, served simply sliced with a wasabi cream and dotted with freshly grated locally grown wasabi. Rarely seen local shrimp with a beautifully clarified tomato consomme could be their staple star. Cod makes an appearance one way

or another, and this current iteration with cod collars, cabbage both sweet and fermented over a wasabi-lemon custard and warm shrimp bisque was made more memorable by the Mystery de Rose Beaujolais that’d convert even the most non-gamay lover.

Two dishes have remained steadfast on the menu since Óx opened. The rutabaga gnocchi—buttery pillows of gobsmacking richness and lightness, paired with green apple kombucha—feel like the kind of warm embrace that only comfort food can provide. The other is the steamed rye bread that is delivered from Laugarvatn everyday. Chef Þráinn introduces it much like Simba, the brick of cake-like bread held aloft, the room ooh-ing and aah-ing as the malty rugbrauð scent wafts across the room. Served with salty butter and dung-smoked trout floss, it is truly a simple yet satisfying bite.

### Old spirit, new location

Honest theatre of this kind is a recurring theme at Óx. The wine flows freely, the conversation ebbs and flows course after course, and the chefs prepping and plating the dishes adds another layer of action.

Getting a table at Óx has always been tricky, given their 11-seat constraint. Chef Þráinn reveals his plans for a new location, a stone’s throw away from Sumac, for an Óx 2.0 that will seat 18. In the spirit of keeping things personal yet exclusive, the new Óx will be fronted by a bar—Ammadon, named after the chef’s grandmother, that will serve both classic and experimental cocktails. I was lucky enough to be shown around the new property, and I’m happy to share that the new location will echo that walk-and-find Óx experience.

### More than a chef’s table

The chef’s table definition is nowhere near an honest description of the rambunctious dining experience one finds at Óx. You walk in expecting it to be a staid, fine-dining affair, but you walk out exhilarated by the conversations and the cross-section of people you just met, with everything held together by the dishes that span the lands and waters of Iceland. Óx manages to walk that fine line of daring with its who’s-coming-to-dinner mystery vibe, mixed with the easy conviviality of an intimate dinner party at home. It is worth dining here for that alone, Michelin star notwithstanding. 🍷



cooling in their ice-baths and sauces and other potions bubble away on the tiny hotplate behind. Just how an indulgent tasting menu comes together in this summer-cabin like space, might be the greatest magic of all.

Dinner begins promptly at 6.30 pm, and the conversations begin to flow just as freely as the bubbles in our Jean Laurent Blanc de Blancs champagne. On this occasion, my dining companions are travelers from across the world and a few locals; we swap travel tips over whipped butter with a thin lavash-like cracker. Smoked lamb tartlets, a fun play on the “amma



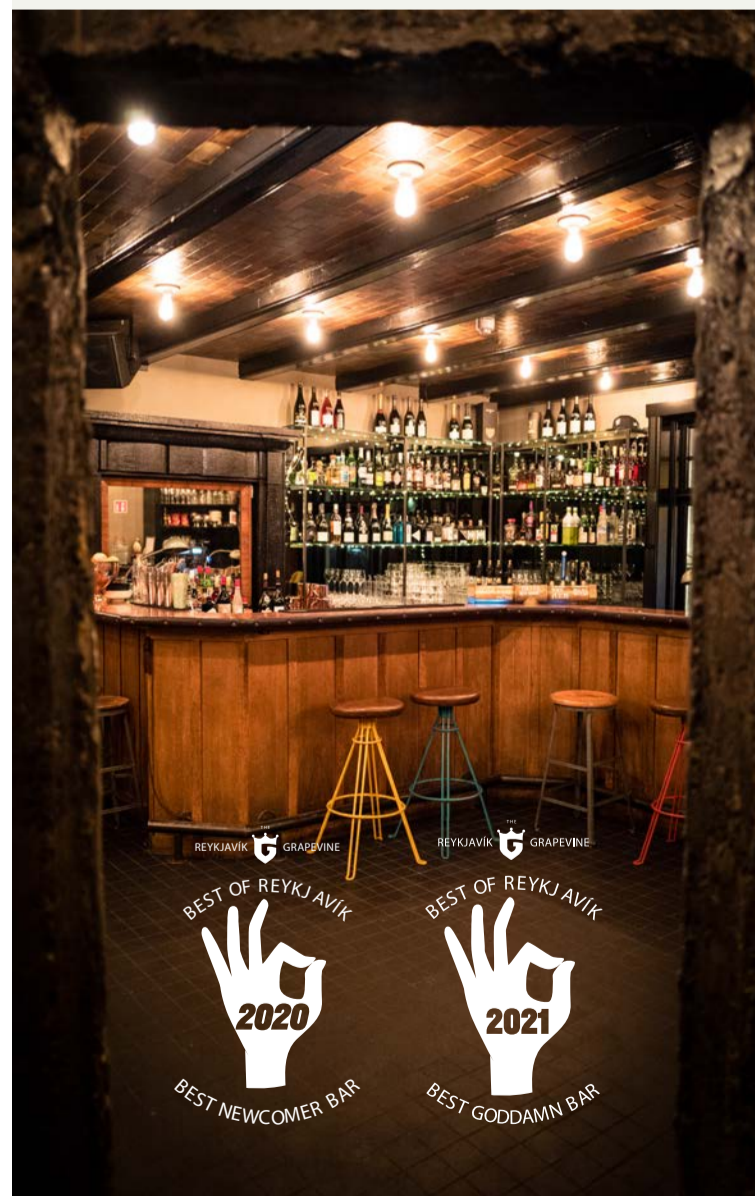
“The fish was how big?”

# RÖNTGEN

Hverfisgata 12



Happy hour / 4–7pm  
Beer / Wine / Cocktails



# Travel

## Hot Dogs and Hot Chocolate On Esja

Testing our patience and resolve

Words: **Emma Ledbetter** & **Asha Edmondson** Photos: **Joana Fontinha**



**Distance from Reykjavik:**  
22 kilometres

Across the waters of Faxaflói Bay from Reykjavik resides Esja—the dark, often cloud-covered mountain considered the quintessential Icelandic hike. Esja is often visible as we leave Grapevine headquarters, prompting us to say, “We’re going to be on top of that mountain...one day.” Spoken into existence, the intern gang vowed to climb the mountain, and the appointed day could not have been more beautiful—or so we thought.

### The uphill and our downfall

Spirits were high as we made our way from the parking lot to the trailhead at 21:00. The weather was about as good as you can get for Iceland—sunny, clear skies, and so warm you almost didn’t need a jacket—and we were very pumped about the hot dogs and hot chocolate we brought along to enjoy at the top.

However, it didn’t take long for our spirits to drop. We majorly underestimated the steepness of the trail—though we probably should have known, as Esja stands 914 metres tall—and even though we like to think we’re decently in shape, Esja made us think otherwise.

Luckily, we had beautiful views of Reykjavik and the promise of some great food and drink to keep us going up the daunting trail. We quickly fell into a groove of joking, complaining, and gasping at the view.

Unfortunately, our luck quickly ran out. As is typical of Icelandic weather, it changes minute-to-minute, and what was once a clear, sunny evening became foggy and cold. Slowly our view dwindled and we could only see our feet and

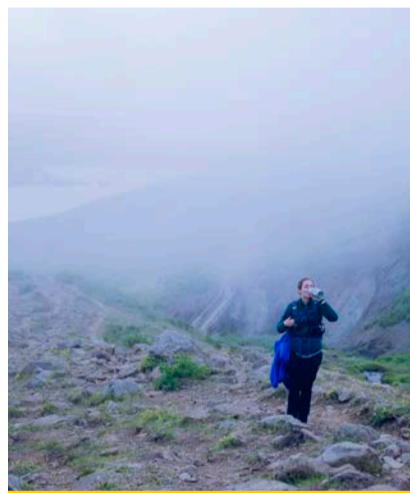
a few rocks in front of us.

Truth be told, we considered giving up a few times. Motivating yourself to continue climbing the steepest path you’ve ever seen at 23:00 when it’s cold, raining, and so foggy you can’t even see the view you came for is very difficult. Still, we trudged on, almost entirely motivated by the promise of hot dogs.

As much as we hated ourselves for this self-inflicted torture, it wasn’t entirely a bust. It provided our little intern group some quality bonding time before three of us depart Iceland for our respective homes. We discussed all topics ranging from grocery stores to jouch memes to goofy songs from our childhoods. Physically we may have been in pain, but our hearts were happy.

### Hot dogs and hot chocolate

We never thought a random boulder could bring us joy, but the mid-sized



Stay hydrated

rock with a “steinn” plaque marking the end of our hike was met with much relief and joy. Despite the thick fog, cold winds, and rain, we took out our small Coleman grill and prepared our celebratory feast.

Several failed attempts to boil water later, we each had a cup—or bowl—of hot chocolate, making the weather slightly more bearable. We cooked some famous Icelandic hot dogs—while teaching our Ukrainian intern the Mickey Mouse Clubhouse theme song—and devoured them before signing the guestbook and making our venture back down the trail at midnight.

We can all say we’ve been to the top of Esja now, but we still have absolutely no clue what the view is like, as our only vista was thick fog and a Coleman grill.

### The downhill and resurrection

We decided—wisely—to take the same path down as we had used on the way up, even though the other half of the loop was more direct. Sitting at the top socked in by fog, the path was unclear, and a midnight tryst through a 900-metre high boulder field seemed like a quick way to get lost.

Despite being cold, damp, and a little crabby that we didn’t get to enjoy any

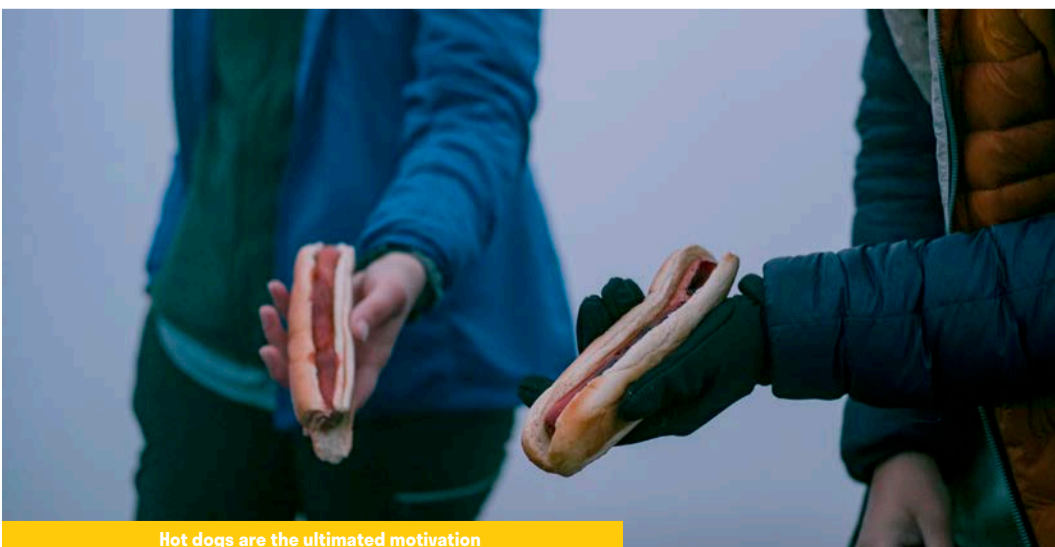
sort of view, the collective mood lightened as we made our way back down the steep southern face of Esja.

Hiking uphill reveals each person’s endurance and resolve to reach the top. Downhill hiking, on the other hand, shows who is most likely to trip and fall into oblivion—and who is willing to catch them. You can tell a lot about a person’s character while scrambling down a mountain with them in thick fog as darkness looms.

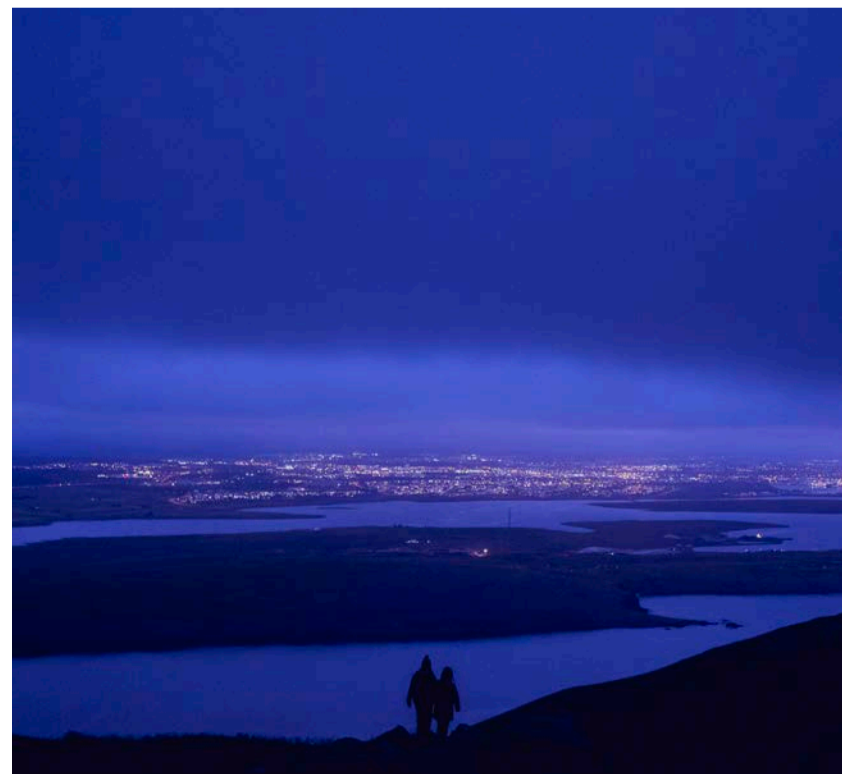
As one of our party members wisely remarked, it’s not about the journey itself, but the friends you make along the way. We were all nodding our agreement to this sentiment when we suddenly dipped below the cloud line and saw the lights of Mosfellsbær and distant Reykjavik. Screw friendship, this is why we came.

The sun had long ago set on a horizon that was still obscured by the hulking frame of Esja. But the city lights and dark waters of Faxaflói Bay reminded us of why we came to Iceland in the first place, whether we knew it or not: to reconnect with nature, to be reminded of our own insignificance in the vast wilderness, and, yes, to make friends who would, perhaps literally, carry us up a mountain. 🍌

Support the Grapevine!  
View this QR code in your phone camera to visit our tour booking site



Hot dogs are the ultimated motivation



Mosfellsbær makes an appearance



## Július Guðnason

Words: **Asha Edmondson** Photos: **Emma Ledbetter**

Hundreds of boats come into Reykjavik Harbour every year, but we often forget the harbour's biggest helpers and keepers of order, the tugboats. Reykjavik Harbour boasts four tugs, and these busy-beavers help make sure everything runs smoothly.

However, the actual tugboat is only half of the package. The captain and the crew are the true rulers of the harbour. Captaining tugboats

in the Reykjavik Harbour since 2005, Július Guðnason, understands oceanic navigation better than anyone.

### Ports (and starboard)

Born and raised in the coastal town of Akranes, Július grew up with seamanship at the forefront. "The port was the main playground for the boys," he recalls. "Wanting to be a sailor was always on my mind."

At 19, Július started working on fishing vessels and eventually transitioned to working the passenger ferry to Akranes. When the Hvalfjörður Tunnel was built, Július was left without a job which led him to start captaining tugboats.

Switching from fishing vessels and ferries to tugboats required Július to learn some new rules. "When you're on a different boat, if you are too close there is danger of collision and you have to do something about it," says Július. "But in a tugboat, you are mainly hitting other vessels and pushing them."

### Bigger is better

Even though tugboats stay relatively close to shore, tugboat sailing is still a dangerous job. "If you're on a smaller boat and make a mistake, it is easy to capsize the boat," Július explains.

Knowing that bigger boats are safer, Július has been an advocate, encouraging the harbour to purchase more large tugboats. "I'm most proud of being the leader and spokesperson for encouraging the port to buy bigger and better tugboats, more equipment, and new technology," says Július. Thanks to Július' campaign, Reykjavik purchased the port's newest—and biggest—tugboat, Magni.

### Friends and family

One of the reasons Július likes tugboat sailing is he is able to stay close to home. "It gives me a lot of opportunity to have a normal family life," says Július.

Július met his wife while participating in the nightlife at sailing and navigation school. The couple have two sons, but he says neither of them are interested in following in his sailing footsteps. "I am very happy they chose another path," laughs Július. "Working on the ocean is very dangerous and I would always worry."

The bond between captains and their crew runs strong and Július says that his friendships with his colleagues are likely deeper than people in other professions have with their colleagues. "Even the retired people maintain those connections," says Július. "You can often see them around the harbour!"

### "We see everything!"

Unsurprisingly, working on the harbour at all hours of the day, Július has some tales to tell. "We see everything!" exclaims Július. "Some of the things we see are not possible to print!"

After hearing some of the stories, we have to agree with Július. Some things that happen at sea were meant to stay at sea... ☹

*The Islanders is our series where we interview interesting people in Iceland about their unique lives. Know someone we should speak to? Email: [grapevine@grapevine.is](mailto:grapevine@grapevine.is)*

## WELL, YOU ASKED



## Why are you all trying to move here?

Words: **Emma Ledbetter**

*You asked, so we answered—but not in a nice way. Although, we did have to ask you to ask, so maybe we should stop doing that.*

### How will international flights to Akureyri affect North Iceland?

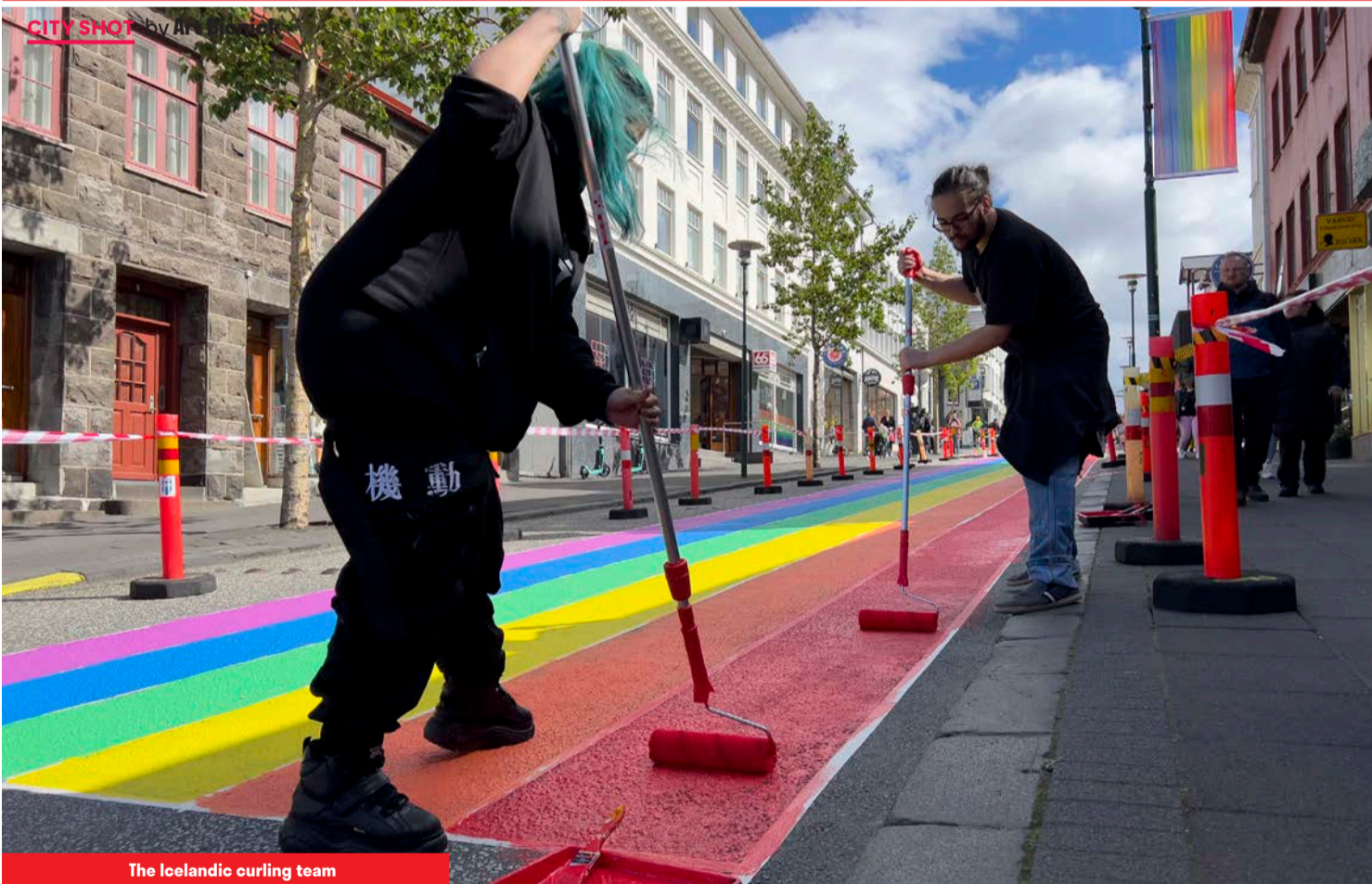
These newly-announced flights surely make it easier for útlendingar (that's "foreigners," for any non-Íslendingar reading this) to access the Land of Fire and Ice. But do you remember why Iceland is called that? It's because of our unpredictable volcanic activity and already melting glaciers. Giving tourists another entry point probably couldn't make this environmental disaster any worse, right? Oh wait, airplane fuel is contributing to greenhouse gas emissions? Hmm.

### What is the housing situation like in Iceland?

If you have to ask this, you probably don't want to live here. And if you already know the answer, you still probably don't want to live here. That's right, folks, it ain't pretty. If you want to live in one of the most expensive cities in Europe, move to Reykjavik. That is, if you can find a place to stay.

### What is the best way to learn Icelandic online?

So you're trying to learn the language of the country you're visiting instead of assuming everyone will speak English? Good for you. Seriously. We have a YouTube video about learning Icelandic, but you should probably just watch Icelandic movies with subtitles. You'll pick it up eventually. In the meantime, just say "jæja" a whole bunch, and you should be fine. ☹



The Icelandic curling team



hugge

COFFEE & MICRO BAKERY  
SELJAVEGUR 2 · 101 REYKJAVÍK  
OPEN EVERYDAY 8-17

