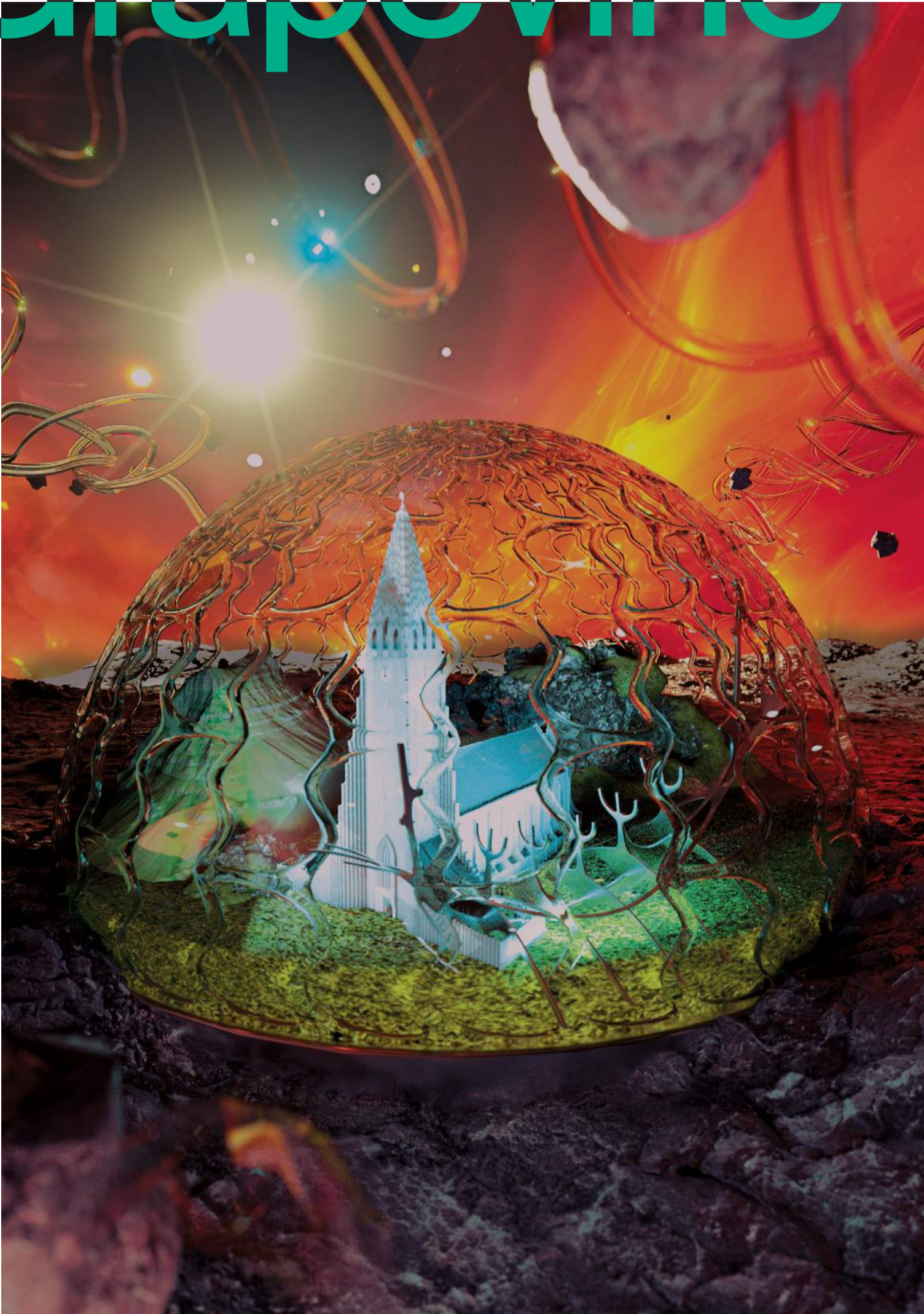


# The Reykjavík Grapevine



Free copy

Volume 21

Issue 16 2024

Best before October 31

## Space: Iceland's Final Frontier

Culture

Music

Travel

# In This Issue

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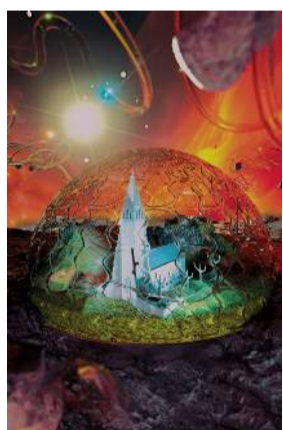
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## On The Cover

Iceland is officially part of the space race. Or rather, it's a member of the International Mars Exploration Working Group, which was convened to share findings, coordinate research and plot a way forward for future Martian expeditions. For such a small nation, Iceland has a lot to offer when it comes to space research – read more on pages 14-16. While it's not likely a spacey replica of Hallgrímskirkja will ever be erected on the Martian landscape, it's a wild idea and one that illustrator Maria Gudjohnsen brought to life for this issue's cover.

COVER ILLUSTRATION:  
Maria Gudjohnsen

## Editorial All Or Nothing

WORDS Catharine Fulton  
Editor in Chief

Have you read this issue's cover feature yet? Of course you haven't, you're still here on page 2 diligently working your way through the entirety of the issue (and I thank you for that – the team puts a lot of thought and care into each issue). But once you get to page 14, you'll find an article on the Iceland Space Agency and its recent collaboration with international space agencies on the International Mars Exploration Working Group. It's a fascinating read that hopefully foreshadows a future in which Iceland is a real partner in international space exploration.

But it was a quote from ISA CEO Daniel Leeb in the article that snapped my train of thought back to a topic that is often on my mind – and that is a regular topic of conversation with friends and contemporaries – for at least a decade now. The all or nothing mindset that seems to dominate here.

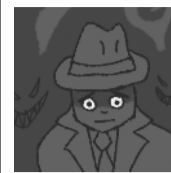
Noting the potential of space research as an economic driver in Iceland, Daniel noted the country's almost exclusive focus on either fishing or the tourism industries to the detriment of everything else.

But it doesn't have to be all or nothing. Just because Jón down the road seems to be making a killing selling this or that excursion to tourists doesn't mean everyone should open a tourism company. Just because one ceramics studio on Skólavörðustígur is doing well doesn't mean the only way to succeed on Skólavörðustígur is with a ceramics store. Just because one puffin store opened, doesn't mean that a dozen more need to be opened on the same city block (and then the next block, and the next and the next until all variety in Reykjavík has been entirely wiped out).

Concerns have been mounting in recent months about the number of incoming tourists levelling off. Good. How about instead of doing more and more and more of the same to attract and appease tourists, the government incentivises innovation in other sectors – be it space or the arts or climate solutions – to add more fuel to the economic fires. More variety. That is the spice of life, right?

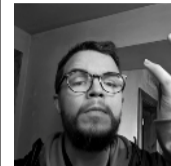
Free Palestine. ■

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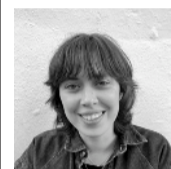
### CHARLIE WINTERS

Ever since escaping his enclosure in the U.K., Charlie has been on the loose in Reykjavík. Idea spouter, drag queen, comedian, retail worker, English teacher and short story writer, he is single handedly ruining the job market. In his free time he skitters along the fine line between delusion and fantasy through tabletop roleplaying games.



### CIARÁN DALY

Ciarán is a UK-based journalist and game developer who first started writing for the Grapevine in 2015. He currently resides with his cat and his partner on the Kent coast where he spends his time exploring rock formations, programming, and struggling with self-induced acid reflux. He refuses to go to war.



### ISH SVEINSSON HOULE

Ish is a former radio station manager and DJ, mainly focusing on music writing with a side of other cultural happenings. Ish moved to Reykjavík to get more in touch with half-Icelandic genes, also writes poetry, and has unfortunately only ever been in a cover band.



### IRYNA ZUBENKO

Iryna is a Ukrainian journalist working at the cross-section of media and technology for the past five years. While still figuring out what to do in life, Iryna's love of travelling, unspoiled nature and Scandi design has brought her to Reykjavík. One day she'll write a non-fiction book.



### JOANA FONTINHA

Joana 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 headfirst 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.



### JÓHANNES BJARKI BJARKASON

Jóhannes Bjarki is a Reykjavík local, straight out of Grafarvogur. Having been active as the frontman of the post-punk band Skoffín and in the post-dreifing art collective, Jóhannes is fascinated by the Icelandic music scene. Among his interests are politics, history and pop culture.



### JOHN ROGERS

is a long-time Grapeviner with a particular focus on art, gaming, culture, and travelling to Iceland's far corners to poke around and see what's there. He also podcasts, photographs, makes art, and does a bunch of other stuff, which is perhaps indicative of a low attention spa

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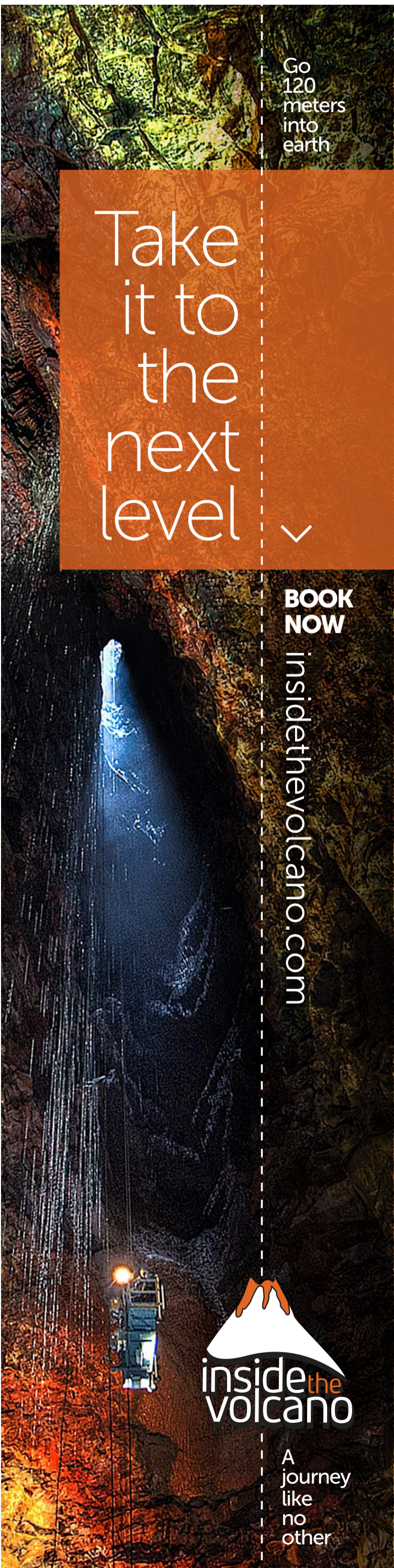


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What The News!?

# Political Parties On The Move, Loss Of Power And High Traffic Deaths

A look at some of the news making headlines in recent weeks

WORDS The Reykjavik Grapevine  
IMAGE Art Bicnick

As the Icelandic government prepares to enter its last year of the current electoral term, political news has been all the rage in recent weeks. According to a survey conducted by Maskína for Visir on Sept. 25, the Social Democratic Alliance is the electorate's most popular choice, polling at 25%. In the survey, the Centre Party – led by Wintris-scandalist Sigmundur Davíð Gunnlaugsson – tripled its 2021 approval rate, jumping from 5.4% to 17%.

In contrast, the coalition government's approval rate has gone down considerably – if elections were held today they would only amass 14 MPs out of the 32 needed for a majority.

With elections nearing, political parties have started recruiting new members to their ranks. Perhaps the most notable person to contend for a parliamentary seat is former presidential candidate Jón Gnarr. As reported by RÚV, Jón enlisted in the Liberal Reform Party and will most likely run for the North Reykjavik riding. Jón served as the mayor of Reykjavik for the Best Party from 2010 to 2014.

But Jón is not the only presidential candidate to want a seat at Alþingi. On September 25, George Washington fan Arnar Þór Jónsson announced the establishment of a new political party: the Democratic Party – Association for Self-Determination. Arnar's decision came after negotiations with the Centre Party failed, having hinted at a possible participation with them. According to him, the party aims to counter tyranny and chaos. Good luck with that, Arnar.

## THE DAY ICELAND LOST POWER

At noon on October 2, over half of Iceland lost power when the Grundartangi aluminium plant in Hvalfjörður short-circuited. Areas in West, North, and East Iceland were shocked cold for approximately 70 minutes with no access to power. Most of the affected areas regained power relatively quickly, while some locations, such as Mývatn, had to wait until the evening for the lights to turn back on. Even Reykjavik was affected when, on October 3, traffic lights at Háaleitisbraut-Kringlumýrarbraut intersection went offline for four hours.

Among the casualties of the power outage were home appliances, according to mbl.is. We're pouring one out for our aunt's KitchenAid stand mixer. More seriously, visibility in the Vaðlaheiðargöng tunnel – between Akureyri and Húsavík – was limited due to lights malfunctioning.

## TRAFFIC FATALITIES NEVER HIGHER SINCE 2018

If you've ever been driving over Hellisheiði – you know, that pass between Reykjavik and Hveragerði – you've probably noticed the rather ominous but informative sign on the wayside. Decked with two wrecked cars, it keeps count of how many people have died in traffic-related incidents in the calendar year. On September 30, that number rose by one after the 13th fatal incident occurred the previous weekend.

A woman in her forties was killed by a driver on Sæbraut in the early hours of Sunday, September 29, according to a statement from the Capital Region Police. The incident took place when the driver of a car travelling north on Sæbraut, between Súðarvogur and Kleppsmýrarvegur, hit the woman as she crossed the street heading east. The woman was pronounced dead at the scene. This is the highest number of traffic-related fatalities since 2018, when 15 people were killed. Since then, annual road deaths have not exceeded 10 – until now.

Another accident, although not fatal, happened on the morning of October 3 when a boy was hit by a driver. The child, aged 8, was on his way to school in Grafarholt on a scooter when he was impacted crossing a street. Fortunately, the boy did not sustain any major injuries.

So, remember to wear your seat-belts and please don't hit people when you're driving. ■



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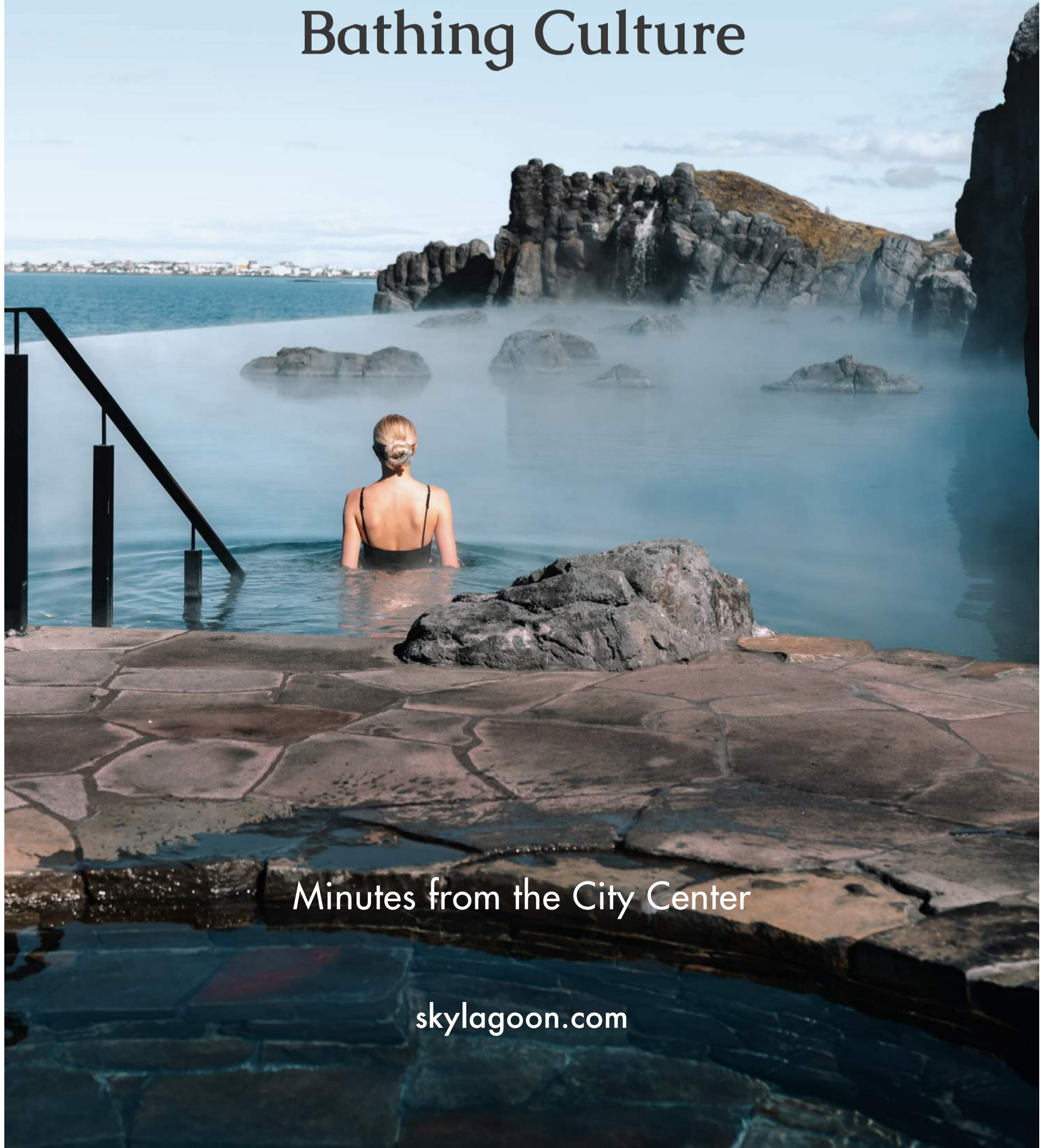
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Word On The Street

# The Leaves Are Turning

The Grapevine took to the streets in search of new autumn traditions to adopt

WORDS Ish Sveinsson Houle, Maria, Ramsey, Hanna and Benoit  
IMAGES Joana Fontinha

The red and orange leaves, and dewy morning air are showing us that autumn is upon us, so the Grapevine took to the streets to ask people what they enjoy most about the season. Perhaps because autumn can be a blink-and-you-missed-it affair in these parts, not a single -son or -dóttir was in a sharing mood. Here's what the non-natives had to say:

MARIA, 25, AND RAMSEY, 25  
USA

*Maria:* Soup! Do you guys have any soup recommendations around here?

*Ramsey:* Probably visiting a pumpkin patch.

[Editor: If anyone knows of a pumpkin patch nearby, let us know.]



HANNA, 24  
POLAND, LIVING IN ICELAND

I am one of the few haters of Pumpkin Spice Latte. I don't like the American fucking trend for drinking Pumpkin Spice Latte, I don't understand what brought pumpkin to a drink. But, because we are in Iceland and I'm Polish, there's not really autumn here. My favourite drink for the autumn would be the Winter tea, which I make, we have it also here! It's basically earl grey with rosemary and oranges, because in Poland oranges, when I was growing up they started appearing in late autumn, you know with communism in the late 2000s there was not a lot of produce, so like oranges and the other citruses except lemons. I'm also a huge fan of lopapeysa, I just got mine for my 'two years in Iceland,' it was two years for me on the 10th of September. So I got lopapeysa, and it's brown, beige, and red, so it fits the vibe.



BENOIT, 41  
FRANCE

I am from France and I live in the French Alps, so my autumn tradition is I go with the kids to find mushrooms in the mountains. We love to cook as a family, we do some mountain biking, we love autumn. It's very important in our place.



Word Of The Issue

## School Of Rock

The Grapevine's guide to sounding Icelandic, one word at a time

WORDS Ish Sveinsson Houle  
IMAGE The Reykjavik Grapevine

Okay, now that we've reacquainted ourselves with the exciting phenomenon that is the echo, let's learn another Icelandic compound word. "Bergmál" is the Icelandic word for echo. "Berg" is the Icelandic word for rock, but it's in the second half of bergmál where things get interesting.

If you've ever taken an introductory Icelandic course, chances are one of the first questions you learned was "hvaða mál talar þú?" This question means "what language do you speak?" In that question, I'd like you to see the word "mál," which means language.

From there, you can piece together that "berg" + "mál" = "rock language." How poetic! No wonder that this was one of the 30 semifinalists for "Most Beautiful Icelandic Word" back in 2013.

Next time you find yourself in an echo chamber, at least you know what language is being spoken. ■

Have you ever shouted into the void? More specifically, have you ever heard the void shout back? Maybe you've hollered "hello!" into a massive cave and received your greeting back tenfold?

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Do Shit

# Go Get Yours – Child Benefits Edition

An Útlendingur’s ongoing guide to getting shit done

WORDS Catharine Fulton  
IMAGE The Reykjavik Grapevine

other payments from various social services than the average immigrant does. I may have then referenced Icelandic welfare queens, Dominoes and Útvarp Saga, but it was all in the name of letting my fellow útlendingurs know that benefits are yours for the taking – go get what’s yours.

That goes for child benefits, too. And they’re even easier to get than housing benefits, so this is less a “how to” and more of a “good to know.”

Child benefits, or barnabætur, are support payments that parents or guardians of dependent children under the age of 18 receive at intervals throughout the year to offset the cost of having children in this impossibly expensive country.

As for what’s “good to know,” child benefits are paid out to those eligible who are Icelandic citizens, those who have full-time residence in Ice-

land or those who stay in Iceland for longer than a total of 183 days over a 12-month period. Whether a parent or guardian receives child benefits – and how much they receive – is determined by income reported on the previous year’s tax return.

Child benefits are paid out quarterly, on the first of February, May, June and October. You won’t receive them the same year your child is born, but should see a deposit in your bank account starting in February of the calendar year after a child’s birth.

In order to be eligible, you must be the supporter of the child, meaning they are registered as living with you. Benefits are divided equally between married parents, and between parents living apart if the child in question is registered as having a split residence. The benefit goes entirely to a single parent with whom the child is domiciled.

#### DOING THE MATH

A single parent is eligible to receive up to 489.000 ISK per dependent child per year, plus a 130.000 ISK supplement for each child under seven years of age. Parents who are married or in a register co-habitation could receive up to 328.000 ISK per dependent child, plus the same under-seven supplement. These amounts decrease the higher the parent or guardian’s income is.

So, a single parent making 5.5 million krónur per year should receive 122.250 ISK quarterly in child benefits for the full 489.000 ISK that year. However, a single parent earning 12 million krónur per year could expect 57.250 ISK quarterly, and a single parent banking 17.725.000 ISK or more per year will get nothing.

Iceland Revenue and Customs (Skatturinn), has a handy calculator online to estimate how much

child benefits you may be entitled to based on your income. It’s only available in Icelandic, but a quick search of “Reiknivél barnabóta” will land you on a page to input your marital status (choose between married/cohabiting or single parent), your annual income, how many children under the age of 18 are dependent on you, and how many of those are under the age of seven.

If the first of a payment month comes along and you’re wondering about the amount that has popped up in your heimabanki, give the good folks at Skatturinn a call to get to the bottom of it.

#### NOTA BENE

Not that this should need saying, but don’t have kids because of the oh so sexy allure of barnabætur – keeping a kid housed, clothed, fed and entertained costs a hell of a lot more than 489.000 ISK per year. ■

**W**hen last I penned this ongoing series of (hopefully) informative and helpful articles on navigating Icelandic bureaucracy, society or just life in general – hey, those who can’t do, teach, amirite? – I was talking housing benefits.

More specifically, I was inspired by statistical findings discussed in Alþingi in August showing that the average Icelandic national takes significantly more from the system by way of housing benefits, child benefits, unemployment benefits and



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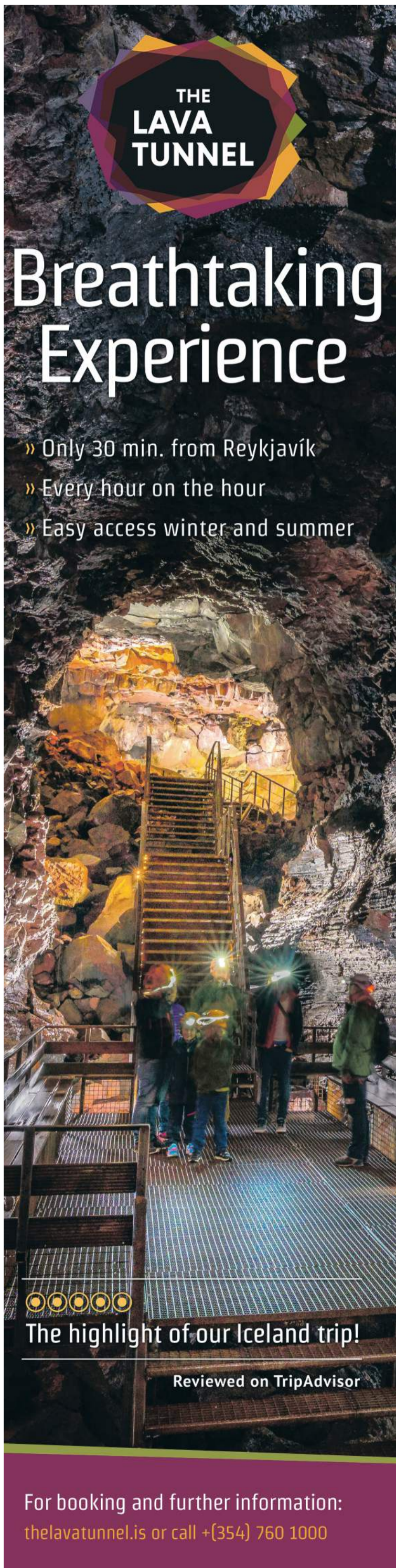


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In This Economy!?

## Stretch Your Body, Not Your Budget

Take your yoga practice to the next level at the Indian Embassy

WORDS Ish Sveinsson Houle  
 IMAGE Supplied

I went to free yoga at the Embassy of India and I think you should too.

In this economy, one needs to take advantage of free shit wherever they can get it. One recurring activity that is entirely gratis is yoga at the Embassy of India. These classes are one of those things about which people say “oh yeah! I’ve been meaning to go to that!” but then skip it with a shrug and an “I’ll go next time.” But this is a poor excuse, because there are usually two classes per day, Monday through Friday. So just go already.

As I approached the building on a Tuesday afternoon, I wrongly assumed I should enter through the Visa/Consulate entrance. Luckily, three kind people working in that office clocked my impending mistake and redirected me towards the building’s grand entrance, beautiful steps and all. There I was greeted with a friendly “first time?” and shows where to leave things and the hall where yoga was set to begin in five minutes.

I grabbed one of the mats on offer and sat among the five others here

for that evening’s class. As I was settling in, I heard the instructor, CGShinde, chatting with another student and gathered that many in the group were regulars.

Due to scheduling constraints, I ended up at an intermediate class, which includes Kriya, Asana, Pranayama and meditation. As we began, it was clear I lacked the coordination and familiarity with the movements that an intermediate class demanded and I wasn’t flowing between positions as gracefully as my classmates. But it was a joy to watch how studious the others were – the apex of the class was a repeated series where moves changed between every inhale/exhale couplet, with the teacher counting, rhythmically and steadfast. A sign by the door reads “Keep Calm Maintain Silence,” and I deeply enjoyed the meditative peace of hearing nothing but breathing and the teacher’s voice.

In a time of “yoga” as a fitness trend, it was incredibly informative and interesting to hear the instructor speak about yoga as a holistically beneficial practice. From regulating metabolism to connecting the metaphysical with the physical, reducing anxiety and controlling breathing, he was diligent in explaining exactly why we were doing something and how it benefits us.

It was challenging in the best sense. If I was doing a pose but the instructor thought I could go further, he would come over to me and ease me into a deeper stretch. There were several times that I thought I

was going as far as I physically could and he helped me prove myself wrong.

As I said to friends after I finished the class, running a half-marathon this summer was easier than this one-hour class. It’s incredibly exciting to think that, with consistency, one can strengthen themselves to the point of doing this daily.

Speaking to Visir back in 2018, the former Indian Ambassador to Iceland explained that he’d seen the interest in yoga classes at local studios, but 3.000 ISK for a session was far too expensive. He felt that yoga should be free for everyone and hoped the entire nation would start to practice. That was the beginning of the free yoga classes at the embassy. This ties me back to the theme of the article: in a world where so much is not free, especially where yoga as a fitness trend becomes shockingly expensive, this offering at the embassy is absolutely worth making use of.

I’m already looking forward to going back – though next time I’ll opt for the beginner’s class. ■

Yoga classes are run every weekday at the Indian Embassy at Túngata 7. Find the class schedule at [IndianEmbassyReykjavik.gov.in](http://IndianEmbassyReykjavik.gov.in).

Times are tough and money is tight. In This Economy!? spotlights things to do that don’t cost a single krónur. Got a free event you want more people to know about? Let us know at [grapevine@grapevine.is](mailto:grapevine@grapevine.is).

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Side Hustle

# How Many Hours Are In A Day?

With multiple jobs and a side gig, Omar Rondon is always busy

WORDS Iryna Zubenko  
IMAGE Joana Fontinha

“It’s true that I can be very busy and it’s true that it can be too much sometimes,” says Omar Rondon, who works multiple jobs and engages in creative side gigs, all while supporting his family in his native Venezuela. “But at the same time, all this work is stuff that I enjoy a lot,” he adds. Here’s how he balances jobs in community work, caregiving, and videography and photography — all with a baby on the way.

**O**mar Rondon, 29, project manager

I’m originally from Venezuela, but I have been living here since 2019. I have multiple jobs. For my main job, I work at a félagsmiðstöð, the social centre in Reykjanesbær. Then I have

a 50% job, mostly on weekends and nights in Blikaás, a house for disabled people in Hafnarfjörður. My side hustle is making videos and taking photos. I used to do that mostly for clubs or events, but recently, I have been getting good contracts with municipalities or governmental institutions like Samfés. It’s a better — and better-paid — job.

## STARTING FRESH IN ICELAND

I came here from Venezuela as a refugee. When I first moved, it took some time to get my paperwork in order. I got some interviews to start working at the airport and cleaning companies and such, but then Covid-19 hit.

In Reykjanesbær, you either work for the municipality or you work for the tourist industry. It was quite hard to find a job, so I started working part-time here, part-time there, trying to hustle on the side, and I got quite accustomed to it. In all these years, I never had stability at work, like a 100% job, until maybe two years ago when I was hired by the municipality. I’m very used to always doing one thing and another thing, but always in this area of making videos, taking pictures, or doing creative stuff.

In the beginning, having a few jobs was a necessity, but now, I do it to have a more comfortable life here.

All my family is in Venezuela, my mother is disabled and cannot really work, so she lives largely on the money I can send her, as do my grandparents. I try to support them as much as possible. In recent years, Venezuela has become a really expensive place — when I moved here five years ago, if I was able to send \$100-200, it was a lot of money. Now, I send almost 2 million ISK per year. Having a side hustle helps me a lot with that. I’m also going to have a baby soon, so it’s good to be prepared.

For most people I know, the current situation with prices everywhere going up, it’s quite hard to live on only one job — to pay the rent or the mortgage, the food, and everything else and still have the quality of life you want — unless you have a very good job.

I’m pretty good with finances; I’ve never been in debt or live paycheck to paycheck. I like to save and invest money. The economic crisis in my country when I was growing up helped me learn this. So basically, as it works right now, my work in Reykjanesbær allows me to pay the mortgage on my house and all the payments for me and my family. My partner and I try to contribute equally to the mortgage. A good amount of my 50% job goes to my family in Venezuela. And then, the freelancing side hustle is the money

I allow myself to fully save or try to invest, or spend on something nice that I want.

## AROUND-THE-CLOCK HUSTLE

My work schedule in the social centre is usually from 13:00 to 20:00 most days, so I have a lot of time in the mornings and at night. I usually work Monday to Thursday, and every other Friday. That works well with my job in Hafnarfjörður, where I work every other weekend. Then I have a couple of night shifts during the week. Of course, it’s a little bit tiring — the shift is from around 22:00 or 23:00 to 7:00 or 8:00 in the morning, so I have four hours to sleep before going back to my other job.

For my video and photo gigs, I usually book them on the weekends when I’m free, or at night. Sometimes, when there’s not much to do at work, I can do some editing. This works well, especially during night shifts in the house for disabled people because there isn’t really much to do at night. You need to be there if someone needs you, but it’s mostly an emergency response role. Sometimes, I have the entire night to edit while on duty. It works for me because my job allows me to do it, otherwise, it would probably be impossible.

I have a BA in visual arts and my job

at the social centre is mainly running an art program. I have different courses for kids. I love my job there. The job at the house for disabled people started as a summer job, but I really like the people living there and I think I have made some emotional connection with them — it feels like I’m spending time with my own grandparents or something. I’ve been doing videography and photography for maybe 10 years — that was my job in Venezuela. I also love it!

## PREPARING FOR FATHERHOOD

I’m having a baby probably in two weeks, so I think that will change everything. I found out that getting paternity leave when you have multiple jobs is very complicated. Right now I will start with just taking normal orlof (leave of absence) and then try to figure it out, take maybe 30% on one job and another percent on another. Unfortunately, I don’t think I will be able to have a normal fæðingarorlof (paternity leave) like most people, because the current system doesn’t really work well with multiple jobs. ■

Want to share how you’re making ends meet? Email us at grapevine@grapevine.is with the subject line “Side Hustle.” We’ll happily keep your identity anonymous.



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The Final Frontier

# Iceland Has Its Sights Set On

In September, Iceland took one great leap closer to becoming an active partner in future Moon and Mars landings – so why is no

WORDS Ciarán Daly  
IMAGES Joana Fontinha

– and it’s not just tourists. For some time, this island has also drawn a very different kind of explorer: those plotting a course much farther off the beaten path than Landmanna-laugar.

years after becoming a participating member of IMEWG is impressive enough. Beyond that, it marks a major shift from Iceland being merely a supporter of space research, to an active participant in the race to

isation within the IMEWG and one of the cohosts of the summit. “Everyone outside of Iceland understands the significance of the country for space research. But not everyone seems to appreciate the opportunities that are now at our doorstep.”

research and innovation initiatives.

So far, the ISA and its partners have helped conduct a number of significant missions in Iceland. Its first expedition took place in 2019 and it has since supported a huge range of field research efforts.

## We have proven ourselves when it comes to geothermal energy and gender equality, so why not in space?

Initially founded by Daniel and his colleague Gunnar Guðjónsson in 2018, the ISA has quickly grown into a core part of the country’s burgeoning space science ecosystem. It is primarily a facilitator of Iceland-based research initiatives, providing operational and logistics support to foreign scientists, space agencies, academics and

Most recently, this includes the NASA Habitable Worlds-funded ‘HABMARS’ research project which took place in June, where Principal Investigator Dr. Roy Price examined and sampled hydrothermal vents in Iceland to better understand how life could have existed on Mars 3.5 billion years ago; as well as site

Use of Iceland as a base for space research and training is nothing new. As early as 1965, NASA was sending astronauts here in preparation for the Moon landings. But last month, an event took place that could change Iceland’s role in the space race forever.

return to the Moon and to eventually land humans on Mars.

Despite being arguably the most significant and consequential space-related meeting in the country’s history – it was even opened with a keynote speech from Icelandic President Halla Tómasdóttir – the summit was met with almost no domestic fanfare.

### MÝVATN OR MARS?

“We are working hard to sing the song of space exploration, so that Icelanders better understand our own value and how we can contribute in a meaningful ways to space science and innovation, but it has not always been easy to have that song heard,” says Daniel Leeb, CEO and cofounder of the Iceland Space Agency (ISA) – the Icelandic government’s official representative organ-

## We are working hard to sing the song of space exploration, so that Icelanders better understand our own value and how we can contribute in a meaningful ways to space science and innovation

private companies working across the country. Although a privately organised initiative, the ISA is in continual dialogue with the Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Innovation, as well as a partner of Háskóli Íslands in developing space

visits for a long term space medicine programme in development between the ISA and doctors from Colorado University affiliated with NASA’s Exploration Medical Capabilities element.

**A** cold wind sweeps across the plain, gently teasing fine grains of volcanic sand and sodium from the riverbank. This landscape, carved by glacial flows millions of years ago, is stark, alien. But this isn’t Mars, nor the Moon.

For decades, visitors have travelled to Iceland to marvel at its unique geography, to bask in the warmth of its geothermal vents and to experience its seemingly alien geologies

During the first week of September, 50 representatives from 15 space agencies – including NASA and the ESA – gathered in Reykjavik for the annual summit of the International Mars Exploration Working Group (IMEWG) to share findings, coordinate research and plot a way forward for future Martian expeditions.

Formed in 1993, the IMEWG has been meeting regularly to coordinate research and exploration of Mars. The fact that Iceland hosted its annual face-to-face just two



# On Mars

body talking about it?

Additionally, the ISA is also supporting the Mars Sample Return project with long term collaborator Dr. Mike Thorpe of NASA Goddard, which hopes to inform the ESA / NASA mission to bring Martian soil

samples back to Earth for analysis in the next decade. On top of all that, the ISA eventually hopes to establish a permanent space research hub in Iceland which will provide the infrastructure necessary to grow these efforts over the coming years, supporting collaboration between Icelandic academia and international researchers.

**From a mission design perspective, the opportunity to see inside of a real lava tube was invaluable and having access to such sites certainly will help us to envisage similar terrains on Mars more easily.**

That begins with catching the attention and interest of foreign space agencies. Fortunately the work of the ISA and its partners around the IMEWG summit has immediately borne fruit in this regard, following a successful Martian analogue field trip with the 15 different space agen-

cies during the summit. Dr Claire Parfitt, who leads Mars exploration research efforts at the European Space Agency and chairs the IMEWG, says that this trip was “invaluable.”

“A day was spent visiting field sites that could be representative of Mars exploration sites, including glaciers, lava tubes and volcanic terrain,” she says. “Iceland has a unique and dramatic landscape that reflects those of Mars and it was a great pleasure to be able to spend the day visiting these beautiful and important research sites.”

“From a mission design perspective, the opportunity to see inside of a real lava tube was invaluable and having access to such sites certainly will help us to envisage similar terrains on Mars more easily.”

## CHALLENGING ENVIRONMENTS

With intense wind and weather that can change at any time, Iceland may never be a practical location for rocket launches or commercial spaceports. Instead, what drives scientific interest in Iceland from a research point of view is the same thing that makes it such a fascinating place for tourists: the land itself.

“Iceland possesses a more diverse set of terrestrial analogues of the Moon, Mars, Venus and other icy worlds – and in closer proximity to one another – than anywhere else on Earth,” Daniel explains. “We have terrain here – geochemistry, geology, geomorphology – that does not exist in such abundance and diversity anywhere else. When we took the IMEWG delegates to some of these locations, they were blown away by the possibilities both in terms of planetary research and from a technology development and testing perspective.”

For example, engineers may need one kind of environment if they’re developing a rover, an instrument, or a habitat, but on the other hand, astrobiologists may be looking for very specific locations that have similar geochemistry or energy sources that can inform habitability on Mars. Other countries might only have a couple of locations suited to these purposes; with a mix of vol-

canic plains, glaciers and geothermal vents within reach, Iceland has these in spades.

Once a research team has a site in mind, the ISA helps them find the right location. Often, these are some of the most remote places in Iceland – places that have barely been visited by Icelanders, let alone tourists. It’s then up to the ISA’s chief field officer, Gunnar, to help get research teams to these locations.

**Given the challenges of navigating to remote, hostile environments, it is no coincidence that the expertise of Icelandic glacier guides and mountaineers aligns so closely with the needs of astronauts and field researchers.**

As a glacier guide, Gunnar is used to working in some of the most challenging environments that Iceland has to offer. But, he says, these research trips are some of “the craziest jobs of all.” For the first ISA expedition back in 2019 to test the MS1 Mars Spacesuit simulator, Gunnar led the team to possibly one of the

most remote and fascinating areas in Iceland, Grimsvötn volcano.

Located in the heart of Vatnajökull, Grimsvötn is not only Iceland’s most active volcano; it’s also the first place on Earth where life was found in a subglacial lake. This fact makes Grimsvötn an especially important location for future ISA research projects that could inform missions to explore icy worlds such as Jupiter’s moon, Europa. And, when research-

ers from NASA collaborated with the ISA on the DIGMARS project, Gunnar took scientists to Sandvatn lake in the Highlands, which acted as an analogue for studying groundwater processes in Mars’ Jezero Crater.

As well as providing practical logistical support, the ISA then also plays an active role as a participant



in the research being conducted, as evidenced by Dr. Mike Thorpe's DIGMARS research publications which cite both Daniel and Gunnar as coauthors.

**MAKING THE MOST OF IT**

Given the challenges of navigating to remote, hostile environments, it is no coincidence that the expertise of Icelandic glacier guides and mountaineers aligns so closely with the needs of astronauts and field researchers.

But the way that Icelanders in general have adapted to living on a rock in the middle of the North Atlantic means Iceland also has some remarkable competencies when it comes to survival in these environments.

One of the key requirements for any future settlement on the Moon or Mars is something called in-situ resource utilisation (ISRU); in other words, using what's around you to survive. It's the key to sustaining life and research operations in extremely hostile environments. It's also something Icelanders have been

doing for generations – whether through harnessing geothermal and hydroelectric power, or using the volcanic rocks for concrete. With any Martian or lunar colonies facing the need to source the vast majority of their own energy and building materials, this is an absolutely critical part of humanity's interplanetary journey.

So with all of this in mind, why is nobody talking about this? There were almost no news stories about the summit and much of the interest in Iceland as a player in space exploration is international, rather than domestic.

"I think the potential for space research in Iceland is really big, but

**Everyone outside of Iceland understands the significance of Iceland for space research. But here, not everyone does.**

"If you want to mitigate risk to your billion dollar space programme, you have got to test the technology and develop it in high-fidelity environments – and that is what Iceland has in spades," says Daniel. "That, in a nutshell, is Iceland and our space programme; that is where we need to invest our time and that's why 15 of the leading space agencies came to Iceland."

we haven't yet been met with a lot of understanding from within Iceland itself," says Gunnar. "There is so much tradition around the fishing industry and tourism is the biggest industry. In my opinion, politics is politics and it tends to follow the money. But I truly believe this is going to be a huge economic driver."

Maybe it's the current small size of the space sector, or perhaps there is just general disbelief that a country

as small as Iceland could contribute anything great to such a cosmic, species-defining mission as humanity reaching Mars.

This is something that the President touched upon in her opening address to the IMEWG. "Some [may] question the role of our small nation when it comes to the grand mission you have come together to ferment. I do not," she told the summit. "It is my humble view that Iceland can and has punched above its size and weight when it comes to solving challenges. Indeed, I believe our purpose here in Iceland is to be the land of solutions. We have proven to be so when it comes to geothermal energy and gender equality, so why not in space?"

**FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS**

Last month's IMEWG meeting of course marks a significant milestone in Iceland's developing space sector and with the country's signing of the Artemis Accords in 2023, Iceland is headed for the stars. Signing the Accords allow Iceland to formally participate in the Artemis program; an international effort to

return humans – including the first woman – to the Moon by the end of the decade and lay the groundwork for future exploration of Mars. This opens up new opportunities for Iceland to collaborate with other space agencies and even possibilities for future Icelandic astronauts.

But something critical is still missing for the next steps of this journey: infrastructure and investment.

"Right now, people are coming here for research. But they're not staying," says Daniel. "I want to see the government empowered to put more energy and resources into the space sector. There's an enormous opportunity here for Iceland and with this meeting, we've been able to demonstrate that we're charting a path forward for future generations here. We now need to create the infrastructure for Iceland to truly be an international partner in space exploration." ■

Learn more about the Iceland Space Agency by visiting [icelandspaceagency.is](http://icelandspaceagency.is)



## Top Events



**THE LAST PODCAST ON THE LEFT**  
TUESDAY OCTOBER 22  
9.990 - 23.490 ISK  
HARPA, SILFURBERG

*The Last Podcast On The Left* crew is coming to Iceland to talk about serial killers, weird government conspiracies, aliens and other topics in the realm of bizarre and macabre. This podcast has been around since before the term "podcast" was coined and has gathered a following around the world so they started touring the material from the shows too. We can expect to be weirded and grossed out while keeled over with laughter. AJ



**KAFFI FLÓRA AUTUMN SERIES**  
WEDNESDAY OCTOBER 9 & THURSDAY OCTOBER 17  
4.990 ISK  
KAFFI FLÓRA

The Kaffi Flóra Garden Bistro in Laugardalur is a hidden gem. A quiet cafe nestled in a greenhouse, it's embraced by the lovely greenery of the Reykjavik Botanical Gardens. Since August, they've organised a concert series — there are only two more shows left of this season and they are not to be missed. On October 9, singer-songwriters Nanna (Of Monsters and Men), RAKEL and Salóme Katrín will join forces and securely implant the cozy atmosphere of autumn warmly into your heart. If that doesn't do the trick, suave crooner Bogomil Font and his henchmen might be able to convince you on October 17. Expect a lot of candles and general hygge vibes. JB



**LEGFEST**  
FRIDAY OCTOBER 4 - SATURDAY OCTOBER 5  
4.000 ISK  
GAUKURINN

No, this is not a music festival centred around those two dangling appendages we all know and love. As the Icelandic word indicates, LegFest is a new music festival showcasing female and genderqueer talent. A certain UTE-R-US, if you will. Scheduled over two nights, Gaukurinn will be brimming with femme talent from a diverse range of musical genres. On Friday, artists EMMA, Mørose and Svartþoka hit the stage, with Ekkert, Krístrún and Sódaskapur playing on Saturday. This is the first-ever LegFest and its organisers are keen to produce many more editions. One could even say that more shows are in embryo. JB



Live In  
Reykjavík

# For The Love Of All Things Dark

*The Last Podcast On The Left* is coming for you, Reykjavík

WORDS Ragnar Egilsson  
IMAGE Supplied

If you like your comedy with a healthy (or unhealthy, depending on your perspective) serving of murder, haunting or war crimes then you're probably already a diehard fan of *The Last Podcast On The Left*. Marcus Parks, Henry Zebrowski and Ed Larson are coming to Reykjavík later this month for a one-night-only live show at Harpa. The Grapevine caught up with Marcus, a veteran investigator of all things bloody and bizarre, about what fans can expect.

*OK, so this is not the most impartial interview — you own a stake in the Grapevine and we have been friends for a while. So this won't be your first time in Iceland.*

Iceland was actually my first vacation anywhere outside America and it's a bizarre place to have as your first trip for pleasure. I came here with my wife and we had a magical time — visiting a horse farm, lying in a hot tub at midnight in the winter, driving through a mountain pass and nearly dying. We joked at the time that "if we die here, they're going to name a mountain after us," and our friend Addy said, "Ah yes, they'll name it 'Another Dead Tourist Pass.'" That's when we realised how expendable our lives were and

how unsurprised anyone would be if we were to die in Iceland. So we're coming back!

*Has it been tricky to adapt to performing live for non-native English speakers?*

The audiences can be a bit more reserved and polite, like in Berlin, but you don't need the boisterous American laughter all the time. Back home you'll get people coming to the show tripping on acid and they'll start talking to us on stage because they forget they are at a live show! But it's definitely a certain type of person who isn't afraid to laugh at something dark that comes to our shows — they're usually a bit more boisterous than your average Berliner or Swede.

*There's a lot of true crime around. What sets Last Podcast apart from the rest?*

We have been interested in this stuff since we were children. I was five-years-old and had a picture of Ted Bundy's corpse on my bedroom wall that I cut out of a Weekly World News.

We actually love this shit and we are truly into the esoteric stuff and the dark historical stuff we cover. Of course we had to teach ourselves

how to do this, as we simply weren't good enough to handle some of the more historical topics in the beginning. Hell, we're still making it up as we go along!

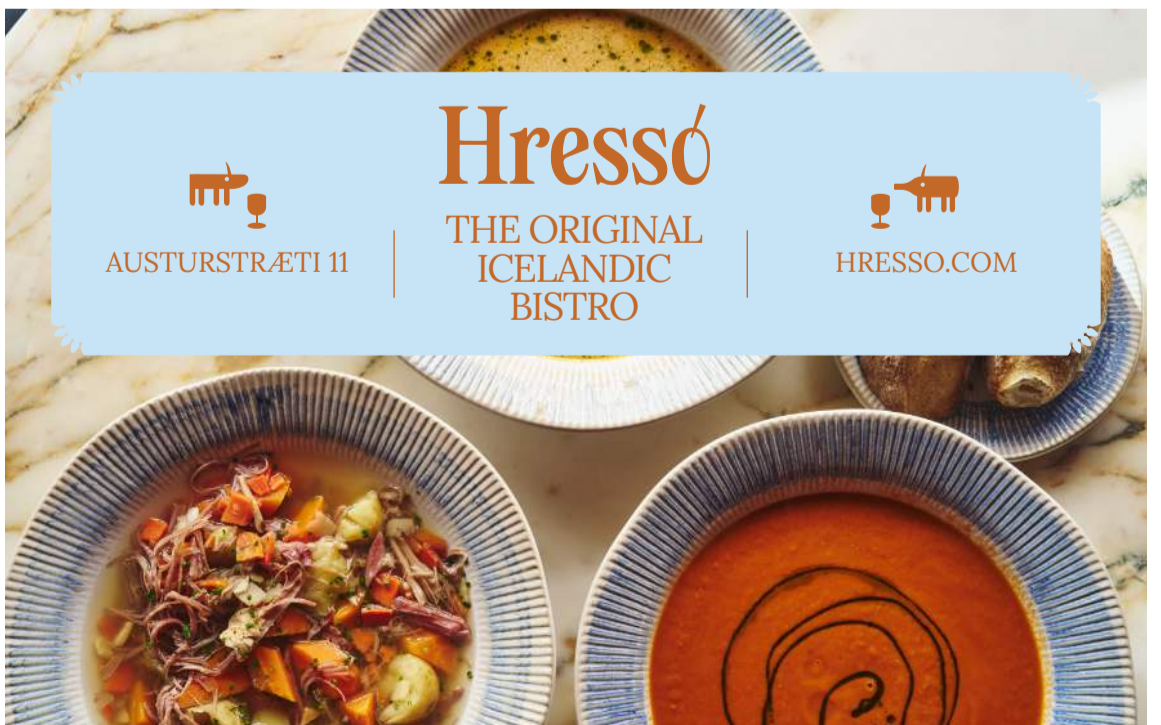
*What goes into a good Last Podcast episode is not just horrible things happening to people — it's when there's something kind of ridiculous about it, too.*

*What can you tell us about the live show without blowing the surprise?*

It's basically a stand-up show with three people. I have a narrative that runs throughout and then Henry and Ed will riff on it. They've been working together in sketch comedy for ages, originally with my favourite sketch group of all time, Murderfist, and they are able to bring that energy to a live show.

We used to have different sections devoted to UFOs, cryptids, etc., but now we're doing one long show on a single subject and I am loving the way it's going. I'm really proud of this live show and I can't wait for people to see it. ■

*The Last Podcast On The Left* is live at Harpa on October 22. Grab your tickets while you still can at [tix.is](http://tix.is). See you there.



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Rhyme Time

## Waxing Poetic

Reykjavík Poetics provide an inviting space for art and experimentation

WORDS Ish Sveinsson Houle  
IMAGE Joana Fontinha

works like *Polishing Iceland* to her name and having curated *Writers Adrift*, a collection of essays by foreign-born writers in Iceland. When Reykjavík Poetics was conceived, it began as a curated night of work revolving around a specific theme and it was immediately well received

Writer's O'Clocks events at Hafnarhaus, where writers can engage in stripped-down, no-mic conversations with anyone who attends. As that milestone came around, Ewa and co. tabulated that over 100 artists had performed at Reykjavík Poetics events to date.

"It's always such a surprise how many people will come," Ewa admits. "And I had this problem that we were not putting enough chairs,

### NOT JUST POETS

But don't let the moniker mislead you, Reykjavík Poetics isn't limit-

### Why just not go crazy and do fun things and surprising things?

just humble you know, because who will come to poetry? It's not like we are having a rock concert. And then there is a crowd!"

ed to poetry – they've showcased everything from screenplays and non-fiction to music and stand-up. "It's a space for experiments," as Ewa puts it. "Why just not go crazy and do fun things and surprising things and experiment!"

As more and more writers began knocking on the door, they conceptualised adding an open mic portion to the series. Writer Kjartan Már Ómarsson – the "godfather" of Poetics, as Ewa describes him – suggested shifting the events from once a month to bimonthly happenings, Ewa realised she couldn't keep doing it alone. In May, Ewa added producers Francesca Cricelli, Martyna Daniel and Christopher Marcatili, and host Gabe Dunsmith to the board of Reykjavík Poetics.

The themed nights are sometimes curated by a board member or someone outside the core team. They've held nights centred around glaciers, working in tandem with the Snæfellsjökull for President campaign, a neurodiverse literary event curated by Kathy D'Arcy, and a night for rants curated by board member Martyna and Grayson Del Faro. They're keen to emphasise that they're open to curation pitches. As Ewa explains: "it's very different to come and read your poetry as an artist on stage, versus putting yourself in a role of curator, composing the program and presenting what you like and who you know."

Celebrating their one-year anniversary in June with the curated event "Til Hamingjúl," Reykjavík Poetics has so far hosted 14 curated Poetics events and four in their open mic series at Mengi, as well as two

Internationally infamous for its saturation of writers and authors, Reykjavík was designated a "UNESCO City of Literature" or "Bókmenntaborg" some 13 years ago. This honorific gains tangibility in its sponsorship of myriad literarily-skewed projects – one of which is Reykjavík Poetics. Founded in June 2023, Reykjavík Poetics occupies Mengi twice monthly with events for the local poetry scene.

Founder Ewa Marcinek is well established in said scene, with celebrated



#### EVERYONE IS WELCOME HERE

"I think we fill the gap," Ewa notes about what Reykjavík Poetics adds to the local terrain, "because with the local literary scene you often see the same names and you have to have a certain level of accomplishment to be part to be invited. People who are maybe not the biggest names don't find the space to also present their words." There's no expectation to present published work at these events; they heartily welcome those who might struggle to label themselves as writers or artists.

"I think I would probably not be writing if it wasn't for this series"

## I think I would probably not be writing if it wasn't for this series.

Martyna shares. When Poetics was started, Ewa suggested Martyna try to work on a piece to present. The response to her writing was phenomenal. "I remember I had shivers," Martyna recalls. "I was like, 'oh my god, I have to write more.'"

"I feel safe enough to read something that is not perfect, which is important. But I do want to, you know, give my best."

Ewa chimes in to talk about seeing Martyna read, explaining that, "People were laughing so hard that it was hard to sometimes hear you, because people are laughing and

cheering. It's just amazing to see how authors are growing."

I asked the board if they could share stories of readers who came to tell them how they felt about Poetics. Gabe tells me about a comedian who came up to him after an open mic event, sharing that "he basically said, 'it's so nice to come here, because whenever I do a comedy open mic, it's like three or four people in the audience. They're not there to listen to you, they're just there to drink, they're talking over you, you're trying to make them laugh. And here people are respectful and attentive, and people actually laugh and people cheer for you.' And I think he was just struck that there was really this very supportive atmosphere."

#### A NIGHT OF MANY LANGUAGES

Though Reykjavík Poetics events are hosted in English, reading in English is not mandatory! "Sometimes people will get up and maybe feel a little bit reticent or shy about not speaking in English. And actually, we love that" says Chris. A recent happening featured readings in English, Icelandic, Italian, and Russian. It's the inclusion of poetry in Icelandic that excites the board. By holding a multi-lingual space for poetry while welcoming Icelandic poetry, they've created a space for non-na-

tive speakers — who might not have attended an poetry event solely in Icelandic — to hear Icelandic poetry.

They all speak with such care and pride for this entity that they've nurtured. "Regardless of whether it's difficult material, funny material, or whatever someone's reading, the crowd is always in the mood for it," Chris describes. "You can laugh and cry" Ewa adds, eliciting smiles from the whole group.

Looking to the future, the board members are hopeful, but are stopping themselves from becoming too dreamy. The organisation is on a short-term contract with Reykjavíkurborg, so any talk about the future tends to extend months rather than years. Upcoming is an open mic on October 16, a curated night themed "Ghost Stories" on October 30, and a night of translated Palestinian poetry in November.

Though the group has found a home at Mengi, Ewa is pragmatic, joking that "I personally have it in mind, like, what's going to happen when Mengi stops being Mengi and it becomes a puffin store." Martyna is quick with assurance, offering "I think we will always find spaces. Physical spaces are physical spaces." Seemingly convinced, Ewa agrees: "definitely, we already created this community. I think we could easily travel." ■

Learn about Reykjavík Poetics' upcoming and past events on Instagram @reykjavikpoetics and at [rvkpoetics.com](http://rvkpoetics.com).

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Film Feature

# Johnny King Rides Again

Inside Árni Sveinsson's eight-year quest to tell the tale of an Icelandic cowboy

WORDS Iryna Zubenko  
IMAGES Joana Fontinha & Supplied still

*Norðursins, sagan af Johnny King (The Cowboy of the North: The Story of Johnny King)*, will later win the Ljóskastari award, the jury prize of Skjaldborg, before hitting the big screen across the country.

ROLLING WITHOUT A PLAN

"This movie is kind of a happy accident," director Árni Sveinsson tells me four months after the film's May premiere at Skjaldborg. "I didn't know anything [about Johnny King]. It was just a crazy idea from my friend Andri [Freyr Viðarsson], who appears in the film as the storyteller."

Andri is a radio presenter at RÁS2 and was introduced to Johnny King through an interview. "Johnny King was having a concert at some hamburger place and Andri asked if I could go check it out and bring a camera," Árni explains, recalling the conversation from eight years earlier. "That's how it started. We didn't

know what we were doing."

Árni brought his camera to the burger joint and filming began without any clear direction. Initially, Árni and Andri weren't even intending to make a movie – or at least they didn't realise that's what was happening. But after meeting Johnny a few times, the story was growing

boy festival in Skagaströnd. Despite a few short-lived attempts to return to the stage in the 90s and early 2000s, Johnny King's career never managed to reach the same level of prominence.

According to Árni, Johnny was initially flattered by the renewed attention. "As time went on and we

without funding, mostly shooting on weekends while juggling other jobs. Two years ago, "everything clicked together," as Árni puts it, and the project finally secured funding from the Icelandic Film Centre and RÚV.

A HUMAN STORY

The documentary is shot in a way that makes you care about Johnny King from the very first minutes. I could see people seated around me at Skjaldborg were all rooting for him, caring about him, worrying about him. Árni makes it clear, "This movie is not about country music. It's just a story about a guy who has a past. He's trying to deal with his past and he's trying to keep going. It's about perseverance, because even through all his trials, he never gives up, he keeps going. It's a human story, a human interest story."

The story unfolds as Johnny's life takes a few unexpected turns and contains some deeply intimate

**“W**ho the hell is Johnny King?” The thought flashes through my mind as I squeeze through the jam-packed screening room of Skjaldborgarbió in Patreksfjörður. It's probably my third feature film of the day at the Skjaldborg Documentary Film Festival and I'm finding it increasingly difficult to maintain focus. The audience, quick to grab their seats while I waited for popcorn, doesn't seem as confused by the next film or its protagonist – they're fully prepared to laugh, cry and empathise, even though, for some of them, the name Johnny King doesn't mean much.

The film in question, *Kúreki*

This movie is kind of a happy accident.

bigger and bigger. "Four years ago, around Covid times, we decided that we should take it all the way," says Árni.

Johnny King (neé Jón Oddi Víkingsson) is a country singer from Húsavík who first gained attention in the 1980s. His rise to fame came after Friðrik Þór Friðriksson's film *Kúrekar norðursins (Cowboys of the North)* featuring Iceland's only cow-

kept visiting him, he, of course, was asking us, "What are you guys doing? When is this going to end? Can we finish this now?" Árni laughs.

The filmmakers explained to Johnny that they wanted to take his story further and that a full-length documentary would be the way to go. But, of course, that meant they needed time and money. For a while, they struggled to advance the project

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revelations. I ask Árni how the crew approached these sensitive topics, “I don’t want to say too much, but we found out straight from the beginning that there was something that he wanted to get out because he hadn’t really talked to anybody about this. We felt that he wanted to get something off his chest,” says Árni. “This was not something that we were hinging all our investment on, but it was a very big part of the story. We knew that we had to try to handle it as best as we could.”

Slowly, the idea that at first seemed to be going nowhere developed into a project with a roadmap. In the span of eight years, the project had its ups and downs. Shooting was first slowed down during Covid and then resumed. Many things changed during that time, including Johnny’s health, which started to deteriorate.

“When you shoot over a long time like this, it can be hard to keep on track,” Árni admits. Taking care of

shooting material that piled up over eight years, was a practical challenge. “We lost one day of shooting due to a mix up with transfers because of very serious personal things that happened.” He pauses. “My father died during the making of this film. And the strange thing is that he died the same day that Johnny had his first heart attack.”

That was the first of multiple heart attacks, turning Johnny’s health into a serious question about whether filming could continue. “At some point, we were just afraid that he would die on set,” Árni admits.

#### CAPTURING STORIES

Following the film’s premiere, Johnny King is enjoying his renewed attention. People are coming up to him in Selfoss, where he now lives, to request photos. His albums are streaming on Spotify, getting more and more listens every day. Rumour has it, he might even return to the

stage. As for Árni, he already has attention spread across at least three other films.

out in September, nobody in Iceland knew about it,” he laughs. “However, everybody in the world knew about

**You’ll laugh, you’ll cry, you’ll get afraid, you’ll get happy. You don’t need to like country music. You don’t need to know who Johnny King is.**

Having worked extensively in the film, TV, and music video industry for the past 20 years, *Kúreki Norðursins* is Árni’s fifth feature-length documentary.

“Actually, we were on the cover of the Grapevine in July 2010 after our film *Backyard* won at Skjaldborg. It was quite fun and very good, but I think we got the cover a little bit too early because when the film came

it because it was screened at over 50 festivals. We travelled a lot for almost two years with that one. It’s about kids in the neighbourhood – you know, the FM Belfast kids who decided to have a concert in their backyard with all their friends – great bands like múm, Hjaltalín, Retro Stefson and Sin Fang Bous.”

With a portfolio of projects touching on unconventional ideas or involving family members, what really

inspires Árni? “You’re just trying to tell a story,” Árni shrugs. “And usually these stories come to you. In my experience, the ones that I’ve been trying to chase, they usually don’t work out.”

“Every good story needs at least one good character. You could have more, but one is usually the essence of every story,” he says, making it clear that Johnny King is that character.

“You’ll laugh, you’ll cry, you’ll get afraid, you’ll get happy. You don’t need to like country music. You don’t need to know who Johnny King is. You don’t need to know anything about this world you’re entering, it will all come to light and you’ll have a good time.” He pauses and adds with a smile, “that’s what people are telling me, at least.” ■

*Kúreki Norðursins* is screening at Bió Paradís. Check show times and buy your tickets at [bioparadis.is](http://bioparadis.is).

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**6pm**

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The Edda Or  
Whatever

## See Ya Later, Skáldskaparmál

The one where Sif gets her weave did, henny

WORDS Grayson Del Faro  
IMAGE Maria R. Dell'Olio

down the Prose Edda, a mediaeval Icelandic textbook that also low-key recaps most of what we know about the Norse gods today, but we're doing it with a little bit of style and a whole lot of sass. (Not to mention ass!) If you've ever wondered, "wasn't Þórr like the himbo of the Norse gods?" (he was) or, "didn't Loki get dicked down by a literal horse?" (he did), then shut up, I'm getting to it.

#### A TALE AS GOLD AS TIME

I know you're not ready for this conversation, but we're sadly coming to the end of the Edda. Skáldskaparmál is both the longest and the thickest of its sections – I know that sounds mouth-watering, but it's a trap. Most of it is full of random

quotes from dusty-ass poems and lists of nicknames for all kinds of stuff. I've chosen to squeeze only its juiciest bits and leave out all the dry stuff. You deserve it! (You're welcome.)

The final bits of Skáldskaparmál are more obsessed with gold than that one obnoxious guy you know who won't shut up about cryptocurrency. They hadn't invented capitalism yet, but that shit was still valuable and they were obsessed with it. They love it so much that they believe it literally shines light of its own volition. Ægir, the god of the sea, uses a pile of it instead of a bonfire to light the dining room for what are surely insane dinner parties with the gods. It's kinda like burning money to show how rich you are, right?

**W**elcome to The Edda or Whatever, where I'm spilling the tea on Norse mythology. We're breaking



Einar Guðmann

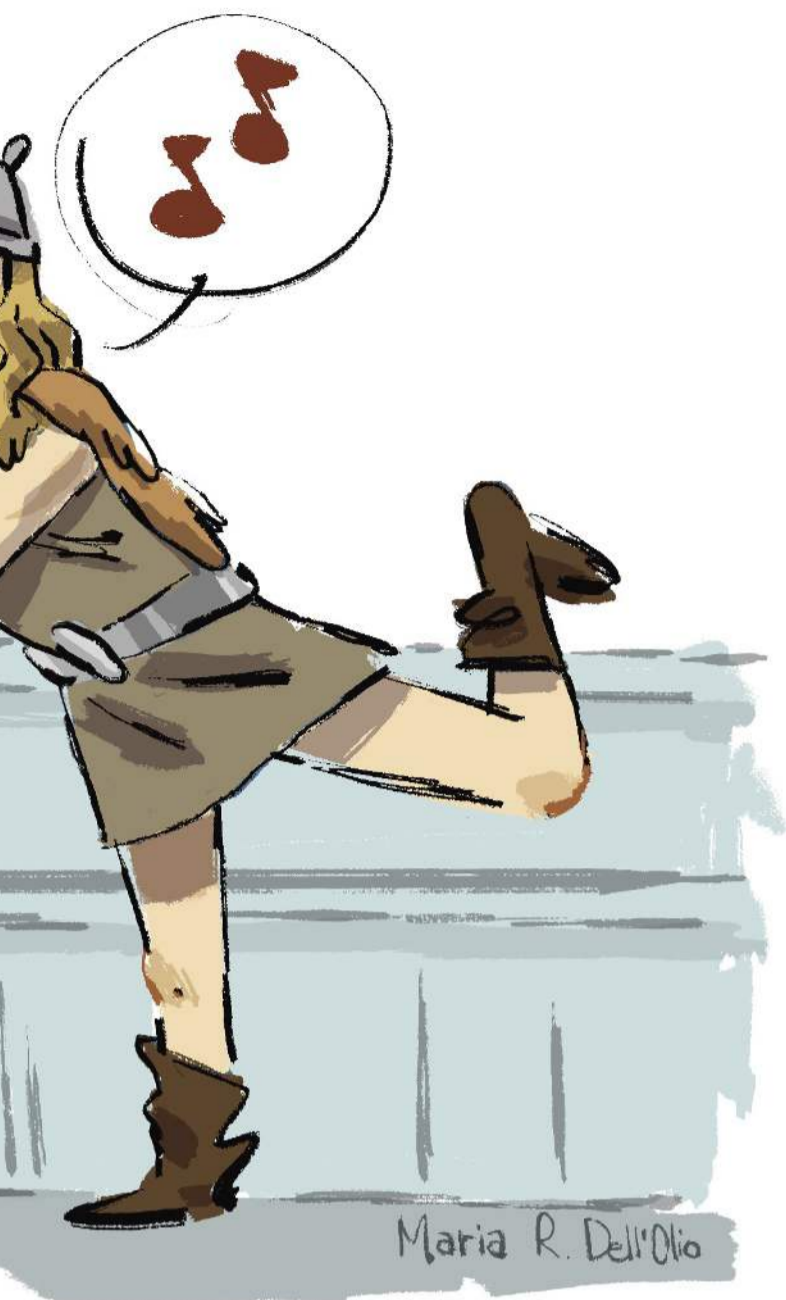


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# Skaldskaparmál-igator!

But that's nothing compared to Loki's batshit behaviour. For absolutely no reason at all, he sneaks up and cuts off all of Sif's hair. She's one of those gurlies whose hair is basically her entire personality. She also happens to be Þórr's wife, so shit naturally hits the fan at this point. He threatens to break every bone in Loki's sleazy body if he doesn't find a way to un-snatch his wife's wig. So Loki hires some dwarves to make hair from solid gold. They throw in a couple other things, too, including a boring spear, and a magical ship that always has wind in its sails and can fold down to fit in your pocket. I mean, make it an airplane and even I'd buy it!

## LIP SERVICE

Then, for his own wacky reasons that we really shouldn't bother trying to make sense of at this point, Loki bets his head to some other dwarves that they can't make three objects more cool than the other first dwarves. By head, I don't mean he'll blow them (knowing him, he'd probably do that for free), but rather if they win, they get to kill him. So the dwarves get to work and make a magic pig that shines light, a magic ring that literally drips eight more golden rings every nine days and a certain magic hammer that you might know from its starring role in several Marvel movies.

Loki presents the spear to Óðinn, the golden wig to Þórr and the ship to Freyr. They're like, "Damn, Loki, you really understood the assignment!" But then the dwarf shows up and gives the ring to Óðinn, the glowing pig to Freyr to pull his chariot, and, of course, the hammer to Þórr. The gods decide the hammer

is the best dwarf-made offering, meaning Loki has lost his bet. Loki points out that he only bet his head and in order to cut it off, they'd have to harm his neck and that was not part of the deal. He may have saved his life by being a pedantic piece of shit, but the dwarf sews Loki's lips shut in punishment. I guess they'll have to settle for handjob jobs now!

## SALTING THE WOUND

This is where the stories start to devolve a little, turning away from the Norse gods themselves and focusing on the legendary monarchs and families who claimed to be their descendants. One of Óðinn's (probably bajillion) grandsons is a Danish king named Fróði. Fun fact: this is often anglicised as Frodo, which is where JRR Tolkien got the name for everyone's least favourite hobbit. This king has a magical mill that can shoot out anything he desires, but it's so big that nobody is able to crank it. That's not even an euphemism — get your mind out of the gutter!

So what's a king to do? Turn to slavery, apparently. He buys the giantesses called Fenia and Menia, and enslaves them to the mill. He has them grind out gold (surprise to no one) but also world peace (I bet you didn't see that one coming). He doesn't let them sleep, though, and so they sing a sad song while grinding out an army to kill Fróði in the night. Only, the giantesses are then enslaved to the king of that army and forced to grind out salt. Like ugh, can somebody please get these ladies a fucking break?

They take matters into their own giant hands and grind so hard it cre-

ates a whirlpool in the ocean, sucking down all a whole armada of ships and turning the entire ocean salty. I guess they would say that revenge is a dish best served salted!

There are some other stories of kings and heroes, but most are not that interesting, except the story of Sigurður and Brynhildur, but we've already recapped that in both poem and saga form. It's not my fault you missed them. Thank god for the internet, amirite?

## METRE? I BARELY KNOW 'ER!

Okay, I kinda lied. Skaldskaparmál is not actually the end of the Prose Edda. There is one more section called Hattatal, which is basically just a list of different poetic metres. A poetic metre is a set of literary rules that dictate the — okay, I can already see your eyes glazing over. Hard pass. It's honestly about as interesting as a set of IKEA instructions, so we'll just go ahead and leave it out. I will, however, leave you with an Old Norse inspired poem, as a treat:

The Edda or Whatever woefully comes to an end. You better have lol-ed a buttload or bitch, you best pretend. It's your problem if you didn't and poetry gives you the ick. If you don't vibe with this metre, may you choke on a dick.

## Morals of the story:

1. Money isn't everything. Looks are, apparently.
2. Slavery is bad. I can't believe I even have to remind you of that. ■

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REYKJAVÍK MÚSÍKJÓRÐ



RÁS 2

# Centre Map

We're here to fill you in on our personal favourite places around town – and a few to consider avoiding.

## Dining

**1 NAPOLI**  
Tryggvagata 24  
We love places that do one thing and do them damn well. This takeaway place is a case in point. Napoli offers sourdough Neapolitan-style pizzas with a menu to match – think margherita, quattro formaggi, parma, calzone – plus vegan options and magnificent sandwiches. Look out for their lunch offer, every day from 11:30 to 15:00. JT

**2 GAETA GELATO**  
Aðalstræti 6 & Hlemmur Mathöll  
Gaeta Gelato is at the centre of a heated ongoing debate at the Grapevine office about who makes the best ice cream in the country. For those keen on the deep tastiness of Italian gelato, this place is IT. They are also located right smack downtown, so you can take that icecream for a stroll – we suggest a stroll to their other location for another scoop. JT

**3 PLANTAN**  
Njálsgata 64  
This cute little neighborhood cafe is 100% vegan and does a few things right: their soup of the day menu updates every week and uses seasonal produce, they mastered the plant-based cheese bun recipe to perfection, and this might be the most hearty vegan brunches in town. Look out for the daily bun and coffee deal, it truly is like a warm hug. IZ

**5 CAFÉ BABALÚ**  
Skólavörðustígur 22  
This quirky café hangout is a great choice when you're looking for a cozy, chill experience. Decked with kitschy decor and plush chairs, the café is perfect for a refuge from an instant shower of rain. If you're looking to snuggle up with a book and a good cup of coffee, look no further. JB

**6 BAN THAI**  
Laugavegur 130  
The absolute GOAT – as they say – in Thai cuisine in Reykjavik. Ban Thai's menu is dotted with little symbols of chili, denoting the spice level of each course. You're welcome to order a level-5 chili course, but do so at your own risk. JB

**7 GRÁI KÖTTURINN**  
Hverfisgata 16a  
This no-nonsense downtown staple has been serving Reykjavik dwellers quality breakfast food since 1997. Tucked away in a cute cellar, the diner boasts retro Icelandic design charm, while its menu is far from outdated. Pancakes, bagels and frying oil all have their special place at Grái Kötturinn. As Grái Kötturinn closes at 14:30 every day, it's not a place for nighthawks, but early-birds. JB

**8 CHICKPEA**  
Hallveigarstígur 1  
This Mediterranean-inspired restaurant is a great place for a quick bite. Servings are generous and the

food nutritious, meaning you'll go full well into the day. They do wraps, falafels, and all kinds of salads exceptionally well. Prices aren't extremely steep, but nothing to write home about either. JB

**9 KRÓNAN**  
Hallveigarstígur 1 & more locations  
If you're ever in a pinch while looking for something cheap to eat if you're downtown just go to Krónan and pick out some flatkökur. Flatkökur goes great with everything. Be it the Mediterranean/Icelandic fusion of lathering some with hummus, or turn it into a poor-man's pizza with pizza sauce and cheese. Honestly, the flatkaka is an empty canvas for you to paint your wildest dreams on. JB

**10 JÓMFRÚIN**  
Lækjargata 4, 101 Reykjavik  
Icelanders may have a love-hate relationship with the Danes, but let's be honest, who can resist craving a delicious smørrebrød every now and then? If you get what we are talking about, there's no better place in town for an authentic Danish smørrebrød than Jómfrúin. This family-run restaurant specialises in serving Danish and Scandinavian dishes, and to top it off, it boasts a fantastic outdoor terrace where you can relax, sip a beer and complain about politics overlooking the Icelandic parliament. IZ

If you're staying in Reykjavik more than a few days, you ought to find your own dive bar – this is ours. It seems like the time froze at Vitabar, but we love it that way. People come for their famous blue cheese burger, but stay for a few pints and delicious fries. Sometimes I wish Vitabar discovered craft beer, but I go back nevertheless – for a late night bite and Thule on draft. IZ

**15 VÍNSTÚKAN TÍU SOPAR**  
Laugavegur 27  
There are a few bars in Reykjavik that have learned how to do wine right, and Vinstúkan Tíu sopar, although located in the middle of the chaos and tourist buzz of Laugavegur, is one of them. Craving Pét-nat? In the mood for orange wine? Ready to explore small Slovenian wineries? You name it – the bar's staff will be ready to come up with suggestions that will suit any pocket. Don't get me started on their small bites to pair with wine – I'm already dreaming about their grilled peppers and torched broccoli with salted lemon. IZ

## Shopping & Activities

**16 BÍÓ PARADÍS**  
Hverfisgata 54  
Sometimes the smell of popcorn fills the air of Hverfisgata, as if beckoning you to come inside. You succumb and find yourself in the cutest art house cinema with colourful posters on the walls and vintage-looking bar straight outta Wes Anderson movie. There's always a film screening and you rarely need to book tickets in advance, so enjoy the old school walk-in experience and one of the best Happy Hours in town. IZ

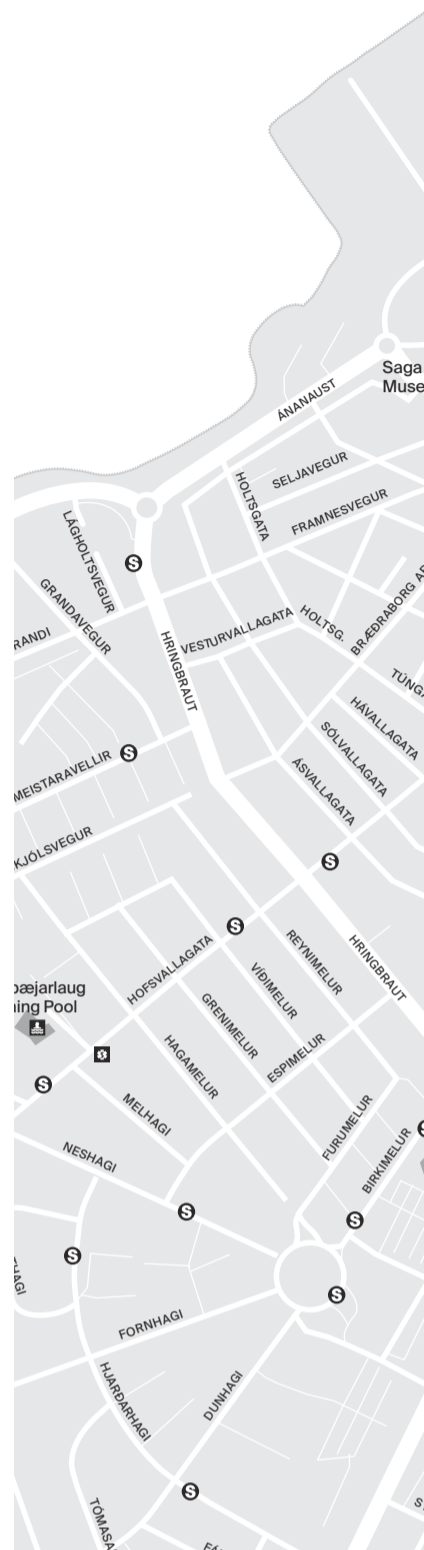
**17 LAVA SHOW**  
Fiskislóð 74  
I didn't know I had a primal urge to see a person clad in a Homer Simpson nuclear suit replicate the natural flow of molten lava until I paid the Lava Show a visit. Nothing will prepare you for sitting in an enclosed space while literal magma flows out of a chute through the wall. And then you just stare at the colours as the host explains the geological properties of lava. JB

## Be Warned

**18 101 BISTRO**  
Austurstræti 3  
The bistro on the corner of Ingólfs-torg and Austurstræti that has a plaque outside saying, "Come in and try the worst [insert popular food item] that one guy on Tripadvisor said we had", or something like that. It's a trap, do not go there. That plaque has been in the same spot ever since Hrunið. RG

**19 10-11**  
Austurstræti 17  
If you're shopping here, I hope it's because you consider this an absolute last-minute resort. Like, you're down-and-out after a night of partying and you need some form of carbohydrates (or for that matter, protection). Don't make this a frequent pitstop in your grocery-shopping because: a) their prices are gouged to compensate for the fact they're always open, and b) their product variety is shit – even by Icelandic standards. Check out Krónan instead, a stone's throw away. RG

**20 LEBOWSKI BAR**  
Laugavegur 20a  
A joke that's gone too far. The longest lasting theme bar that sprung up during a theme-bar craze many years ago. We'd list off a bunch of reasons to avoid this place, but the owner has our phone numbers and we're over the after-hours calls. So just take our word for it. The Dude does not abide. RG



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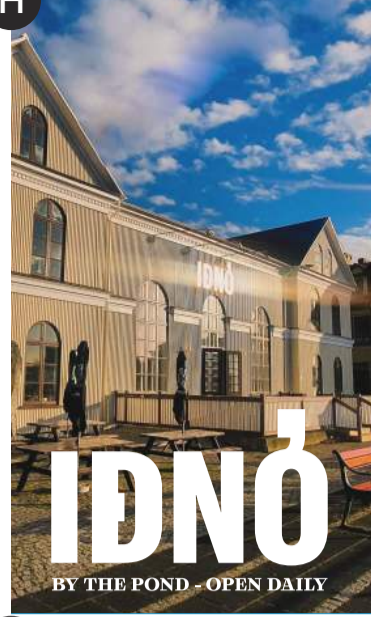
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For a country of avid bookworms, Iceland is lacking in independent bookstores. So whenever one pops up, we need to be sure to support and cherish it before it's gone. One such indie bókabúð is Skálda, a brand-new independent bookstore housed in a 120-year-old building on Vesturgata. The one-man project of former teacher Einar Björn Magnússon, Skálda offers an excellent selection of new books, featuring a wide range of contemporary authors in both Icelandic and English, as well as a curated collection of used books – available for as low as 990 ISK. The store aims to host events and readings in the future and is currently in the final stages of its Karolina Fund campaign. IZ ■

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# Art Exhibitions

# 04.10–31.10.24

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

## Opening

### GALLERY PORT

*Dýrfinna & Geoffrey – Afbygging/ Deconstruction*

Two artists explore their past experiences in Reykjavík.

Opens October 5 @ 15:00  
Runs until October 26

### HEAD 2 HEAD FESTIVAL

Greek-Icelandic art festival showcasing 30 artists and curators from Greece and Iceland.

### Participating galleries:

Associate Gallery, Gallery Kannski, Kling & Bang, The Living Art Museum, Nordic House OPEN, Phenomenon Artist studio Complex and Gallery, Gallery Underpass and Bókumbók.

Opens October 11  
Runs until October 13

### KORPÚLFSSTAÐIR

*TORG – Art Fair in Reykjavík*  
TORG 2024 is curated by Paulina Kuhn and is one of the largest exhibitions and sales platforms for art in Iceland.

Opens October 4th @ 16:00  
Runs until October 13

### GALLERY FOLD

*Gísli B. Björnsson – Landssýn / Sighting Land*

Graphic Design  
Opens October 5  
Runs until October 26

### LOFTSKEYTASTÖÐIN

*25th Anniversary of the Pink Ribbon Exhibition*

The Pink Ribbon originally came to Iceland in 2000 and was made available for sale to people who wanted to support the fight against breast cancer through donations. This exhibition features each of the Pink Ribbons produced in Iceland since then.

Opens October 5  
Runs until October 12

### HAFNARHÚS (REYKJAVÍK ART MUSEUM)

*Erró – 1001 Nights*  
The works come from the Erró Collection in Reykjavík Art Museum and private collections in Iceland.

Opens October 5 @ 15:00  
Runs until March 23

### HAVARÍ

*Lóa Hlín Hjálmtýsdóttir – Solo Exhibition*

Grapevine's favourite artist/illustrator is at it again with an exhibition of sculptures, paintings, prints and various other random craziness. Everything is for sale, so get your Christmas shopping done there!

Opens October 3  
Runs until December 23

### KJARVALSSTAÐIR (REYKJAVÍK ART MUSEUM)

*Hallgrímur Helgason: Havoc*  
In the exhibition Havoc, we focus on the art of Hallgrímur Helgason, an artist equally known for his writing and social commentary. Within the visual realm, Helgason has chosen painting and drawing as his means of expression.

Opens October 19  
Runs until February 9

### NATIONAL GALLERY OF ICELAND

*Looking Inward, Looking Outwards: 140 years of the National Gallery of Iceland*

Anniversary exhibition showing a selection of outstanding works by approximately 100 artists from the museum's collection.

Opens October 12  
Runs until March 30

*Stay and turn to stone! Folklore in Icelandic Art*

Opens October 18  
Runs until May 25

### SÍM GALLERY

*Hjörtur Matthías Skúlason – Kennir þú til / Are you hurt*

Solo exhibition, sculptures

Opens October 4  
Runs until October 27

### PULA

*Hayden Dunham – Salt of a New Earth*

A solo exhibition by Hayden Dunham, exhibiting sculptures "which take on diverse forms, act as extensions of the body, seamlessly fusing primal elements like water, light, and chlorophyll with conduits such as glass, silicone, and metal."

Opens October 5 @ 16:00  
Runs until November 10

## Ongoing

### ÁSMUNDARSAFN (REYKJAVÍK ART MUSEUM)

*At Hand*  
Works from the collection  
Runs until December 8

BERG CONTEMPORARY  
*Steina Vasulka & Woody Vasulka – Orka & Lucifer's Commission*  
Photography, video work  
Runs until October 26

GALLERY GRÓTTA  
*Alfa Rós Pétursdóttir – Unseen Textures*  
Textile works, mixed media  
Runs until October 12

GALLERY SIGN  
*Anna Hrund Másdóttir – Water Lilies*  
Mixed media, silicone works  
Runs until December 15

GERÐARSAFN (KÓPAVOGUR ART MUSEUM)  
*Gerður Helgadóttir – Transformation*  
Works from the collection  
Runs until October 21

HAFNARBORG CENTER OF CULTURE & FINE ART  
*Unknown Benevolence*  
Group exhibition, mixed media  
Runs until October 27

*Elín Sigríður María Ólafsdóttir – "We See What We Want to See"*  
Paintings, mixed media  
Runs until November 3

HAFNARHÚS (REYKJAVÍK ART MUSEUM)  
*Hreinn Friðfinnsson – From Time - To Time*

Based on works in the museum's collection, the exhibition is a poetic and philosophical exploration into every-day human experience and the artist's attempts to handle transience and capture the infinite.  
Runs until January 12

HALLGRÍMSKIRKJA  
*HALLGRÍMSHORFUR*  
Design, archival works  
Runs until December 1

HÖFUÐSTÖÐIN  
*Shoplifter/Hrafnhildur Arnardóttir – Chromo Sapiens*  
Installation, colourful whole body experience  
Permanent exhibition

18 GALLERY  
*Stefán V. Jónsson (Stórval) – The Mountain Within*  
Historical paintings  
Runs until October 5

18 GRANDI  
*Andreas Eriksson – Real Time*  
Paintings, progressive exhibition  
Runs until December 2024

KJARVALSSTAÐIR (REYKJAVÍK ART MUSEUM)  
*Paintings from Home*  
Group exhibition, works from the collection  
Runs until October 6

*Kjarval and the 20th Century: When Modernity Anchored*  
Paintings, drawings  
Runs until December 2024

LISTVAL  
*Ynja Blær – Pása / Pause*  
Pencil drawings  
Runs until October 12

MOSFELLSBÆR ART GALLERY  
*Magga Eddudóttir – Please Revolt*  
Textile work, mixed media  
Runs until October 11

MUSEUM OF DESIGN AND APPLIED ARTS  
*Residency – Unnar Ari Baldvinsson*  
Graphic Design  
Runs until December 29

*Microbes in the Home*  
Curated by Ragnheiður Másól Sturludóttir  
Focuses on the collaboration between humans and microbes  
Runs until November 17

WOOL  
Textile works  
Runs until October 27

*Katla Einarsdóttir & Una María Magnúsdóttir – Messages*  
Graphic design  
Runs until November 24

*At Home in the Design Museum*  
Icelandic design works from the collection  
Runs until March 2026

NATIONAL MUSEUM OF ICELAND  
*Porgerður Ólafsdóttir – Future Fragments*  
Mixed media, archival works  
Runs until January 2025

*The Lögrétta Valences*  
Historical textile works  
Runs until June 2025

THE NORDIC HOUSE  
*The Tree*  
Children-oriented exhibition  
Runs until January 2025

REYKJAVÍK MARITIME MUSEUM  
*Heimir Freyr Hlööversson – We are Earth, We are Water*  
Video installation  
Runs until December 2024

*Eva Ágústa – Queer and Autistic*  
Photography  
Runs until November 3

REYKJAVÍK MUSEUM OF PHOTOGRAPHY  
*Agnieszka Sosnowska & Ingunn Snædal – RASK (en)*  
Photography  
Runs until December 8

THE SCULPTURE GARDEN  
*Nina Óskarsdóttir – Gathering Rain*  
Ceramics, sculpture  
Runs until October 26

SIGURJÓN ÓLAFSSON MUSEUM  
*Carl Philippe Gionet – Imprints of Laugarnes*  
Graphite works exploring the interplay between the artistic legacy of Sigurjón Ólafsson and the rugged landscape and rich history of Laugarnes.  
Runs until December 1

## Art Picks



*Dýrfinna & Geoffrey - Deconstruction*  
Runs until October 26  
Gallery Port

Dýrfinna Benita Basalan and Geoffrey P. Huntingdon-Williams have, each in their own way, been an influential part of Reykjavík's artistic landscape over the past years. Here, they explore their respective journeys, from wild youth to maturity. Dýrfinna is also well known under her musical stage name Countess Malaise, while Geoffrey is best known for running a label and one of Reykjavík's most enduring bars; Prikið. What do they make of their artistic journey so far? Find out at Port. JTS



*Lóa Hlín Hjálmtýsdóttir - Solo Exhibition*  
Runs until December 23  
Havari

Iceland's (or at least The Grapevine's) favourite artist/illustrator/musician/gossiper/over-all-awesome-person is at it again with an exhibition of sculptures, paintings, prints and various other random craziness at Havari. Filled with humour, imagination, social commentary and, dare we say it, beauty. The works will be on sale until Christmas, and take our word for it, Lóa's art is something to adorn your home with and will be welcomed as a gift to your best friends, and even perhaps, that odd aunt of yours. JTS



*Hallgrímur Helgason - Havoc*  
Runs until February 9  
Kjarvalsstaðir (Reykjavík Art Museum)

Hallgrímur is an excellent novelist and social commentator who also paints and draws. And by that we don't mean that he is primarily the former and dabbles in the latter. No, his paintings and drawings would have made a career in themselves. And what does he want his paintings to be? "I want my colours to come alive, take huge risks, and not be too tasteful. Ideally, paintings should wreak havoc in a space, take over the living room, disrupt the balance, destroy the marriage!" So there you have it. JTS



# Events 04.10–31.10.24

If you're putting something on for the general public, send us a line to: [events@grapevine.is](mailto:events@grapevine.is)

- Friday October 4**
- Hjörtur Stephensen*  
21:00 Dillon
- Legfest*  
20:00 Gaukurinn
- Jet Black Joe*  
20:00 Háskólabíó
- Reykjavík Deathfest - Festering Fall*  
19:00 Iðnó
  
- Distrakt #10: Dani Labb + Ali Demir*  
22:00 Kaffibarinn
- Longer Shadows, Softer Stones: Snorri Hallgrímsson*  
20:00 Mengi
- KGB**  
22:00 Pablo Discobar
- Að standa á haus: DJ Kommi Jay*  
19:00 RVK Brewing Company
- DJ Óli Dóri*  
22:00 Röntgen
- Saturday October 5**
- Skúlagata Collective: Plötubeysireið*  
20:00 Ásmundarsalur
- Space Odyssey Opening Party*  
14:00 Bergstaðastræti 4
- Fógetarnir*  
21:00 Dillon
- Legfest*  
20:00 Gaukurinn
- Matinée / Organ and Trumpet*  
12:00 Hallgrímskirkja
- Children's Hour – Iceland Symphony Orchestra*  
11:30 Harpa (Flói)
- Jet Black Joe*  
20:00 Háskólabíó
- Kjörk*  
22:00 Kaffibarinn
- Elsa Bjé DJ Set*  
22:00 Pablo Discobar
- Að standa á haus: Róshildur + Áslaug Dungal*  
19:30 RVK Brewing Company
- KGB**  
22:00 Röntgen
- House of Revolution vol. 5 – ROOTED*  
19:00 Þjóðleikhúskjallarinn
- Sunday October 6**
- Faroese National Concert Band*  
14:00 Harpa (Hörpuhorn)
- Sunday Classics: The Chamber Music Society, Schönberg and Tchaikovsky*  
16:00 Harpa (Norðurljós)

- Vinyl Sunday: Maggi Legó*  
21:00 Kaffibarinn
- Lúpína + Laglegt*  
20:00 Port9 Wine Bar
- Siksa + MSEA*  
19:00 Smekkleysa
- Polish Stand-up in Iceland: Adam Van Bendler*  
20:00 Tjarnarbíó
- Monday October 7**
- Pub Quiz*  
20:00 Bodega
- Daði Freyr*  
17:00 Gaukurinn
- Silja Glömmi*  
21:00 Kaffibarinn
- The Declutter Show*  
20:00 Tjarnarbíó
- Tuesday October 8**
- Carl Craig*  
20:00 Gamla Bíó
- Karaoke Tuesday*  
21:00 Gaukurinn
- DJ Júllala*  
21:00 Kaffibarinn
- Pub Quiz*  
20:00 Röntgen
- The Declutter Show*  
20:00 Tjarnarbíó
- Wednesday October 9**
- Bleikur Bastarnir + Langi Seli og Skuggarnir*  
20:00 Gaukurinn
- Múlinn Jazz Club: Maria's Blues Band*  
20:00 Harpa (Björtuloft)
- Apex Amina*  
21:00 Kaffibarinn
- Nanna + Salóme Katrín + RAKEL*  
21:00 Kaffi Flóra
- Vinyl Wednesday: Snáðinn*  
21:00 Röntgen
- The Declutter Show*  
20:00 Tjarnarbíó
- Thursday October 10**
- Beggi Smára Blues*  
21:00 Dillon
- Jazz í Djúpinu: Sigurdís*  
20:30 Djúpið/Hornið
- Space Volvo + Sleeping Giant*  
21:00 Gaukurinn
- Sigrún Plays Brahms – Iceland Symphony Orchestra*  
19:30 Harpa (Eldborg)
- Eva Luna*  
21:00 Kaffibarinn
- Barlómur*  
21:00 Lemmy
- Paradísá DJ Set*  
22:00 Pablo Discobar

- Jamesendir*  
21:00 Röntgen
- Friday October 11**
- Lame Dudes*  
21:00 Dillon
- Af Himnum Ofan - Aftur – Apparat Organ Quartet & Dómkórinn*  
21:00 Dómkirkjan
- ApocalypticK: House of HUNTease*  
21:00 Gaukurinn
- DIMMA & SinfoniaNord*  
19:30 Harpa (Eldborg)
- Inspector Spacetime + Dillistone (DK)*  
20:00 Iðnó
- LING:CHI**  
23:00 Kaffibarinn
- Seth Sharp DJ Set*  
22:00 Pablo Discobar
- Að standa á haus: DJ Arnar Eggert*  
19:00 RVK Brewing Company
- DJ de la Rósa*  
22:00 Röntgen
- Embla (DK) + Celestine + Gubba Hori*  
19:00 Smekkleysa
- Saturday October 12**
- Casio Fatso + Kul*  
21:00 Dillon
- Celestine + Embla (DK) + Gaddavir + We Made God*  
20:00 Gaukurinn
- Bianca Del Rio – Dead Inside Comedy Tour*  
20:00 Harpa (Eldborg)
- Sykur*  
21:00 Iðnó
- DJ Margeir & Simon fknhdsm*  
23:00 Kaffibarinn
- Pan Arctic Vision – Live Stream*  
18:00 Nordic House
- Paradísá DJ Set*  
22:00 Pablo Discobar
- Að standa á haus: EMMA + Moogie and the Boogiemans*  
19:30 RVK Brewing Company
- CYBER DJ Set*  
22:00 Röntgen
- Sunday October 13**
- Vinyl Sunday: Kraftgalli DJ Set*  
21:00 Kaffibarinn
- Monday October 14**
- LoFi Music Monday*  
20:00 Gaukurinn
- Fu Kaisha*  
21:00 Kaffibarinn
- Tuesday October 15**

## Looking Inward, Looking Outward 140 Years of the National Gallery of Iceland



Anna Ancher (1859-1935), Sjómansstúlka / Fisherman's Girl, 1886. LI 25

**12.10.2024  
–30.3.2025**

Listasafn Íslands  
National Gallery of Iceland

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listasafn.is

## Event Picks



**Space Odyssey Opening Party**  
Saturday October 5, 14:00  
Space Odyssey,  
Bergstaðastræti 4  
Free

Record shop Space Odyssey has quickly become Reykjavík's bastion of ambient and electronic music. Established by husband and wife Pan Thorarensen and Guðrún Lárusdóttir, Space Odyssey has built a vital bridge connecting Iceland's electronic scene with the rest of the world. Space Odyssey ran a brick-and-mortar that shut its doors a while back, only to rise like a phoenix from the ashes. Celebrating their new location, Space Odyssey invites you to their opening, featuring performances by artists R.M. Hendrix and Kambasel. JB



**Að Standa Á Haus Concert Series**  
Multiple dates  
Reykjavík Brewing Company,  
Skiptholt 33  
Free

Some – and that includes us – might say that Reykjavík is changing for the worse with the perennial closure of popular music venues. While that is the case, it's important to focus on the parties responsible for opening exciting new cultural spaces. The Reykjavík Brewing Company are planning to open up the main Tónabíó auditorium as a fully decked venue seating up to 280 people. In the meantime, they're hyping up the location with a concert series featuring up-and-coming artists and DJs. Check out the full event schedule at [events.grapevine.is](http://events.grapevine.is). JB



**Pan Arctic Vision – Live Stream**  
Saturday October 12, 18:00  
The Nordic House  
Free

The Arctic is a big deal. And as with any major geographic territory, it should have its own version of Eurovision. The Pan Arctic Vision – a Eurovision for the Arctic – is a platform fostering connections between Arctic communities. This year's rendition takes place in Nuuk, Greenland, and will be live streamed across the globe. Iceland's entry is metal band Vampíra, who won the 2024 Músíktílaunir, while the mysterious artist Mighty Bear will serve as a host. Head on down to the Nordic House and cast your votes for your favourite Arctic performer. JB

## Reykjavík Art Museum One museum Three locations



**Hafnarhús**  
Tryggvagata 17  
101 Reykjavík

**Kjarvalsstaðir**  
Flókagata 24  
105 Reykjavík

**Ásmundarsafn**  
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[artmuseum.is](http://artmuseum.is)



# Events

# 04.10-31.10.24

Concerts, comedy, movies and other happenings that defy categorisation

If you're putting something on for the general public, send us a line to: [events@grapevine.is](mailto:events@grapevine.is)

**Upprásin – Blossi + ANDERVEL + Andlit**

20:00 Harpa (Kaldalón)  
Brynja (Girls Gang)  
21:00 Kaffibarinn

**Wednesday October 16**

**Fusion Groove**  
21:00 Kaffibarinn  
**Vinyl Wednesday: Alexjean.dj**  
21:00 Röntgen

**Thursday October 17**

**Beggi Smára Blues**  
21:00 Dillon  
**Jazz í Djúpinu: Bento Box Trio**  
20:30 Djúpið/Hornið  
**Atli James**  
21:00 Kaffibarinn  
**Bogomil Font & Milljónamæringarnir**  
20:00 Kaffi Flóra  
**ROKKTÓBERFEST**  
21:00 Lemmy  
**Sonur Sæll**  
22:00 Pablo Discobar  
**DJ Melerito de Jere**  
21:00 Röntgen

**Friday October 18**

**Ebenezer**  
21:00 Dillon  
**Steinþór Helgi & Björn Leó**  
23:00 Kaffibarinn  
**Scooter**  
19:00 Laugardalshöll  
**ROKKTÓBERFEST**  
21:00 Lemmy  
**KGB**  
22:00 Pablo Discobar  
**Að Standa Á Haus: DJ Queerwolf**

19:00 RVK Brewing Company  
**DJ ANNAMARIA**  
22:00 Röntgen  
**Sindri Eldon & The Ways + Tófa**  
19:00 Smekkleysa

**Saturday October 19**

**Fógetarnir**  
21:00 Dillon  
**Reykjadoo – Golden Core (NO) + Fortið + CXVIII**  
20:00 Gaukurinn  
**DJ Óli Dóri**  
23:00 Kaffibarinn  
**ROKKTÓBERFEST**  
21:00 Lemmy  
**Paradísá DJ Set**  
20:00 Pablo Discobar  
**DJ Margeir / Pablo Discobar Anniversary**  
22:00 Pablo Discobar  
**Að standa á haus: Karítas + ANDERVEL**  
19:30 RVK Brewing Company  
**DJ Mellí**  
22:00 Röntgen  
**Söngvaskáld: JFDR**  
20:00 Salurinn  
**Slummi + Knackered + Pedro Paramo + Alice Syndrome**  
19:00 Smekkleysa

**Sunday October 20**

**Umbr Ensemble / Two Sides to Hallgrímur Pétursson**  
20:00 Hallgrímskirkja  
**Vikingur and Yuja Wang: Two Pianos**  
20:00 Harpa (Eldborg)  
**Sunday Classics: Electrico**  
16:00 Harpa (Norðurljós)  
**Vinyl Sunday: Sammi Jagúar**  
21:00 Kaffibarinn

**Monday October 21**

**Vikingur and Yuja Wang: Two Pianos**  
20:00 Harpa (Eldborg)  
**Mary Jane from UA**  
21:00 Kaffibarinn

**Tuesday October 22**

**Karaoke Tuesday**  
21:00 Gaukurinn  
**The Last Podcast on the Left**  
20:00 Harpa (Silfurberg)  
**DJ Vala**  
21:00 Kaffibarinn  
**Pub Quiz**  
20:00 Röntgen

**Wednesday October 23**

**Seiðr's Shadow Circus**  
21:00 Gaukurinn  
**Þorgerður Jóhanna**  
21:00 Kaffibarinn  
**Vinyl Wednesday: Silja Glömmi**  
21:00 Röntgen

**Thursday October 24**

**Júníus Meyvant**  
20:00 Bæjarbíó  
**Beggi Smára Blues**  
21:00 Dillon  
**Jazz í Djúpinu: Erla Hlín**  
20:30 Djúpið/Hornið  
**Yo-Yo Ma plays Elgar - Iceland Symphony Orchestra**  
19:30 Harpa (Eldborg)  
**Ragga Gröndal + Guðmundur Pétursson + Nico Moreaux**  
18:00 Hótel Holt  
**Maggi Legó**  
21:00 Kaffibarinn  
**Burlesque Halloween Edition**  
21:00 Lemmy  
**Halliball**  
22:00 Pablo Discobar  
**DJ DÍA**  
21:00 Röntgen

**Friday October 25**

**Brimbrot + Smutty Smiff's Devil's Jukebox**  
20:30 Bird  
**Rót**  
21:00 Dillon  
**Hjaltalín**  
21:00 Gamla Bíó  
**Yung Lean**  
20:00 Harpa (Eldborg)  
**Young G+T**  
23:00 Kaffibarinn  
**Blóðmör + CHÖGMA**  
21:00 Lemmy  
**Javi Valiano Latin Party**  
22:00 Pablo Discobar  
**Gaman Saman**  
22:00 Röntgen

**Saturday October 26**

**Hipsumhaps**  
20:00 Bæjarbíó  
**1900**  
21:00 Dillon  
**Kyrja Choir**  
20:00 Frikirkjan  
**DJ Frímann**  
23:00 Kaffibarinn  
**KGB**  
22:00 Pablo Discobar  
**Young G&T**  
22:00 Röntgen  
**Halloween Iceland**  
20:00 Gaukurinn

**Sunday October 27**

**Hallgrímsspassía – Oratorio**  
17:00 Hallgrímskirkja  
**Reykjavik Opera Days: CIRCLE - a SCI-FI chamber opera**  
19:30 Harpa (Norðurljós)  
**Reykjavik Opera Days: Song Party / Open Mic**  
20:30 Harpa (Norðurljós)

**Vinyl Sunday: King Lucky**  
21:00 Kaffibarinn  
**Tíbrá: Þorpið Sefur**  
13:30 Salurinn

**Monday October 28**

**LoFi Monday**  
20:00 Gaukurinn

**Tuesday October 29**

**Karaoke Tuesday**  
21:00 Gaukurinn  
**Fu Kaisha**  
21:00 Kaffibarinn

**Wednesday October 30**

**Múlinn Jazzclub - Iris Kramer Quartet**  
20:00 Harpa (Björtuloft)  
**Hristo**  
21:00 Kaffibarinn  
**Vinyl Wednesday: DJ Allenheimer**  
21:00 Röntgen

**Thursday October 31**

**Jazz í Djúpinu: Óskar Guðjónsson Trio**  
20:30 Djúpið/Hornið  
**In Goth We Trust – Kælan Mikla + DJ Morningstarr**  
17:00 Gaukurinn  
**Dr. Gunn Release Show**  
20:00 Iðón  
**KRBear**  
21:00 Kaffibarinn  
**Frumburður + Katla Yamagata + JóiPjé**  
21:00 Röntgen

**Sæta svínid**  
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Appy Listings

# Some Of The Happiest Hours In Town

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

**12 TÓNAR**  
Every day from 14:00 to 19:00  
Beer 1.100 ISK, Wine 1.200 ISK

**APÉRO**  
Every day from 16:00 to 19:00  
Beer 1000 ISK, Wine 1.200 ISK

**BINGO DRINKERY**  
Every day from 16:00 to 18:00  
Beer 1.000 ISK, Wine 1.000 ISK

**BÍÓ PARADÍS**  
Every day from 17:00 to 19:00  
Beer 1.000 ISK, Wine 1.200 ISK

**BODEGA**  
Every day from 14:00 to 18:00  
Beer 1.000 ISK, Wine 1.000 ISK

**DAISY**  
Every day from 16:00 to 18:00  
Beer 1.000 ISK, Wine 1.200 ISK

**DEN DANSKE KRO**  
Every day from 16:00 to 19:00  
Beer & Wine 1.550 ISK 2-for-1 offer

**FORRÉTTABARINN**  
Every day from 16:00 to 18:00  
Beer 950 ISK, Wine 950 ISK

**FRÖKEN REYKJAVÍK**  
Every day from 16:00 to 18:00  
Beer 900 ISK, Wine 1.100 ISK

**GAUKURINN**  
Every day from 17:00 to 21:00  
Beer 1.000 ISK, Wine 1.200 ISK

**HAFNARHÚS  
LADY BREWERY POPUP BAR**  
Every thursday 17:00 to 22:00  
Beer 1.100 ISK, Wine 1.300 ISK

**THE IRISHMAN**  
Every day from 12:00 to 19:00  
Beer 950 ISK, Wine 950 ISK

**JUNGLE COCKTAIL BAR**  
Every day from 16:00 to 18:00  
Beer 1.000 ISK, Wine 1.100 ISK

**KAFFIBARINN**  
Every day from 15:00 to 19:00  
Beer 950 ISK, Wine 1.000 ISK

**KAFFIBRENNSLAN**  
Every day from 16:00 to 20:00  
Beer 900 ISK, Wine 950 ISK

**KALDI BAR**  
Every day from 16:00 to 19:00  
Beer 950 ISK, Wine 950 ISK

**LOFT**  
Every day from 16:00 to 20:00  
Beer 990 ISK, Wine 1.400 ISK

**ÖLSTOFAN**  
Every day from 15:00 to 20:00  
Beer 1.000 ISK, Wine 1.000 ISK

**PRÍKIÐ**  
Every day from 16:00 to 20:00  
Beer 800 ISK, Wine 1.500 ISK

**RÖNTGEN**  
Every day from 16:00 to 19:00  
Beer 950 ISK, Wine 1.200 ISK

**SKÚLI CRAFT BAR**  
Every day from 12:00 to 19:00  
Beer 1.000 ISK, Wine 1.000 ISK

**STÚDENTAKJALLARINN**  
Every day from 16:00 to 19:00, until  
21:00 on weekends  
Beer 850 ISK, Wine 1.090 ISK

**TIPSÝ**  
Every day from 16:00 to 19:00  
50% off select cocktails

**VEÐUR**  
Every day from 14:00 to 19:35  
Beer 900 ISK, Wine 900 ISK

**VÍNSTÚKAN TÍU SOPAR**  
Every day from 17:00 to 19:00  
Buy one wine bottle, get two courses  
(any price)

\* We do our best to keep these prices current, but still they change.

Featured  
Happy Hour

## Litli Barinn

RÁNARGATA 4A

Tucked away in the quiet side street Ránargata in the adjoining hostel Local 101, Litli Barinn offers a fine selection of beers and wines guaranteed to bring your body temperature back to normal levels. Their food menu is not to be missed either, and according to our sources, they offer wild ale testing on Wednesdays. What a treat! The next time you find yourself lost in Reykjavík's merciless autumn winds, seek refuge at Litli Barinn. JB

**HAPPY HOURS:**  
Every day from 15:00 to 18:00  
Beer 990 ISK, Wine 1.200 ISK



## Cheap Eats

Here are some sweet meal deals that'll fill your tummy and without draining your bank account.

**APÓTEK**  
Soup of the Day  
1.990 ISK all day, every day

**ARABIAN TASTE**  
Falafel Roll  
1.790 all day, every day

**BIRD**  
Deathmetal sandwich and beer  
3.500 ISK all day, every day

**BÆJARINS BEZTU**  
Hotdog and soda  
990 ISK all day, every day

**DEIG**  
Poor Man's Offer: filled bagel,  
doughnut & drink  
1.850 ISK weekdays after 10:00

HAMBORGARABÚLLA

**TÓMASAR**  
Tuesday Special: burger, fries &  
soda  
1.990 ISK all day on Tuesday

**HLÖLLABÁTAR**  
Lunch Offer: Choice of any sub and  
soda  
2.195 ISK every day until 14:00

**ISLENSKI BARINN**  
Soup of the Day  
1.950 ISK all day, every day

**LEMON**  
Combo of the Month: large sandwich  
& juice  
2.390 ISK all day, every day

**MAI THAI BISTRO**  
Lunch Offer: daily curry meal  
2.290 ISK weekdays between 11:00  
- 14:00

**NAPOLI PIZZA**  
Lunch Offer: choice of menu pizza  
or sandwich  
1.890 ISK every day from 11:30 -  
15:00

**PÍTUBARINN**  
Veggie pita sandwich  
2.090 ISK all day, every day

**REYKJAVÍK ROASTERS**  
Breakfast menu & sourdough toasts  
580 ISK - 1.800 ISK, all day, every  
day

**SHALIMAR**  
Curry in a Hurry Lunch Special  
1.790 ISK weekdays from 12:00 -  
15:00

**ZORBIAN HOT**  
Chicken shawarma wraps & falafel  
wraps  
1.690 ISK all day, every day

\* We do our best to keep these prices current, but shit's outta control. Let us know if you spot a sweet deal: [grapevine@grapevine.is](mailto:grapevine@grapevine.is)

Smiðjustígur 10 / Klapparstígur 16, 101 Reykjavík  
Artists Björn Roth, Dodda Maggý, Finnbogi Pétursson, Haraldur Jónsson, Hulda Stefánsdóttir, John Zurier, Katrín Elvarsdóttir, Kees Visser, Monika Grzymala, Páll Haukur Björnsson, Rintaro Hara, Rósa Gísladóttir, Sigurður Guðjónsson, Steina, Woody Vasulka, Þórdís Erla Zoëga  
[www.bergcontemporary.is](http://www.bergcontemporary.is), (354) 562 0001

## BERG Contemporary



Woody Vasulka  
*Glass – Lucifer's Commission, Iris Print Series 1977–2003*  
123 x 117.5 cm

Steina & Woody Vasulka  
*Orka & Lucifer's Commission*  
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# Music News



## Reykjavík Record Shop Changes Ownership

In June 2024, news broke that one of Reykjavík's record shops was for sale — more specifically, The Reykjavik Record Shop. Opened in 2014, the business soon branched into music publishing with its eponymous label. Since June, music and vinyl lovers were kept in suspense as to who would take over the Klapparstígur spot. In late September, the details of the purchase were finally uncovered. In a public

social media post, former head of Fjarðabyggð's cultural centre Jóhann Ágúst Jóhannsson was revealed as the new owner. Jóhann's professional experience includes working for the book publisher Edda and 12 Tónar record shop. "Some purchase a big jeep or a summer cottage. I decided to buy a record shop. You should make your dreams come true," Jóhann said to mbl.is. JB



## Laufey Jabs DuoLingo

Icelandic-Chinese artist Laufey recently took a dig at the language-learning app DuoLingo. According to a social media post by the young artist, Laufey slid into the menacing owl's Instagram DMs, asking, "yo, why don't you have icelandic [sic]." The app promptly

replied, "you wanna help me teach it from the start?" Although it's unclear whether DuoLingo will actually start teaching Icelandic, it's fair to say that Laufey's efforts in promoting linguistic accessibility are quickly reaching those of Cultural Minister Lilja Dögg Alfreðsdóttir. JB



## Bríet and Birnir Opened RIFF

Celebrated pop artists Bríet and Birnir's recent creative endeavour was featured as one of Reykjavik International Film Festival's opening screenings. The film, labelled as a music video short, is a creative interpretation of the duo's latest collaboration album 1000 orð. With the album release on May 31, Bríet and Birnir contacted filmmaker Erlendur

Sveinsson for the project. Erlendur's repertoire includes music video production for artists such as Aron Can, Hipsumhaps and GDRN. The short film follows a couple trying to eradicate memories of each other, set in a framework mixing nostalgia and science fiction. The film is available to watch on YouTube. JB



CYBERNET

## CYBER Is SAD :'(

Electronica duo CYBER resolve their troubled teenage years on their latest

WORDS Jóhannes Bjarkason  
IMAGE Ágústa Ýr

Now celebrating the release of their third LP album, *SAD :'(* (out October 4), CYBER is opening up old wounds and digging up the awkward — and the awful — experience of being a teenager.

explain to anyone," Joe continues, further detailing the *SAD :'(* universe by explaining that the teenagers in question are covered by a unidirectional glass, where, "they can't see out, but you can see in. And they can feel that someone is watching them. And I'm like, 'Why?' There's no reason for that," Joe laughs.

### SAD TEENAGERS

"It's a bit of a period piece," Salka begins, explaining CYBER's latest release. "To some extent, we're basing it on what we were thinking as teenagers and the music we listened to. As is often the case with us, it became more theatrical."

"It's such a voyeuristic experience being a teenager," Salka jumps in. "It revolves so much around being perceived by others and being occupied with how others perceive you," she opines. "So I think the concept about the amphitheatre was a way to construct a simple idea which easily describes the condition of being obsessed with this part of your life."

"[*SAD :'(*] specifically examines two teenagers who live in a bedroom located in this Greek amphitheatre,

## It's such a voyeuristic experience being a teenager.

To label CYBER simply as a hip-hop duo would do its members Salka Valsdóttir and Jóhanna Rakel — Joe — a great disservice.

tre, where they're constantly being watched. They're both paranoid about being seen while also obsessed about it," she explains.

### SOCIAL MEDIA GUINEA PIGS

Not only does the album serve as a reflection of Salka and Joe's experiences during adolescence, *SAD :'(* also became a platform for the pair to philosophise on the rise of social media and its effects on teenagers. On top of the existential crisis intrinsic to growing up, Salka and Joe belong to the millennial generation that came of age during the dawn of social media — in Joe's words: "Dealing with the double load of

While certainly drawing from the well of hip-hop, CYBER has since 2017 consistently proved themselves to be much more than a band, constructing whole universes coupled with intricately detailed stage design in their live performances.

"It's a bit ridiculous," Joe remarks with a smile. "But I remember vividly when we started thinking about making this record. I thought, 'We're just gonna do one pop album. No concept. Just some nice club music. We won't need to think too much.' That got out of hand very quickly."

Whether it's carrying a life-sized coffin onstage or building a set piece evoking Californian beach culture, CYBER has always had a flair for the visual and theatrical.

"Yet again, we have this huge world that is somehow too complex to

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**KRONAN**



## album

figuring out your identity in the real world *and* on the internet.”

“We were both deep in philosophical questions at the time. Everything was new for us. There opened up a space for us to contemplate old wounds,” Joe remarks. “If I think about the things I did — I was unhinged and just awful. I was wearing three push-up bras with no breasts, trying to show adult people that I’m a sexy child.”

“I think it was a brutal time to be a teenager,” Salka adds. “It’s pretty brutal to be a guinea pig for social media and experience the heavy pornification happening on every media, while there was no real consensus on what was appropriate. The culture was extremely saturated with sexism and sexualisation, which our parents weren’t as attuned to as we were,” Salka explains. “And you could share all of this information much faster via MSN and Myspace, so I think it was a hardcore time for sensitive souls.”

## CYBER’S WILD IMAGINATION

At this point, CYBER’s mainstay includes releasing elaborate concept albums which completely transform the band’s identity, aesthetics, and performance style — almost verging on a full-blown musical production. Between 2016 and 2018, CYBER released three albums, changing their image at every turn. “We get bored fast,” says Salka.

According to them, it’s become a workable method — a way to tame their wild imagination. “I think sitting down with a blank page is really scary. You could do anything in the world. That’s so annoying,” says Joe. “For me, having a concept is a good starting point for writing.”

“We started out in Reykjavíkurdætur, which had a lot of members, so we started deciding on a sort of theme out of necessity,” Salka explains of

the duo’s beginnings. “I guess it’s a method to give everyone ample space to create individually, while still making sense [together].”

Starting their run collaborating in a widely popular and equally controversial all-female rap collective, Salka and Joe formed a close friendship. Their relationship is one of the keys to CYBER’s originality and ambition, allowing them to discuss ideas that have percolated through several years of conversation.

“Most of the time, we’ve already decided all the song titles before we start actually writing them. We contemplate and formulate before we actually start writing,” says Salka.

## AN ALBUM FOR THE WEIRDOS

In contrast to releases prior to the 2020 offering *VACATION*, Salka and Joe feel they’ve grown out of necessitating speedy releases.

Instead of burning through ideas

**I was wearing three push-up bras with no breasts, trying to show adult people that I’m a sexy child.**

and laying it all on the table, they’ve opted to focus more diligently on their music and production. Additionally, they’ve pared down their over-the-top performance antics, turning the focus away from the pomp and onto the duo.

“[Performing] has become very natural for us,” Salka admits. “It used to be extremely complex and had me anxious a month before every show. Because we needed to, like, borrow six couches. It was a major hassle. Now, it’s less of a hassle, on the account of us being better performers.”

“We don’t need to hide behind such an enormous quantity of props,” Joe adds, stating for the record that CYBER still loves props.

“We used to be all about the tricks,” Salka chimes in. “Now, I feel like we’re at the almost opposite end. We aren’t doing anything.”

Salka and Joe explain CYBER’s development on account of growing up — “Having a fully developed frontal cortex,” as Joe puts it.

“*VACATION* and *SAD :’(* are the albums that I think are our most diligent and contemplated. I don’t know what changed,” Salka says. “Maybe one of the reasons is that we don’t take ourselves too seriously. I think we’ve decided that CYBER is a joyous entity in our lives. It’s pointless suffering a nervous breakdown because of a bass drum track,” she continues.

“It doesn’t matter to us. And ironically, in terms of the album’s subject matter, we’ve never cared less about

what people think about this project,” Salka admits, “which is super emancipating.”

“There’s a certain group of people I know will love our new album, and I don’t care for the rest,” Joe says emphatically. “It’s not for those people. It’s an album for the weirdos.” ■

*SAD :’(* is out via *marvaða* on available streaming platforms. Catch their DJ set at Röntgen on October 12 and their album release show at *marvaða* on October 25.



# HALLGRÍMS KIRKJA

**350TH ANNIVERSARY**  
of the death of reverent and poet Hallgrímur Pétursson

**Hallgrímur Pétursson Festival**  
20.-27. October 2024

**TWO SIDES TO HALLGRÍMUR**  
Sunday October 20th. at 17hrs.



**Umbra ensemble | concert**

Umbra Ensemble concert will perform compositions written to secular and sacred poetry by Hallgrímur Pétursson from the book “Hvað verður fegra fundið?”

**HALLGRÍMUR IN PROSPECT**  
Wednesday October 23rd. at 12hrs.

**Exhibition**

Artist talk and walk of the Exhibition Hallgrímur in Prospect, by the artist Hallgerður Hallgrímsdóttir and rev. Irma Sjöfn Óskarsdóttir and Eiríkur Jóhannsson. (Event in Icelandic)



**HALLGRÍMUR’S MASS**

Thursday October 24th. at 20hrs.

Choir of Breiðholtiarkirkja  
Örn Magnússon | conductor



**PUBLICATION**

Friday October 25th at 17hrs.

Publication of the bilingual publication (Icelandic and English) “Hvað verður fegra fundið?”. The book contains sacred and secular poetry by Hallgrímur Pétursson. (Event in Icelandic)



**FESTIVE SERVICE**

Sunday October 27th at 11hrs.

Hallgrímskirkja 28th inauguration anniversary



**HALLGRÍMUR’S PASSION**

Sunday October 27th at 17hrs.

Hallgrímur’s Passion by Sigurður Sævarsson. Performed by The Choir of Hallgrímskirkja, Reykjavík Chamber Orchestra and soloists.

For more information:



Track By  
Track

# Reykjavík Is Dumb

Juno Paul brings slacker rock and grunge apathy into the 21st century

WORDS Juno Paul  
IMAGE Supplied by the artist

Reykjavík's top slacker has no warm feelings for the city. Breaking out from Músiktilraunir last year, Juno Paul caught the eyes and ears of the Grapevine with his Cobain-esque theatre antics and slacker rock revival. Out with his debut LP *Gimp* on August 2, Juno Paul says what everyone's thinking: Reykjavík is dumb.

## LATE NIGHT PIMP

In my opinion, the ultimate Juno Paul song. It's like if I took a shit and that would be the song. It has a hint of the night we all regret in our lives.

## MY NOKIA

A nostalgic tribute to the great Nokia phones – a reminder of better and simpler times when we hadn't all seen beheading videos on the internet.

## E.M.H.

This is Juno Paul's version of "Roxanne" by The Police except I'm encouraging prostitution in the digital world. OnlyFans has saved a lot of women from exploitation by this disgusting industry. It's entirely made on a Yamaha toy keyboard from the 80s.

## DOWN TO CLOWN

Written in 2021 by God himself, he sent the song to Juno Paul to be released on his first album which has yet to break any of the records that God promised. Probably because Juno Paul has committed many sins and does not deserve recognition because he is lazy.

## RVK IS DUMB

What the shit is going on with Reykjavík? I will tell you: Reykjavík is dumb. It's never any fun and we used to be so young. This is a diss track to the greyest city on Earth in a fun, 8-bit dance music style. Reykjavík can pretty much eat ass in my opinion.

## SONG69

Juno Paul gives a "legit lowkey kick-back" with the track "Song69". The song has a history of making people insane, kinda like the monster in *Bird Box*. Whatever, maybe don't listen to this one.

## INCEL

A very controversial title and song made with the help of Valgeir Skorri of Celebs. Galaxy-exploding rock with a hint of pop. I will be cancelled someday and this song title will be the headline.

## ONE LAST SHOW

The song is about exactly what the title is. It's my last show and I will break my guitar and die after. This one is entirely mixed and mastered by yours truly. Its basically a three-part song that ends in a Buddhist prayer. ■

## BROKEBOI

The first track on this album is a galaxy-exploding rock song about the lows in life, money and diarrhoea, which are the key ingredients of a miserable existence.

## LAZY CUNT

This track is inspired by the Xanax-popping Soundcloud rapper that lives inside all of us, although it's far from being a rap song. This song is a mixture of electronic dance music and the feeling that you are going to die a virgin.

New Festival  
Alert

# More Than Just A Music Festival

State of the Art mixes the modern with the traditional

WORDS Jóhannes Bjarkason  
IMAGE Joana Fontinha

Do the properties of a classical composition change when performed at a car repair shop in Kópavogur? What's the best type of dance music and why is it 18th-century baroque? These are only some of the questions posed by the State of the Art festival, happening for the first time between October 8-13. Pairing together classical and popular music, the festival presents unconventional events set in unconventional locations.

**F**ounded by local musicians-about-town Bjarni Frímann Ragnarsson, Bergur Þórisson, Magnús Jóhann Ragnarsson and Sverrir Páll Sverrisson, the group's combined experience is virtually unmatched. Connected through friendship and professional collaboration, Bjarni, Bergur and Sverrir have all worked in multiple capacities with Björk, while Magnús is considered the genre-sprawling workhorse of Iceland's pop and jazz scene.

"We present music from various periods in a new context," says Magnús, laying down State of the Art's mission statement in its most simplified form. "That can mean baroque music, as well as contemporary music – which, in turn, includes pop and jazz," he elaborates. Presenting eight events over six days, State of the Art's programme is as varied as it is far-fetched. Piano concerts at the mechanic's, baroque music mixed with electronica, and a creative flow between a musician and visual artist are only some of the festival's components.

HARD TO FIND PERFORMANCES

Derived from Magnús' four-night concert series in Mengi in 2023, State of the Art is also partly influenced by pianist Víkingur Heiðar Ólafsson's Midsummer Music Festival, which ran from 2012 to 2019. Attempting to mix the modern with the traditional, State of the Art doesn't confine itself within the musical framework, instead aiming to fold in both visual art and symposium events.

"There's perhaps a slight classical bias in our scheduling, if we can put it that way," Magnús clarifies. "But it's not the intention that this is a classical festival. This is not a jazz festival either. It's more of an experimental kitchen. I think the overarching concept is that the majority of the schedule is something that you wouldn't get anywhere else."

"We wanted to try and mix different elements and place them in a new context," Sverrir says. "Partly, I think it's an effort to try and cater to people on both ends of the spectrum – those who aren't used to attending either pop or classical shows."

THE CONTEMPORARY ECHO CHAMBER

Having "long turned crazy in an echo chamber," Bergur emphasises the need for a dimension of accessibility. "It's not an issue for us to attend a symphony concert at Harpa, but we realise that's a big package for a lot of people. We're trying to take the edge off and just present the music," he says.

"We're in an echo chamber and the lines between music genres are constantly fading," Magnús adds. "To me, contemporary music is pop by Flóni and Briet, as well as the 'composed' music," he says, referring to the Composer Carousel – a festival event where each participant writes a piece for the next individual in the circle, who in turn performs it and writes another composition.

"The 'composed' music falls better under the definition of contemporary music or classical," Magnús

continues. "It's perhaps less accessible. It's more instrumental, so it has fewer listeners than mainstream pop music. That's why it needs to be supported, so it can reach the ears of people."

NOT MESSING AROUND

Admitting that the idea behind State of the Art (and its name) seems comedic, the founders are by no means joking around. Rather, they are walking a fine line between not taking themselves seriously and boldly presenting a novel take on the tried-and-true festival concept.

"We sat down with an empty page and started blurting out ideas," Bergur describes. "There were a lot of ideas that didn't make it through. Some of them were too much in the direction of comedy, but we decided to keep some of the jokes in," he says, explaining that the Baroque at the Club event was initially conceived as a foam party. "We soon realised that people wouldn't really be interested in that."

Organising and executing a festival for the first time, the quartet confesses the uncertainty they face. "Every meeting starts with the words, 'Shouldn't we just cancel?'" Sverrir jokes. "But we're stuck with it," Bergur responds.

No one, not even the festival coordinators, knows exactly what's in store – but that only adds to State of the Art's allure. "I think most of the scheduling is kind of personal. As in, it's not a programme that's tried and tested," Bjarni says. "No one's bringing a product that's undergone a thousand festivals. We're still figuring out what exactly will happen." ■

State of the Art takes place between October 8-13. Some of its programming includes Briet performing with free jazz group ADHD; Miguel Atwood-Ferguson performing with Elja Ensemble; and a symposium on Icelandic electronic music. Full festival price is 14.900 ISK with single-event tickets available as well as free entry to some. For more information, visit [stateofheartfestival.is](http://stateofheartfestival.is).





You Jelly?

# Transparent Honesty

Lúpína pours her heart out on her latest album *MARGLYTTA*

WORDS Jóhannes Bjarkason  
IMAGE Joana Fontinha

Debuting under her artist moniker Lúpína with the 2023 *ringluð*, Oslo-based Nina Solveig Andersen presents her innermost thoughts and emotions through a Scandi-pop fusion on her latest album *MARGLYTTA*.

“I’m trying to be more confident on stage,” is the first thing Nina says, less than 24 hours after arriving in Iceland from Stockholm. Based in Oslo, Norway, the 21-year-old has a busy schedule ahead of her. Following her appearance in Sweden at an Iceland Airwaves showcase, some of the artist’s recent concerts include a Taste of Iceland showcase in Seattle and a live television performance in the popular *Vikan með Gísla Marteini*.

Reflecting on her show in Sweden, Lúpína notes the few things in her live set that need tweaking. “I can get a bit shy,” she continues softly. The shyness of the young artist — whose discography already counted at least three albums by the age of 20 — is overshadowed by their

expressive musical arrangements and detailed artistic vision.

One of Lúpína’s noteworthy accomplishments includes the success of her 2023 track “ástarbréf,” which has amassed over 1.1 million Spotify streams.

“I think partially it’s TikTok,” she says of the song’s unexpected popularity. “I publish most of my songs there, but this one took off, which must come down to the song itself.”

“I’ve noticed one underlying theme that characterises some of my best work: the fact that I wrote them under time constraints. ‘Ástarbréf’ was written pretty early on in my studies at LIMPI [Lillehammer Institute of Music Production] when my friends visited me from Iceland,” she explains, referencing her Norwegian music school. “They were cooking dinner and I was headed home to join them. So I wrote the song in a hurry and left.”

POP’S RIGID BOX

Nina’s music career began as part of the experimental folk trio Dymbrá, which progressed to Músiktilraunir’s final round in 2018. Subsequently, Dymbrá released two albums and featured on post-dreifing’s compilation *Drullumall #2*. “That was the first step into the music world,” Nina says.

Half-Norwegian, half-Icelandic, Nina made further inroads, when she enrolled at LIMPI. Explaining that she wrote most of her debut album as part of a school project, Nina soon compiled her existing material and established her moniker Lúpína.

Originally wanting to become a producer, Nina found her strong sense of direction blocking that path. “I realised my opinions are too strong to solely focus on what others want. I feel like I have so many things to say. I think that’s what led me to start my own project,” she explains.

Coming from the classical and experimental worlds, Nina’s studies were a gateway into the flashy realm of popular songwriting.

“[The school] was very pop-centric,” Nina explains. That’s perhaps not surprising considering its co-founder, Amund Bjørklund, has co-written with several Billboard Top 100 artists. “Everything revolved around formulas and understanding what makes a hit. Not that anybody has the answer to that question,” she continues, admitting that the school’s focus was intriguing and unappealing at the same time.

“It’s a tool that’s good to learn and know how to use. But it can be quite limiting when you’re always thinking, ‘The chorus needs to hit before the

40-second mark,’ and so on. There are so many rules,” Nina describes. “I got slightly brainwashed to think that music needs to fit within this frame — which is not true.”

Lúpína’s allure is partly due to her confluence of music genres which seem at odds with one another. On *MARGLYTTA*, pop music seamlessly blends with contemporary and electronica, crafting an enticing

“I’d say overall there’s more energy present on *MARGLYTTA*. I see it as a photograph of a period in my life where I’m a jellyfish. The listener can see through me,” she smiles, explaining the album title (marglytta translates to jellyfish).

Written immediately following *ringluð*’s release, *MARGLYTTA* was composed in collaboration with several songwriters. As any songwriter

## I feel like I have so many things to say.

mixture. In Lúpína’s opinion, *this* is the secret to great pop music. “I think you always need an edge — you can’t make pure pop interesting. But that’s maybe debatable,” she says, countering her own argument.

NO ‘I’ IN LÚPÍNA

An obvious difference between Lúpína’s debut and sophomore albums lies in their volume of energy. While *ringluð* saw the beginning of Lúpína slowly finding her feet, its radiance transfers over to *MARGLYTTA*, firmly establishing Lúpína’s talents and creative proficiency. This second offering is louder and more assertive — not aggressive, but just as if someone turned Lúpína’s dial up just a tad.

knows, Nina realises the importance of working with other writers. Some of the collaborators present on the album include Nina’s longstanding conspirator Grímur Einarsson, Eurovision superhero Daði Freyr, and JóiPjé. “Most of my work is done through collaboration. I believe that’s a very important part of it. Even though I want to have the final say, I think it’s imperative that other people can express their opinions,” she concludes. ■

Lúpína’s *MARGLYTTA* is out now, available on streaming services. Catch her first Iceland Airwaves performance in November and follow her on social media, @lupina.is.

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## Adventure And Bird C On (Not) Björk Island

For The Birds

The study of seabirds takes a team of researchers to the loneliest house in

WORDS Cody Alexander Skahan  
IMAGE Stephen Hurling

do come to land to breed during summer, they make their home on isolated islands like Elliðaey and other uninhabited islands in Vestmannaeyjar that are only accessible by boat when ocean swells are below two metres.

Elliðaey is often deceptively referred to online as “Björk Island,” a mysterious place that is home to the so-called Loneliest House in the World. Having been there, I have to say that the house is anything but lonely – at least when occupied by

with everything we would need for a 22-hour stay, including food, water, clothes and a variety of equipment. After a bumpy and wet ride, getting onto the island was a challenge – one had to jump from the moving boat onto a slippery rock, grab a rope that had been tied onto the cliff and then hike up the rocks with our equipment before embarking on the brief hike to the “lonely” lodge. Little did I know, the uneven ground beneath my feet, covered as it was by grassy tussocks, was littered with puffin and petrel burrows.

**W**hile puffins are practically the symbol of Vestmannaeyjar, petrels (a small species of sea birds in the same family as the larger albatross) are much more enigmatic.

Stephen Hurling, a PhD student in seabird conservation at Landbúnaðarháskóli Íslands (the Agricultural University of Iceland), is conducting doctoral research to learn more about the population, distribution and diet of three species breeding in Iceland: the European Storm Petrel, the Leach’s Storm Petrel and the Manx Shearwater. But here’s the rub: not only are they nocturnal, they also spend all but three months of the year at sea. And when they

**As a defence mechanism, the European Storm Petrel vomits almost instantly after hitting the net.**

a group of biologists, puffin hunters, shepherds, or some combination of the three, lubricating their unlikely cohabitation with generous amounts of alcohol. And I definitely didn’t see Björk there.

I had been warned about the difficulty of getting there, yet I still expected a larger boat to ferry my fellow island-hoppers and I. The seven of us, eight including the captain, squeezed onto a small zodiac

### SPECIES UNDER THREAT

Stephen told me that all three species he is studying are red listed in Iceland. The Leach’s Storm Petrel has also been globally red listed by the International Union for Conservation of Nature since 2016 on account of their population dropping approximately 50% over the last 30 years at key colonies in Canada (home to more than 90% of

# Conservation

## the world

the Atlantic population) and by 80% in the U.K. since 2000, but no one knows why.

The last population survey of these species in Iceland happened in 1991 or 1992, even though such a census should be conducted every 15 years. And so Stephen, who fell in love with seabirds because they move so well between land, sky and sea, decided to focus his studies on a population survey of petrels in Vestmannaeyjar.

Just a few years earlier, he had quit his university job teaching English in Japan after 16 years to help take care of his parents in the U.K., but turned the situation into a chance for further study, following his dream of working with seabirds. It was not until that night on the island that I began to understand why.

At night, when much of a petrel researcher's work is carried out, hordes of petrels compete to make themselves heard. Stephen described the Leach's call as a demonic cackle, while the Manx Shearwater's call is slightly less alarming, resembling an "angry donkey" in the words of one local.

Soundtrack notwithstanding, the romance of the island is undeniable at night. No volcano was visible when I was on Elliðaey, but Stephen said his

favourite experience was seeing the distant glow of an eruption on the Reykjanes Peninsula while holding one of the elusive petrels in hand. Despite describing himself as not particularly adventurous, Stephen traded the relatively comfortable life of a language teacher for exactly that experience—reluctantly accepting the risks that come with working in less than secure conditions on the isolated islands.

### PULLING AN ALL-NIGHTER

After arriving on the island, we spent most of our time preparing and hoping that the wind (which had to be less than 10 m/s) would die down. Once night arrived and the birds with it, we split into two teams, setting up mist nets to capture the creatures. The first catch for the other team was one of the assistants who lost their footing on the side of the steep hill, while my team was much more fortunate to be in a divot beside an embankment.

From around 10 p.m. to 5 a.m., we waited in darkness for the sound of birds hitting the nets. We then quickly grabbed them to either put a numbered ID ring on their leg, record the number from already ringed birds, or—as happened on one very lucky occasion—collect a tracking device from the leg of a

bird that showed where it had travelled over the past year. The other team's task was more complicated and time consuming: taking feather and faecal samples to get a better understanding of the birds' diet, and taking blood samples to compare between male and female birds.

### EXHAUSTED, BUT ENCHANTED

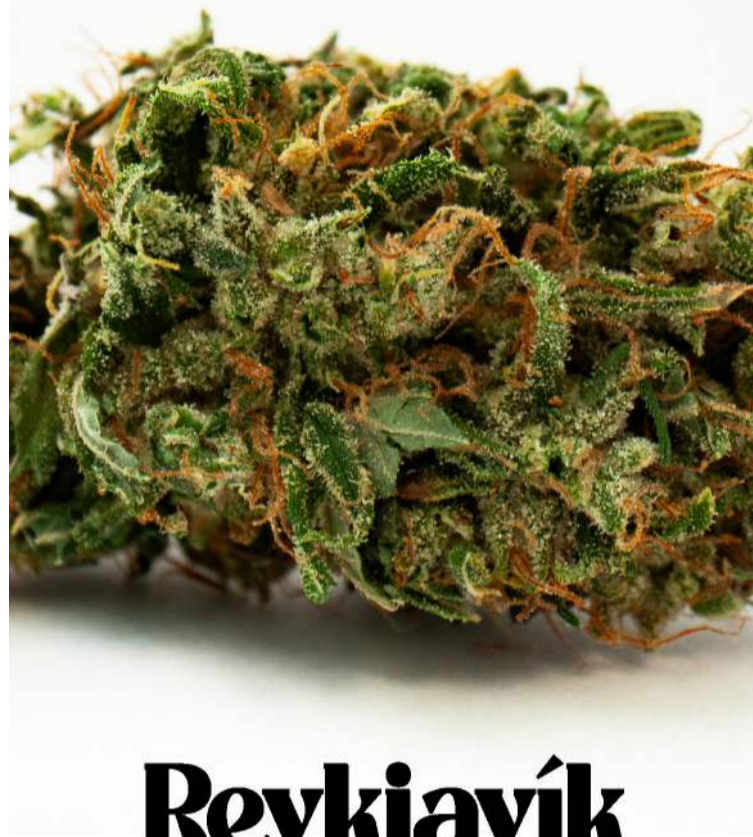
A European Storm Petrel weighs only about 25 grams and is very easy to hold in one hand, but as a defence mechanism, they vomit almost instantly after hitting the net. After a night spent processing around 60 birds until bleary-eyed and vomit-covered, we stumbled back into the lodge for a couple hours of sleep before leaving the island.

Despite my exhaustion, I felt fortunate. After all, few people ever catch a glimpse of nocturnal petrels either here in Iceland or during their yearly migration to the south coast of Africa.

It is only through this unique experience enabled by Stephen, who will now be analysing the data and writing up his dissertation, did I learn about and grow enchanted by some of the smallest seabirds in the Atlantic, which I may never see again. ■

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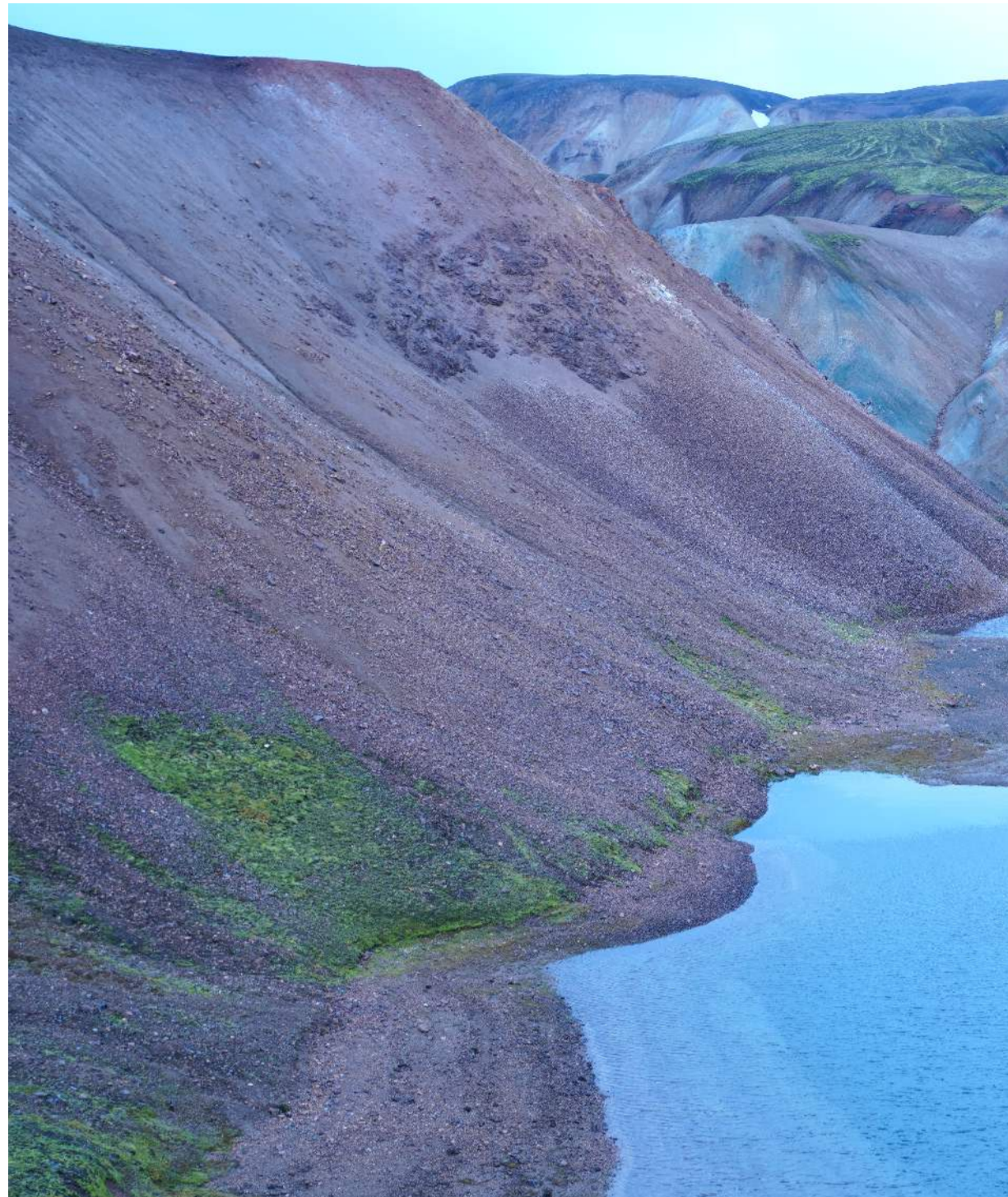


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Trailing Off

# A Do-Over Decades In

### The Laugavegur trail is so good I tackled it twice

WORDS Paul Sullivan  
IMAGE Paul Sullivan

The noises were unlike anything I had heard before. An inhuman blend of wailing and whimpering, growling and grunting, mixed in with some incoherent yelps and trumpeting farts – the kind of thing you might expect if you spent a night

in a zoo. But this was no menagerie. This was a shared-dorm in a hiking hut and these were not hippos, zebras or elephants but fellow human beings.

Chinese tourists, to be precise. And before anyone accuses me of screaming racism, I should note that during waking hours they were the friendliest, most cheerful group on the whole hiking trail. One gentleman was even courteous enough to advise everyone in the room to wear ear-plugs because of – he gestured broadly and apologetically – “the noise.” Not that mere earplugs could have ever blocked such a thundering cacophony, but hey, it’s the thought that counts.

That relatively sleepless night was pretty much the biggest challenge of what was otherwise a stunning five-day trek along the Laugavegur Trail, one of Iceland’s most popular hikes that is also regularly voted one of the world’s most scenic. So life-affirming is the experience that this was my second time traversing it, the first being undertaken back in the early 2000s while I was in Reykjavik to write a book about the music scene. (What do mountains have to do with Icelandic music, you might justifiably ask? Everything, if you’re one of those tedious music journalists who loves to describe Sigur Ros’s music as “glacial” and revels romantically in Björk’s professed paganism. Ahem).

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BY THE POND - OPEN DAILY



## n The Making

In any case, the first time I did the hike, I was clueless about a) hiking and b) Icelandic mountains – two things it's admittedly wise to know something about before embarking on an Iceland mountain hike. I walked it in the clothes I had been wearing around Reykjavik – jeans, regular tee-shirts and jumpers and a non-waterproof army jacket that got drenched the first day. I borrowed some hiking boots that immediately gave me blisters and brought

September weather.

On arrival, everything was pretty much as I remembered it, except for the presence of a well-stocked supply wagon – the only one on the whole trail – called the Mountain Mall. We didn't need anything but took a look anyway and that was when we spotted the small bottle of whisky. Hm. "How much is it?" We asked. "A lot," beamed the shopkeeper. And it was. But, seduced by

tel-hued rhyolite mountains, twinkling fields of obsidian, occasional geothermal springs, snow-capped glaciers and stretches of black sand. Despite it being right at the end of the season, we got sunshine every day – as well as some very testing and occasionally unnerving winds – plus a bonus night of fairytale snowfall...and no rain at all.

The trail itself does require some reasonable fitness. The four main sections comprise two days of 12 kilometres with constant and steep climbs (especially the first day from Landmannalaugar up to Hrafninnusker; an overall altitude gain of some 500 metres), plus two 16 kilometre days along slightly flatter terrain. But although the trek was tough-going in my memory, this time it wasn't such a struggle; partly because the weather was better but also because I wasn't dressed like a clown.

We completed most of the days in around three to five hours and although we were certainly tired and delighted to see the sleeping huts each time, we found ourselves heading back out for some additional side-hikes after a quick nap. The huts themselves are maintained – as is the trail itself – by the wonderful folk at Ferðafélag Íslands (the Iceland Touring Association). They're basic but have everything one needs (hot water, heating, toilets) and there are camping grounds if you prefer to tent.

Did I say the group snoring frenzy was the only challenge? I should add that although the huts at Hrafninnusker look like cute toys set amidst

the sprawling mountain scenery, the compost toilets there do require a great deal of courage (or a nose peg)

or two shorter days? Yes. But we certainly did not regret our decision to book a room with Midgard Base-

**In any case, the first time I did the hike, I was clueless about a) hiking and b) Icelandic mountains – two things it's admittedly wise to know something about before embarking on an Iceland mountain hike.**

a backpack that I filled with heavy jars of pasta sauce and tinned fish. I also brought a camera tripod I didn't need. "Idiot" doesn't even begin to cover it.

Somehow I survived, but this time I vowed to do it better. I invested in technically suitable clothing, purchased dehydrated food, and actually did some training. As the bus rumbled and bumped its way from Reykjavik up to the Landmannalaugar basecamp, my hiking partner and I felt more than ready, albeit a little nervous about the mid-

the idea of drawing on its comfort and warmth while battling a freak blizzard or finding ourselves trapped in a ravine with no escape in sight, we took it, and wound up adding a small splash into our hot chocolate each night as we lay exhausted in our dorm beds, reading our books and scrolling through the photos from that day on the trail.

And what scenery! Otherworldly. Stunning. Breathtaking. It's difficult to avoid superlatives when you're walking through a dynamic and diverse landscape that spans pas-

**It's difficult to avoid superlatives when you're walking through a dynamic and diverse landscape that spans pastel-hued rhyolite mountains, twinkling fields of obsidian, occasional geothermal springs, snow-capped glaciers and stretches of black sand.**

to spend any reasonable time in. And you should also know about the rivers. Despite bringing some sexy wading shoes this time – last time I crossed them with blister-covered bare feet and the screams are still audible in my traumatised mind – they're still painfully cold and can coax a whimper out of even the toughest soul.

But hey, there are hot showers at Álftavatn that more than compensate for smelly toilets, and after the final river crossing we emerged into the leafy embrace of the Langidalur valley in Þórsmörk.

In retrospect, do we wish we had booked the Fimmvörðuháls Trail, an additional 25 kilometre section via Skógar that can be done in one long,

camp, whose driver welcomed us at Þórsmörk with a pylsur (hot dog) barbecue, which we rounded off with the last of our whisky before being whisked off to a hot shower and a comfortable bed... one not a single loud snorer within earshot. ■

Although the Laugavegur Trail is located deep in the Icelandic highlands, it's easy to get to and from during the hiking season (roughly between late-April and mid-September). Reykjavik Excursions, for one, runs services direct to Landmannalaugar and shuttles hikers back to the capital from Þórsmörk.



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Food On The Move

# Three Cheers For Skál!

Reykjavík's upstart eatery has grown up, left home and gotten its own place

WORDS John Rogers  
IMAGES Joana Fontinha

scrawled red neon sign, the restaurant had just 24 bar seats wrapping around the busy kitchen. It was an island of calm amongst the tumult of Hlemmur, where discerning diners could get a perfect view of each dish being prepared. In 2019, the elevated, seasonal sharing plate fare was

that no amount of renovation and rebranding can fully exorcise that slightly loose punks 'n' drunks vibe from the building.

CARPE CIBUM

Now, Skál! has grown up and moved

Part of Skál! was always being able to see inside the whole process.

the deserving recipient of a Michelin Bib Gourmand – an award reserved for notably good food at an affordable price.

out, starting its new life at a dedicated brick and mortar location on the corner of Njálsgata and Klapparstígur. It's a great spot in the heart of 101, with windows looking out at the streetlife for a Greenwich Village neighbourhood restaurant vibe. The basement interior – previously a gelato place and many other things before – has been reworked into a cosy space that feels both refined and approachable.

It still carries many of the hallmarks of the food hall. "We tried to bring

**S**kál! was an early trailblazer in Reykjavík's food hall boom. An outlier and prodigy from the start, Skál! brought fine dining flair and seasonal flavours to the confines of the country's first ever food hall in the converted Hlemmur bus station. Under a chic and instantly iconic



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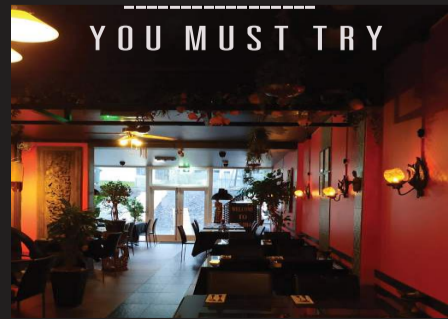
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over as many things as we could from the first location," says Jon Sadler, the front-of-house manager and one of five partners in the business. "The concept of high tables, low tables and bar seating, to continue that story – and not forget where we come from."

The open kitchen and bar are strongly featured in the restaurant's layout, with a handful of raised bar seats and some cosy booths with custom-made leather seating. "Part of Skál! was always being able to see inside the whole process," says Jon. "So our bartender is very exposed. He's kind of the central point of the main room." He gestures towards the bar. "My personal favourites are these two tables. You've got a lovely street window, you can see into the kitchen and you have the bartender. For me, these are the perfect seats."

The renovation involved pulling up the floors, adding soundproofing, and upgrading the plumbing, as well as landing on the right aesthetic. "This building is so old!" Jon admits. "It's from the early 1900s – well over

100 years old now. We've gone with a brown and cream interior with the same red wine colour we had at Hlemmur. We've kept the marble and brought it over into rose marble. We tried to transfer as many things as we could."

#### NEW TWISTS

To my surprise, the new space has only 30 seats – for those keeping count, that's an upgrade of just six from the food hall location. But the

The renovation also extends to the menu, which has been reworked by head chef Thomas Lorentzen. Regulars will recognise many of the staples, delivered here with new twists. The raw scallops (3.950 ISK) are served on the half shell in a dish of ice, with redcurrant granita on one side and creamy horseradish sauce on the other. The horseradish is festooned with neat green dots of dill oil that change shape as soon as they're touched, the spoon becoming a paintbrush that warps the

the dish's flavours seem to lack a punchline, with a light chilli tingle that's nothing for spice fans to get excited about.

#### AN EDIBLE TERRARIUM

The vegetarian sides, however, outperform. The beet salad (2.950 ISK) sits on a bed of decadent mascarpone, garlanded with freshly picked elderflower sprigs. The baby gem salad (2.750 ISK) is such an attractive artwork that I feel almost guilty cutting into it. Cupped in a crisp lettuce leaf, this strikingly fresh dish looks like an edible terrarium. My delighted vegetarian companion munches on the snappy apple and crunchy pistachios, exclaiming that she'd happily have supersized it up to a main – something the kitchen can accommodate, our waiter confirms. Although the menu's vegetarian options are few, he adds that vegans can swing by for lunch, served from Thursday to Sunday, when chickpea panisse is served.

Even the vegetarian pauses to admire the presentation of the hanger

steak (4.850 ISK), served sliced to reveal both the ragged, seared edge and the rare pink core. The flavour has an unexpected caramel-ish note, with charred, smoky sun-chokes and a pickled stem garnish setting the whole thing off.

The real highlight, though, is the menu's only dessert (2.650 ISK). It's a remix of the classic lemon meringue pie, with salty hazelnut crumble and a tart lemon curd filling. The topping of singed meringue surprises me when my spoon touches it, quivering rather than breaking, with a homely burnt marshmallow flavour. My companion remarks that they'd come again for this dish alone.

It's a sweet conclusion to a solid meal. As we head out, Jon confirms that dishes will come with seasonal twists, so we should come again to try new variants – and although booking is advised, there are always a few tables open for drop-ins. So swing by sometime and raise a glass to Skál! as it settles into its new grown-up life. ■

## There's a lot more attention to detail. We can transmit who we are to every table.

move was about more than just increasing capacity. "There's a lot more attention to detail," says Jon. "We can transmit who we are to every table. Instead of taking someone's order, spending three minutes with them and giving them a buzzer, we can have some fun. We get to dine with our guests now."

shell's graphically presented contents with every bite.

The cod wings (3.950 ISK) are coated in a light, crispy batter and slathered in a mild rhubarb hot sauce. The concept is good – a jokey spin on chicken wings, with fishy fins instead of protruding bones – but

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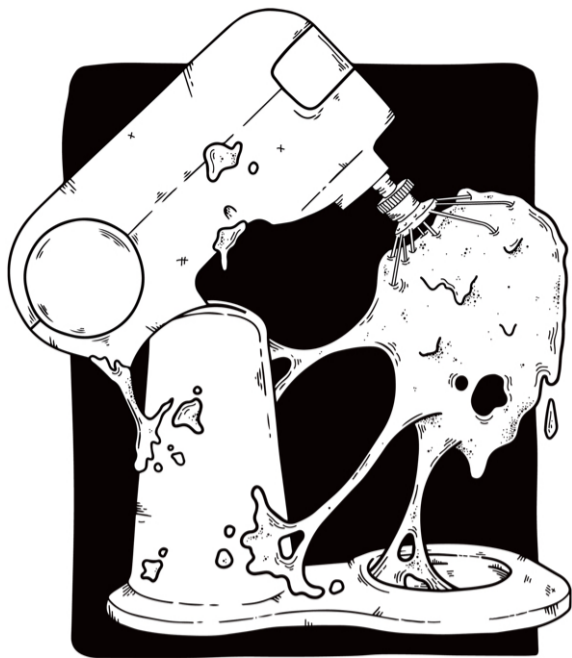
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Autumnal Eats

# Comfort In Every Bite

Grapevine staffers wax poetic about their fall favourites

WORDS The Reykjavik Grapevine  
IMAGE Timothée Lambrecq

What sparks your nostalgia? A familiar scent, that one song that was playing during a defining period in your life, a favourite meal. Comfort food is like that, with the textures and flavours of each bite flooding the mind with memories and emotion while filling the stomach. With autumn in the air and the temperatures dropping, the Grapevine team is sharing the foods that really hit the spot these days. Go out and try them or make them at home to fully embrace the season.

THE GRILLED (FRIED) CHEESE SANDWICH + TOMATO CUP-A-SOUP AT MY HOUSE

It occurred to me the other day, whilst I was preparing my seasonal comfort meal, that a grilled cheese sandwich is such a misnomer. Don't get me wrong, Icelanders are as likely to bust out the barbecue in sub-zero temperatures as they are to get ice cream in equally cold weather, but I hereby implore you to consider calling it by its correct name: a *fried* cheese sandwich. Anyway, few things in life fill my heart and soul (probably due to the amount of calories) like a well-prepared fried cheese sandwich, paired with a cheap, tomato-flavoured cup-a-soup. Boom – instant nostalgia, taking me back to the seasonal darkness when my parents shielded my family from the effects of the 2008 financial recession.

With nothing but Icelandic cheese

at your disposal, the hilariously titled Góðostur – which consists of 90% rubber and 10% milk – makes the perfect filling for a gooey, stretchy, butter-lathered fried sandwich. You can even go loco with some strategically placed pickled jalapeños. Pour some kokteilsósa on that sucker and you can kiss your evening plans goodbye as you become impervious to the miserable, bone-shaking cold of the outdoors. JB

THE KRA PROW (WITH TOFU INSTEAD OF MEAT) AT BAN THAI

I had the misfortune of having Covid last week, resulting in all kinds of food tasting bland as cardboard. When my taste buds finally returned to their senses (or as I thought so), I was up for a treat. Really, it was an occasion to celebrate and I almost splurged 6.000 ISK on a main at Austur-Indíafélagið, but lack of parking places downtown diverted

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me and my companion further east for dinner.

I'm not an adventurous eater and usually just stick with what I've tried — and didn't hate — before (in Ban Thai's case, that's pad thai), but I remembered Shruthi's recent article in the Grapevine stressing multiple times that Ban Thai is so much more than pad thai, so I decided to try my luck.

Seeing the three chilli peppers next to Kra Prow on the menu, I thought "Please." I've been training with ginger shots these past few days, I can handle hot and spicy. God, I was wrong.

The meal, while absolutely delicious, almost made me cry. I got a takeout, so as I was curled up on my couch, both in pain and delight, literally taking breaks to numb my mouth with ice cream, I thought, "This is so good."

The next day, I couldn't stop thinking about that humble kra prow with crunchy tofu and found myself googling — more than once — how to build spice tolerance. As my former therapist always said — "Life isn't always about comfort." IZ

#### VEGAN TANTANMEN AT RAMEN MOMO

Making an argument for sitting down with a big bowl of steaming ramen on a crisp autumn day feels like a lazy way out — it's just so obvious — but the reasons for seeking out the vegan tantanmen (or any other menu item, to be honest) from Ramen Momo are many.

First and foremost, it's delicious. It warms the soul to tuck into a complex bowl of ramen, with the steam hitting your face before the flavours bring your tastebuds to life. It's like if your favourite sweater was a meal.

But then there's the experience of eating at Ramen Momo's Tryggvagata location in particular. The cramped and somewhat chaotic atmosphere is elevated to pure magic when the temperature outside dips and the build up of steam inside makes it near impossible to see out the front window. It's like you're being warmed inside and out while in a cosy bubble of goodness. CF

#### COLD SKYR WITH DOUBLE CREAM AND NUT MIX AT KRÓNAN

As a self loathing, deluded Icelander, I take no solace in trying to warm my bones with soup, sandwiches or hot tubs. I just continue wearing my shorts and eating the food of my ancestors: Skyr.

Skyr is a yoghurt-like dairy-based substance that, technically speaking, is cheese. Only lately the more cheese-like variant has become available at stores in Iceland again — it is dryer and harder to swallow than the creamy varieties that have gained international popularity. It not only brings back memories of a childhood spent in rural Iceland, where it could be bought in chunks covered in paper, it brings me closer to the everyday cuisine of my ancestors who subsisted largely on skyr with double cream — though not by choice, as I do. Eat that, or die.

Since the bounty of the rest of the world now arrives on our shores via container ships, I sprinkle my culinary conservatism with imported nuts, so there are at least some carbohydrates mixed with the fat and proteins on my plate. JTS

#### ROASTED CHESTNUTS AND PUMPKIN SOUP... IN PORTUGAL

Is there a better autumn meal than pumpkin soup and roasted chestnuts? Historically, chestnuts were

the go-to snack in my native Portugal, serving as a winter bread substitute before potatoes made their grand entrance in the late 16th century. Nowadays, you can find chestnuts roasting on just about every street corner in Portugal during the cold days, served up from little stands like they're the latest culinary craze.

As for the pumpkin soup, it's pure comfort in a bowl, especially when my mom makes it. Creamy and mixed with potato and carrots — the perfect combination for the chestnuts. I must admit though, I am not the biggest fan of the taste of chestnut itself, but there is something about the tradition and the way they complement the soup. JF

#### THE CINNAMON SKYR AND A CUP (OR CUPS) OF COFFEE AT REYKJAVÍK ROASTERS

We'd be remiss (and very un-Icelandic) if we didn't include filter coffee on this list. For me, a steaming cup of joe paired with the warmth of a cinnamon-forward pastry provides the perfect comfort as we stumble into winter's windy embrace. This combo is even more enjoyable if you manage to grab a window seat at Roasters to watch others fight through the wind as you are cosied up with your coffee and treat (admittedly, this is a less gratifying case of schadenfreude because you, too, will have to endure the unfortunate weather at some point).

Now is the time for reading and writing, inspired by fallen leaves and frosted mountain tops, so make sure to bring a book or your journal to complete this autumnal tableau. I take my coffee black and the scone with butter, cheese, and jam, but I won't tell you what to do. ■

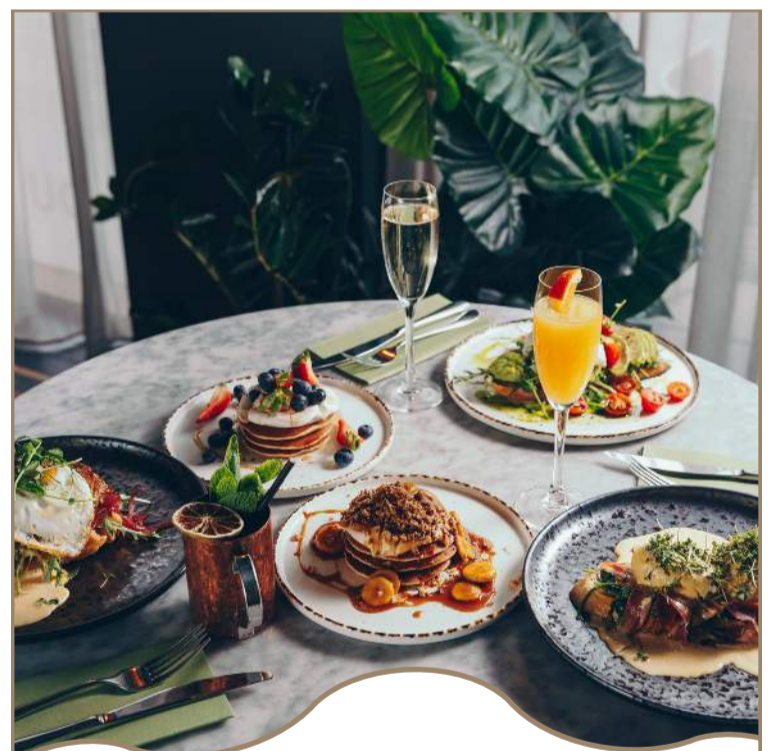


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Islanders

# An Icelander Abroad

Award-winning audio engineer Andrea Kristinsdóttir reflects on her success (so far)

WORDS Ish Sveinsson Houle  
IMAGE Supplied

**N**ew York-based Icelander Andrea Kristinsdóttir is an award-winning audio engineer, composer, sound designer. Currently she is working at Vox, the American media company famed for its explanatory journalism. Hired in May of this year, Andrea began as an audio engineer on their daily news podcast *Today, Explained*, but has since added sound design, composition and audio engineer credits on another Vox podcast, *Explain It to Me*.

### AN INTERNATIONAL ICELANDER

Perusing Andrea's biography, I soon realised it's more a question of where didn't she grow up as op-

posed to where she did. Meeting up on a sunny evening in Brooklyn, New York, she breaks it down: "I was born in Iceland, and then when I was two months old we moved to Virginia, and when I was one we moved back to Iceland, and then Kenya at five,

relocations her family would return to Iceland every summer. She tells me with a smile that staying connected to Iceland through childhood was "so amazing, so complicated, so beautiful."

**I wanted it to carry the love that I have for Iceland and how special it is to me.**

Japan six, seven Cambridge, nine New York, twelve Pakistan, fourteen Zimbabwe, no - twelve Zimbabwe, fourteen New York, and then Massachusetts, and then back to New York." Her father's job at the UN kept them moving, but despite the

Andrea has held a long-blazing love for the audio medium. As a high-schooler she began work scoring student films and short films. Then, she got her start working in the New York studio system as a door-opener for a recording

studio. With her foot (literally) in the door, she took a few tentative steps forward, asking to arrange the microphone, or to hit record - and the only way from there was up. Since those early days, Andrea has scored numerous films, composed themes for celebrity interview podcasts such as *Storytime with Seth Rogen*, and worked as Recording Engineer for Marvel's *Wolverine: The Lost Trail*, *Conan O'Brien Needs a Friend* and much more.

The past few years have included a handful of accolades: Webby Awards for *LeVar Burton Reads*, a Signal Award for *Blind Plea*, as well as Ambie and iHeart nominations. Andrea admits that she lives "in a perpetual state of hunger, of wanting more and more, going, going, go-

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ing,” but adds that “it does feel really nice to take a second and acknowledge that things that I felt so far away from a few years ago are in the periphery of the work that I’m doing currently. That’s really rewarding.”

#### ICELAND FOR THE RADIO

I’m incredibly excited to ask Andrea about a particular piece she made, centred on Iceland’s Ring Road. *Before Route One* is a piece made by Andrea for BBC Radio 3’s *Between the Ears*, which saw (or heard) Andrea, her mom and a producer travelling Route One counter-clockwise in four days. The trio stopped along the way to see family and friends, hear stories and collect audio, ending up with a piece that is sonically immersive and stunningly beautiful. Location recordings amidst glaciers and geysers allow for ambient water flow to be interlaced with oral histories and shared folklore.

“I wanted it to carry the love that I have for Iceland and how special it is to me,” Andrea says of *Before Route One*. “There are so many things that make it feel like Iceland... it’s a very specific lens and I just wanted it to feel as much as possible like Iceland – to carry as many voices, as many little stories,” she explains. “To paint as much of a picture as I could in sound of a place that is so known for its visuals was the interesting task.”

The stories heard from Icelanders encountered along the way bring about an incredible, almost nostalgic aspect of oral storytelling. I was struck by how well the piece captured the sincerity that comes with telling folklore; stories that have, for centuries, instilled in Icelanders respect for nature around them. In a

time of elf-themed walking tours and souvenir figurines of trolls golfing, folklore isn’t often imparted sincerely or accurately to communities outside Iceland, which makes Andrea’s piece distinct and powerful.

“I think from the outside, there are all kinds of skits and jokes in popular culture, in the U.S. about it,” she says. “There is a fun element to a lot of it, but I don’t think there’s any of it that’s a joke. I think it is quite sacred and quite beautiful, and it should be revered.”

*Before Route One* is a piece where Andrea boasts presenter, sound designer and composer credits. “I think the beauty of podcasting and radio is that you can wear a lot of those hats, and it is a little bit more flexible than a lot of other industries,” she explains.

## For me to just hear my full name feels so important.

#### WHAT’S IN A NAME

I first learned of Andrea Kristinsdóttir by hearing her (very clearly Icelandic) name in the credits of *Today, Explained*. Like many other Icelanders working internationally, Andrea’s name had been truncated at various points in her career, seeing her use the nickname “Andi” while her patronymic “Kristinsdóttir” was chopped down to “Kristins.”

“I think I wouldn’t get shortlisted for jobs initially because they would assume my English wasn’t as good or there was a foreign element – that was really problematic,” Andrea

shares. “I noticed that change very quickly when I shifted my name. That helped me very early in my career to be able to get a foot in the door.” However, she’s using her full name these days, saying, “now that I have a little bit more behind me and under my belt, I feel like I can do this.”

Working on *Today, Explained* was the first time Andrea made the point of ensuring she’s credited with her full name. Upon that insistence, a host even stayed in the studio longer to do take after take of her name until he got it right.

“For me to just hear my full name feels so important, because for so long working in the States it had to be shortened and people haven’t wanted to put in the effort,” she shares. Using the name Andrea Kristinsdóttir holds twofold signif-

icance for her: “I know for myself, years ago, hearing a female name would have meant the world to me,” and as for Kristinsdóttir, “when you’re outside of Iceland, it’s really nice to have the full name, because it acknowledges your identity.”

So if you tune in to Andrea’s work, make sure to stick around and hear those end credits. ■

Listen to Andrea’s work on Vox’s *Today, Explained* and *Explain It to Me*, and access her past work from her website [andikristins.com](http://andikristins.com)

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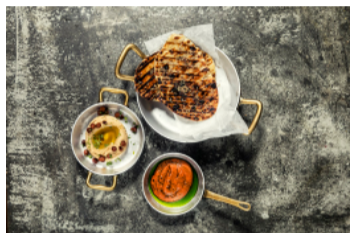
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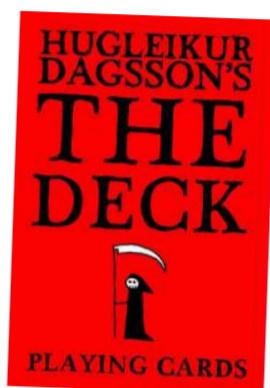
The Haul

# The Autumn Survival Shopping Bag

It's getting colder, the leaves are falling, so let's all shop

WORDS Catharine Fulton  
IMAGES The Internet

Can you smell that? The distinct scent of autumn is in the air these days – an earthy blend of damp, decomposing leaves and impending snowfall. And am I picking up a hint of pumpkin spice on the wind? Yes, it's the cosiest season of the year. But that doesn't mean it can't get even cosier. We've compiled this shopping bag to usher in the season in style. Happy shopping! ■



1



2



3



4



5



6



7



8

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7. *Gutter Cup* by Gudnyhaf –  
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2. *The Mark* by Frída Ísberg (Translated by Larisa Kyzer)  
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6. *Ash Sweater* by Magnea  
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Now And Then

## A Tale Of Two Bankruptcies

Storage units become housing units

WORDS  
IMAGES

Jón Trausti Sigurðsson  
Joana Fontinha &  
Gunnar V. Andrésson

Both of the pictures were taken from the roof of the Central Bank building. The former was shot in 1984 when the then Icelandic shipping company Hafskip, whose main offices and operations were located in and around the building pictured, was reported to be in dire financial straits. Hafskip was declared bankrupt the following year. Its CEO, Björgólfur Guðmundsson, and many other employees of the company were subsequently prosecuted and sentenced for criminal conduct related to the company's operations and a lively political witch hunt ensued.

Fast forward to 2004 and the former Hafskip building was still standing, with the plot unchanged. The previously sentenced Björgólfur, however, had by then become the main owner of newly privatised bank Landsbankinn. When the area was due for development Björgólfur managed to secure a part of the former Hafskip plot for Landsbankinn's new flagship building.

But before long came the economic collapse of 2008. Landsbankinn and Björgólfur went bust, and the classic political fallout ensued (again). So Björgólfur's plans to exact revenge through erecting a temple for his new business venture on the ruins of his failed outing went similarly tits up.

Or sort of. Fast forward another 20 years and a now state-owned Landsbankinn went ahead and built its HQ on the plot Björgólfur chose way back when. Also in the vicinity is the Harpa concert hall, a five-star hotel, a food hall, a gigantic subterranean parking garage and a slew of overpriced apartment complexes.

Aesthetically, though, things haven't really changed much. Sure, the container units have been replaced by mid-rise mixed-use buildings, but they are all rather grey and dull – the unofficial colours of Reykjavík. ■

**F**ew locations in downtown Reykjavík have shapeshifted as massively in the past two decades as the plot of land extending inland from Reykjavík harbour and Harpa. Or maybe that's hyperbolic – let's explore the area.



# Delicious!

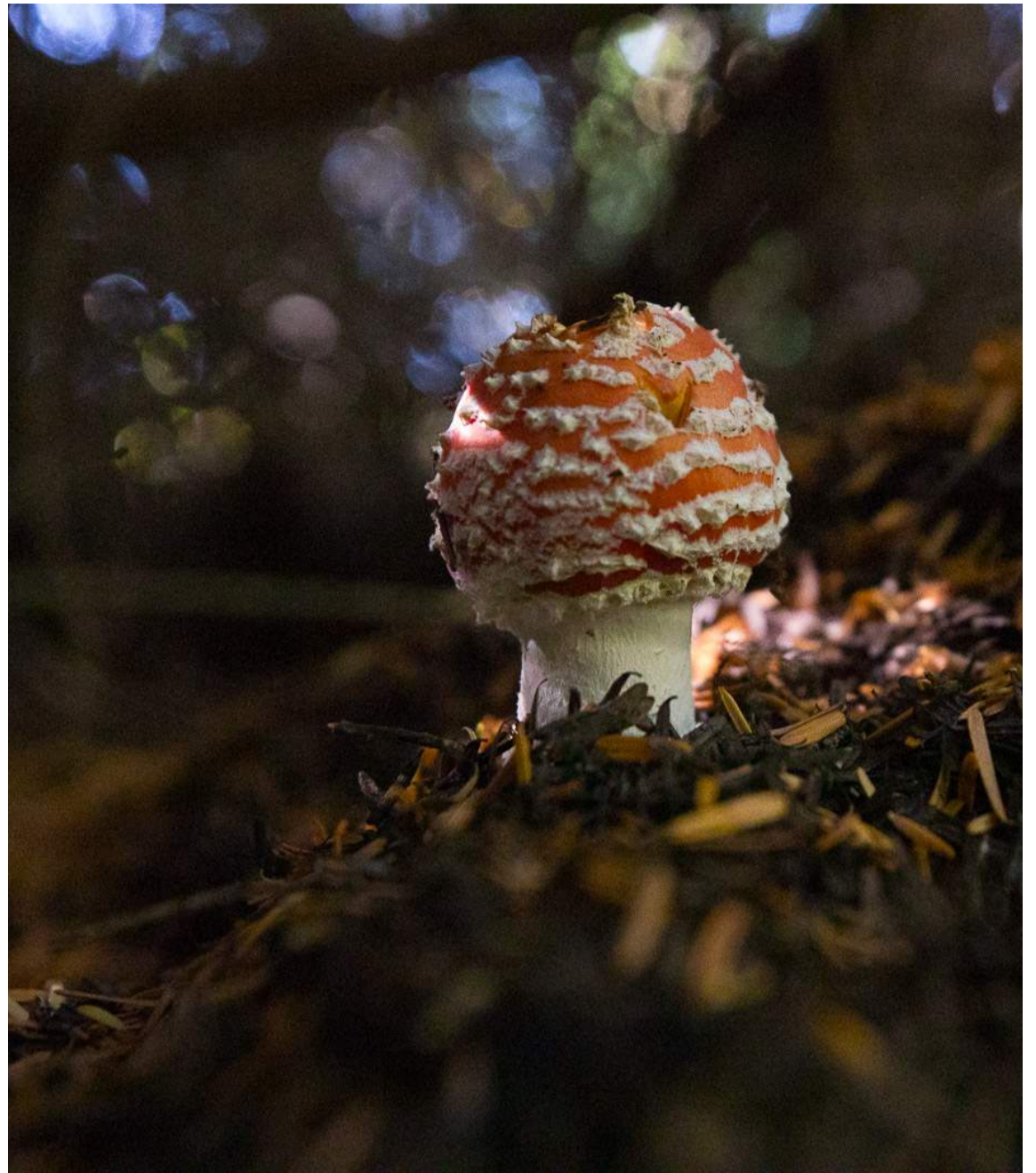
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## Musings No Mushroom Left For The Bodies

For a real autumnal treat, go foraging in your local graveyard

WORDS Charlie Winters  
IMAGE Art Bicnick

Before you continue with this article, you are legally required to sign the following:

I, \_\_\_\_\_, of my own volition continue reading this silly article knowing full well that this is mostly a work of satire and that Charlie Winters™, The Reykjavik Grapevine™ and the management of Hólavallagarður™ are not responsible for me fucking up, eating mycelium, lichen, or any fungus that I shouldn't have been eating, and ending up dead – or worse, at Landspítali.

Now that that's out of the way, let's get shrooming.

First and foremost, my favourite shroom to find in the cemetery is the Phallus impudicus. I can already hear the Latin nerds screaming "STINKY PENIS!" for yes, this mushroom is the common stinkhorn. With a phallic shape that would make Freud jealous and the smell of a teenage boy in heat, this shroom is very easily recognizable. Yet, because of that it is also mercilessly hunted by insects. If you want to catch this mushroom untouched by their grubby little antennae, you'll have to find it flaccid, when it's slightly below the ground looking almost like an egg. I've had a few and I haven't died yet, so they're not poisonous.

The second mushroom on my list is Pholiota squarrosa also known as the Shaggy Scalycap. (Why are all these mushrooms so horny?) I interviewed a random stranger at the graveyard who I spotted collecting mushrooms. He would not give me his name but did let me quote him for my "research."

"This species is edible but it kinda tastes like shit. There're no look-alikes that resemble it, so it's good for dummies like you to safely find if you're comfortable with eating stuff you find in a fuckin' graveyard. It melts the trees tho'. Grows on rottin' wood and stumps. You can find em' in Iceland on old rowan trees." Thanks, random stranger! I'll never forget you.

The third mushroom on my list is Hypholoma fasciculare also known as Sulphur Tuft. These are very pizza mushroomy-looking mushrooms, they come in large clumps and have a yellowish colour. The ribbed bottom doesn't make the mouthfeel too nice, and frankly they're quite bitter in taste.

Hold on a moment.

I've just been informed that these ones are, in fact, poisonous. Diarrhoea you say. Vomiting? Any mushrooms in Iceland with gills or ribs on the bottom have a chance of being poisonous? That would have been very useful information to know before I started collecting mushrooms.

There are Facebook groups that know all about these? I should join one. ■

Editor's note: don't consume any mushrooms you forage unless you're knowledgeable about them and certain of their safety.

If you're anything like Charlie, be sure to commit these numbers to memory.

Iceland Poison Control: 543 2222. Emergency Services: 112

**W**e've all been there. Taking a midnight saunter on a misty night through your local cemetery, rummaging for lootable objects, when suddenly – BOOM! – there it is. Poking out of a tree stump, just a few centimetres tall. Smurfs live in them, Mario chomps them down, you know we're talking mushrooms, baby. And in the spookiest of locations!

Hello, Charlie here. I love collecting mushrooms and right now it's October! Which means not only is it Spooky Season, it is also Mushroom Season! So, now and then I will pretend to be a whimsical fae creature and wreak havoc within the local graveyard, Hólavallagarður, ripping up dirt and eating whatever fungus I can find. Mind you I do this with the supervision of people who are much more knowledgeable about this than I am ( they insist I wear a shock collar). So, with all this experience under my belt, I shall impart to you the wisdom of my graveyard ventures, so you, too, can find yourself some mushrooms.



## Letters **Won't Somebody Think Of The Polar Bears!?**

You send us letters so we answer them

WORDS The Reykjavík Grapevine  
IMAGE The Reykjavík Grapevine

There was an article posted today about a polar bear sitting around an owner's summer house and that the bear was immediately shot dead by authorities. Was killing the bear the only alternative available? I know that they are very large predators but, the animals are rapidly losing their natural habitats due to climate change. Is it not possible that the bear could have been sedated and relocated? Was it in an area that was occupied by thousands of people that it put them at risk? Was putting that majestic creature to death the only option available?

Too, why didn't The Grapevine, as a voice of the people, question those actions? Or, is it standard operating procedure to eliminate any dangerous animal on the island?

— Debra

I was wondering if you could provide further information about the polar bear killing in Iceland. I read it was not possible or cost effective to send it back. But I could almost guarantee a zoo or non profit could have stepped up to help relocation effort. I am just shocked that it had to end with killing the polar bear. any insights?

— Thanks, Jeff

Well, Mark, as you may now gather from reading the letters from your fellow Grapevine superfans Debra and Jeff, the polar bear that managed to make it to Iceland's shores on September 19 was not, in fact, sent back to Greenland. Unless "sent back to Greenland" is a euphemism, like when parents tell a distraught child the family dog was "sent to a farm."

The polar bear is dead, Mark. But we're sure it's chasing seals in that great big Greenland in the sky.

As for your letters, Debra and Jeff, believe us when we say we're also confused and upset and angry every time a polar bear reaches Iceland because we know it's just a matter of time before it's shot dead. Nobody wants that. Polar bears have a raw enough deal, what with the ongoing destruction of the natural hab-

itat by manmade climate change. The thought process here in Iceland is that the bears, by the time they make it to Iceland, are so hungry that they'll attack the first living thing they see. That's probably very true. But then we also understand that the argument can be made that the bear can just as easily be shot with a tranquilliser as with a lethal round.

What it ultimately comes down to, however, is resources. Iceland does not have a trained team, the facilities or the cold hard cash to tranquillise and house the animals and then transport them back to Greenland.

And so, here we are with another dead bear to be stuffed and put on display in some hotel lobby.

It's the circle of life? ■

**H**i. I was recently in Iceland on a world trip. Wonderful country and people. But while I was in Blönduós the manager of the accommodation I was staying in told me that a polar bear came ashore. That bear was sent back to Greenland. The recent sighting was not clarified into where in the north-west of Iceland it was. Can you tell me what village it was. — Mark



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## Potent Quotables

For most people I know, the current situation with prices everywhere going up, it's quite hard to live on only one job.

Omar Rondon shares how he juggles three jobs with a baby on the way on page 12

Everyone outside of Iceland understands the significance of Iceland for space research. But here, not everyone does.

Ciarán Daly explores the significance of the Iceland Space Agency on pages 14-16

It's an album for the weirdos.

Electronica duo CYBER get SAD :( on page 30

And what scenery! Otherworldly. Stunning. Breathtaking. It's difficult to avoid superlatives when you're walking through a dynamic and diverse landscape.

Has Paul Sullivan just hiked the Laugavegur trail twice? Find out on page 36

It's a great spot in the heart of 101, with windows looking out at the streetlife.

John Rogers sampled Skáll's new downtown spot and is still dreaming about that dessert. Read more on page 38

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