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THE ESSENTIAL GUIDE TO LIFE, TRAVEL & ENTERTAINMENT IN ICELAND

The Year The Prince Popped

IN THE ISSUE

THE DARKNESS

How to defeat it

DISCOURSE

We fan the flames of

FOOD

WTF is "The Lizard" ?

TRAVEL

Meet the tourist of the year

WEATHER

The year in

Prins Póló made **THE SONG OF THE YEAR**.
And Prins Póló is **THE BAND OF THE YEAR**.
All hail the Prince!

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On the cover: Svavar Pétur, Prins Póló, The Prince, Skakki.
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Editorial-in-chief | Haukur S. Magnússon

THIS FEELS RELEVANT NOW



Hi. Happy New Year.

Right now, at this very moment, you could certainly argue that shit is fucked up and bullshit. For all sorts of reasons.

But, it feels sort of important that we don't. That we retain hope. That we strive for understanding, empathy, humanity. For compassion and care. And kindness. Harmony. All that dirty hippie bullshit.

Here is some dirty hippie bullshit that rang through my brain as I woke up this morning. It seems pertinent:

“(What’s So Funny ‘Bout) Peace, Love, And Understanding

As I walk through
This wicked world
Searchin’ for light in the darkness of insanity.

I ask myself
Is all hope lost?
Is there only pain and hatred, and misery?

And each time I feel like this inside,
There’s one thing I wanna know:
What’s so funny ‘bout peace love & understanding?
Ohhhh
What’s so funny ‘bout peace love & understanding?

And as I walked on
Through troubled times
My spirit gets so downhearted sometimes
So where are the strong
And who are the trusted?
And where is the harmony?
Sweet harmony.

‘cause each time I feel it slippin’ away, just makes me wanna cry.
What’s so funny ‘bout peace love & understanding?
Ohhhh
What’s so funny ‘bout peace love & understanding?

So where are the strong?
And who are the trusted?
And where is the harmony?
Sweet harmony.

‘cause each time I feel it slippin’ away,
just makes me wanna cry.
What’s so funny ‘bout peace love & understanding?
Ohhhh
What’s so funny ‘bout peace love & understanding?
Ohhhh
What’s so funny ‘bout peace love & understanding?”

(Those words were written by a man called Nick Lowe in the year 1974, right when dirty hippies were falling out of fashion. They are reprinted without permission.. I hope that Nick Lowe is still into that whole “being understanding” idea).

Happy New Year. I love you.

Comic | Lóa Hjalmtýsdóttir



TRACK OF THE YEAR!

Prins Póló

París Norðursins

Download it at www.grapevine.is

Our panel of experts—along with the whole of the Icelandic nation—picked “París Norðursins” as THE song of 2014. The track is a true radio monster, which resulted in the perennial left-field outsider indie kid (who has rested so comfortably on the margins of Icelandic culture for over a decade) becoming somewhat of a celebrity. We hear he even had to remove his listing from the phone book to thwart an incessant stream of phone calls from drunk housewives who wanted discuss the lyrics. We went bonkers for it as soon as we heard it, featuring it as our “TRACK OF THE ISSUE” last August. Here’s what we had to say back then:

“You won’t find Prins Póló’s unexpected summer hit ‘París Norðursins’ (‘Paris Of The North’) on the act’s recent LP ‘Sorri’ (‘Sorry’). Written and recorded specifically for the purpose, the song features in a highly anticipated film of the same name, which hits theatres in early September and should be pretty great if the Prince’s contribution is anything to go by.

The track’s steadily humming, upbeat bass line is accompanied with occasional keys and distorted guitar segments, all wrapped up in a fun and danceable package. Hiding behind that cheerful façade are lyrics that explore a recurring bitter theme in Icelandic literature—Halldór Laxness’s ‘Independent People,’ for example—that of the stubborn male who strives to do honest work while his family life turns to shit, partly because life is complicated, partly of his own doing. Whether this mirrors the plot of ‘París norðursins’ remains to be seen [update: we saw the movie, it doesn’t exactly mirror the lyrics, but there are similarities].

With its infectious melody, steady beat and haunting lyrics, Prins Póló’s new single is surely in the running to be crowned Iceland’s Summer Jam 2014.”

It ran, it won, it surpassed. “París Norðursins” is our TRACK OF THE YEAR! TRACK OF THE YEAR! TRACK OF THE YEAR!

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SOUR GRAPES & STUFF

Most Awesome Letter of the Issue!

A big thank you

Dear Reykjavik Grapevine,

My wife and I stopped over last week and wish to share with Iceland's public and your readers several wonderful incidents in which we were helped immensely and left with a full appreciation of the kind people who live in your country. Our Icelandair flight from London landed late in very strong winds. Our hotel was the Hotel Smari only 100 meters from the airport – a very short walk which we were unable to complete on our own. Trying to walk at 3:30 AM the very very strong winds pushed us back and we could only complete about 40 meters when the wind blew my glasses off my face onto the road. It was completely dark and we were on our knees searching for my glasses when a car stopped and the driver and a passenger got out to ask if we were OK..... this was the first random act of kindness we encountered. They offered to drive us the rest of the distance to the hotel and only when we got in the car did we realize there was also a baby and mother. In order to fit us in, the kind lady stood in the car over her baby's car seat. Her husband entered the car, unbelievably, with my glasses which he found quite a few meters further back than where we were looking!

We thanked them with all our heart and we do so again now if they ever read this. We never could have negotiated the distance without their help.

The man working in the Hotel Smari reception at close to 4AM was also most kind, making us a cup of tea and offering to waive the normal check out deadline so we could have a decent sleep. Thanks again very much to him

as well.

The next day was supposed to be in a rental car driving to the Blue Lagoon and the Lucky bridge that spans the gap between the North American and European tectonic plates but the weather again prevented that and, as well, we wanted to be sure we sorted out our luggage which had been left behind at Heathrow. This is where we were again blessed with the kindness and extra effort of Ms Drofn Palmberg who was working at the Icelandair luggage services desk. She immediately appreciated that we couldn't leave for Canada that night without our luggage because all our grandchildren's Christmas presents were inside. She suggested how I could check in without our luggage and I could meet that day's incoming flight from London which was carrying our four suitcases and she would be there with me to tag the suitcases so they could be loaded onto our flight to Toronto. She sensed our concern and made sure to give us complete comfort that this plan would work. She also made sure the check in staff were willing to go along with this plan. And it did work perfectly. Another big hug from my wife and me to Drofn, who did so much to help our five grandchildren have their presents to open this Christmas.

My wife and I missed out on seeing Iceland sights that day last week but we saw so much that was absolutely wonderful – the people living there. We certainly will return to rent that car and now intend to spend much longer in your country. (As a further bonus, my wife did see the glow of the Northern lights from her seat aboard the London to Iceland Icelandair flight.)

Thank you for letting me share our experience with you and your readers.

I hope those people who were so kind to us somehow manage to read what their kindness meant to us. If that happens our miracle visit will be perfectly completed.

Merry Christmas
James and Sybille Scott

Dear James and Sybille,

Wow. Thank you guys for writing that. Seriously. As you might have noticed, we spend a lot of time ragging on Icelanders and complaining about shit in these pages (and on our website!). In a way, it's kind of our job, you know, being "a critical media entity" and all, but we're not gonna lie: it gets tiring. Perhaps especially lately, when there's all sorts of bullshit going down in Iceland (seriously, so much fucking bullshit!), it gets a little too easy to lose perspective and forget that most of us humans can be really goddamn decent kind and well-meaning when given the chance.

So thanks for the reminder, James and Sybille, thanks for taking the time to write (a lot of the time, folks only bother writing in when they're super upset about something, like being overcharged at some shitty restaurant or whatever). Honestly, you just made our day.

Hope you can come back to enjoy all your AWESOME LETTER swag (drop us a line to collect it by the way)!

Love,

Your Friends At The Reykjavik Grapevine

MOST AWESOME LETTER TWO FREE MEALS AT THE ICELANDIC HAMBURGER



Dear reader. We love you very much, especially those of you that write us letters all the time. In fact we love you so much that we keep trying to reward you somehow for writing us those letters. They entertain us, and they keep us informed of what our readers think. Now. Whoever wrote this issue's MOST AWESOME LETTER gets a prize. And it's a pretty great one. Yes, not one but TWO delicious hamburger-style meals at the

wondrous ICELANDIC HAMBURGER FACTORY, which is an Icelandic themed restaurant that specializes in huuuuuuuu and mouth-watering burgers to fit every occasion. And if you for some reason didn't write this issue's MOST AWESOME LETTER don't panic. Their tasty burgers aren't that expensive, and you can always try for a MOST AWESOME letter later. Just write us at letters@grapevine.is

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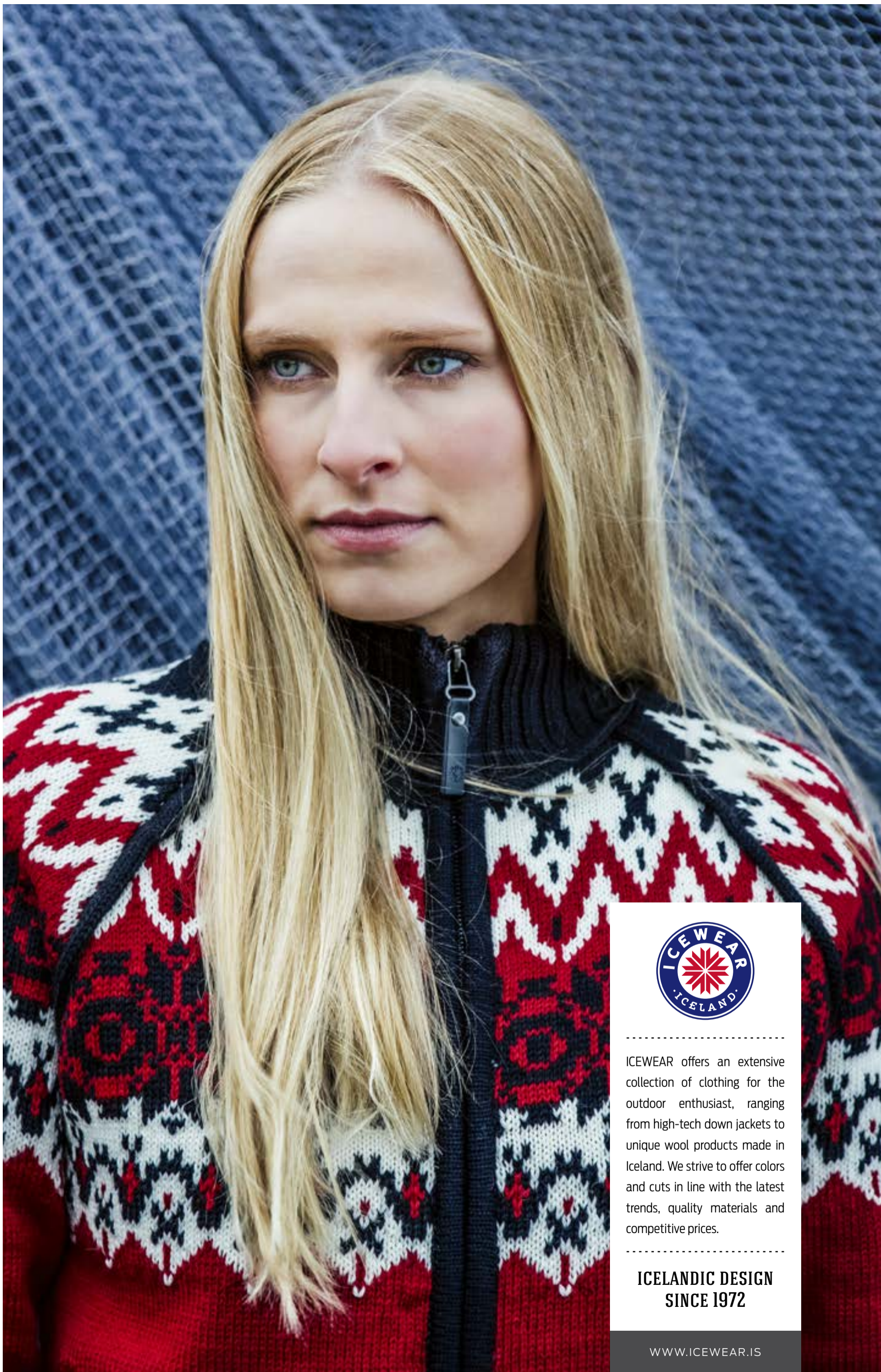


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WHERE WERE WE? WHERE ARE WE? WHERE ARE WE HEADED? What are we thinking?

Compiled by Haukur S. Magnússon

To mark the beginning of a new year, we posed two questions to dozens of Icelanders, old and new. Representatives of every single political party, ministers, mayors and machinists alike (as per usual, the governing parties mostly ignored our queries). We asked them to tell us—in their own unique ways, from their own unique perspectives—what summed up the year 2014, and what they expected of the coming one. We asked them to answer the following: “Where are we now, at the end of 2014. Looking back, how did that journey begin, and where did it leave us?” Furthermore: “Where are we headed? What would be the best possible outcome of the year 2015—and what might the worst one entail?” Or not. There were no restrictions—our correspondents were free to respond in any way, language and format. From their hearts or from their minds. Through this issue you’ll find the replies we received. Every last one of them. We hope that when read together, in the context of one another, they may give a broad and even enlightening view of how Icelanders as a nation perceived the events of the last twelve months, and what hopes (and/or fears) they harbour for the next twelve. Each and every one speaks for itself, and each one tells a story. Our hope is that this “perspective-mosaic” might help us gain an insight into and understanding of our current situation. If nothing else, it makes for a pretty fun read. Enjoy.



The Year 2015—Where Does Iceland Stand?

Steingrímur J. Sigfússon
MP, former Minister Of Everything, Left-Green Party

Iceland saw progress in several areas in the year 2014. We enjoyed some economic growth, even though Statistics Iceland’s quarterly numbers were disappointing. The economic recovery, which began with the economy’s turnaround in 2010, continues for the fourth consecutive year. Unemployment numbers kept decreasing, as they have since they peaked in the spring of 2010. The state treasury further recovered after being balanced for the first time post-collapse in 2013. However, the recovery of 2014 is unfortunately first and foremost due to irregular, one-time credit entries from the Central Bank of Iceland and Landsbankinn. The underlying recovery of the state is thus nominal in actuality. Nonetheless, 2014 marks the state’s sixth consecutive year of overall recovery. Furthermore, public spending power continued improving, although a growing economic divide is implicit in this development.

To summarize: the recovery process continued in 2014. There are those who maintain that a great transition, a turnaround even, occurred when the current government took power at the end of May 2013. The Prime Minister, the head of the state budget committee and other government affiliates are prone to speak as if the brunt of any good fortune Icelanders have enjoyed since settlement times occurred when the collapse-parties resumed their reign over Iceland. Such claims are naïvely egocentric, solipsistic even, as official economic statistics aptly demonstrate. Regardless, we continue pulling forward in most areas, and the recovery that commenced halfway through the last parliamentary term is still ongoing.

There are unfortunately storm clouds on the horizon. The year 2015 has potential to be the first one a long time where the state treasury’s returns do not improve, but grow worse. There is much uncertainty with regards to the imminent general wage negotiations, and the governing parties seem to harbour fundamental disagreements over how to lift the currency restrictions. This does not bode well, as it is the biggest, most fateful post-collapse task that remains unresolved.

So: Iceland is in an infinitely better position than it was in 2008-2009, but there is still much work to do—and the current outlook is uncertain, to say the least.



Somewhere Between Worried And Cynical

Andri Snær Magnason
author, poet

The world’s mood is very strange and Iceland swings along. The post-crash era was interesting in many ways: offering promises of social innovation, the rise of small businesses and a general optimism—a euphoric feeling that anything might be possible. This situation caused a wave of urban legends about Iceland. We were creating a new constitution, exciting initiatives, etc... Such stories are still circulating, even as the new government has been busy systematically killing most of the post-crash initiatives—along with dismantling the older systems we were so proud of along with raising taxes on culture and food (while lowering taxes on TVs, sugar and cars).

Many are stuck somewhere between worried and cynical. Online, they try to leave comments on viral videos detailing all the amazing stuff going on in Iceland, saying “nothing of that is true: the constitution failed, the innovation failed, our cops want guns, not kittens, the culture is

a thorn in the side of the ruling elite and there is a general polarization going on.”

Thus, if 2014 was the year of shock, disbelief and cynicism, the year 2015 should be the year of new hope, where we find the core of the good old ideas, and start working for them all over again. Getting the constitution done and agreed upon with the help of international specialists and activists in the field, preventing the money from natural resources (such as fisheries and hydro/geothermal power) from being drained away. Breaking up the polarization from the grassroots up—leaving the elite cold and lonely on the top—finalizing a new constitution, founding a national park protecting the highlands of Iceland from further exploitation and getting the innovative spirit on the rise again.

This would be the best. The worst would be going from cynicism to despair or depression—to just giving up and moving to Norway.



Optimistically Moving Forward

Vigdís Hauksdóttir
MP, The Progressive Party

We Icelanders are at a good place in light of how little time has passed since the last parliamentary elections and the subsequent turnaround. Fundamental services have been placed in a priority position—healthcare, education and transportation. The national budget has been settled deficit-free for the second time since the current government took the reigns, which is very important and affirms that the state’s debt collection has ceased. This has vastly improved our credit terms on the international market. That the household debt relief’s implementation has commenced is cause for great joy, as it signifies that we have gained the necessary foothold to move society forward, because the household serves as the cornerstone of every society.

We have set the course for the abolishment of currency restrictions and the settlement of the collapsed banks’ estates. If done right, these acts will completely transform the Icelandic nation’s standing. I am very optimistic for the coming year, and choose not to remark upon what the worst-case scenario would entail



Empire Of Illusion

Biggi Veira
musician, GusGus

I read an interesting book last year, Chris Hedges’ ‘Empire of Illusion: The End Of Literacy And The Triumph Of Spectacle’. Even though it’s focused on U.S. affairs and realities, I found it corresponded with developments in Iceland and our current government’s policies to the point of discomfort.

Chris depicts a world where demagoguery and stupidity have conquered, where the education system aims only at producing a malleable workforce, where the media has been commandeered by the ruling classes and has abandoned any pretence of keeping the authorities in check and speaking truth to power, instead wholly devoted to providing brain-dead entertainment and propagating a distorted worldview in the service of its owners. On the surface, the public has little to complain about, as it now resides

“Ideology is dead. Democracy is an illusion. Critical thinking has been deemed impractical and unprofitable, entirely abandoned by educational institutions. Scholars’ focus is so narrow and localized that any kind of ethical or contextual overview is all but impossible.”

entirely on the surface level. The public is intellectually castrated, completely assimilated to economic models where it plays the role of subservient workforce in service of the elites.

Ideology is dead. Democracy is an illusion. Critical thinking has been deemed impractical and unprofitable, entirely abandoned by educational institutions. Scholars’ focus is so narrow and localized that any kind of ethical or contextual overview is all but impossible. The media’s role as a Fourth Estate has evaporated, as the public is uninterested in—and unable to comprehend—anything beyond sports and vapid entertainment.

Chris Hedges seems uninterested in finding reasons for optimism. Rather, he delves into the blackest night of a future that is already deeply rooted in modern-day America. In the end, he attempts to console us with a single paragraph, citing humankind’s deeper natures.

Especially interesting to me was a chapter entitled “The Illusion Of Happiness,” which revolves around corporations’ attempts to quell any negativity or attempts at critical thinking amongst their employees.

I detect similar sentiments in Iceland. From our president, from our Prime Minister, from the bishop, and from others. “Negativity is so boring, so tiring, so 2009, it doesn’t contribute and provides no opportunity.”

I disagree. It’s true that negativity isn’t constructive in nature, but for people who foster no particular vision of what they desire, determining what one doesn’t want is a great starting point. And for me, the reality that Chris depicts—that grim future that’s currently gaining a foothold—is the opposite of what I desire, for myself, for my friends and for my descendants. I suspect that most people would agree.

This leaves us with the question of how we can collectively work against going there, what concrete actions we can take to veer off that path.



numbered folders

Jófríður Ákadóttir
musician (Samaris, Pascal Pinon)

life is a current and we are currents, everything is the same but always changing. we make a monument of it when dividing a flow of things, situations and happenings into a year. i feel, more now as i grow older, that this particular year has no particular meaning and that it’s merely a matter of convenience, putting life in numbered folders. nonetheless i do hope that we will see good people spread good energy and good things taken into action, amity kismet and harmony in every corner.

2014 IN BRIEF

BY GABRIÉL BENJAMIN

JANUARY

The year came out of the gate running, with television personality-cum-sports announcer Björn Bragi Arnarson remarking that Iceland’s dominant performance in a handball game against Austria was “like the German Nazis in 1938. We’re slaughtering the Austrians!” All the while, Icelandic brewery Steðji put slaughtered whales to good use, crafting the novel Þorri “Whale Beer,” which contains trace amounts of whalebone meal. And, in an attempt to harness the 40% increase of tourists arriving to Iceland, landowners of Geysir started charging admission fees to their site, only to be thwarted by the government itself. So much controversy!

FEBRUARY

Despite pressure from LGBT groups to boycott the Sochi 2014 Winter Olympics due to the host country Russia’s recently passed homophobic legislation, Iceland sent two government ministers and president Ólafur Ragnar Grímsson. The latter was even spotted chatting amicably with the man Putin himself. And, after twelve years of operation, anti-bullying association Regnbogabörn (“Rainbow Children”) shut down, its founder and chairman, actor Stefán Karl Stefánsson (AKA “Robbie Rotten”), blamed lack of funding.

MARCH

When the two coalition parties proposed to prematurely rescind Iceland’s EU application, despite explicitly stating such decisions should be made through a referendum throughout their election campaigns, people were not amused. An estimated 8,000 people gathered in protest outside Alþingi, and fifteen protesters assembled to greet ministers with the now infamous “banana gauntlet,” indicating that Iceland was in fact a banana republic.

In other, more inspiring protest news, Björk, Darren Aronofsky, Patti Smith and their friends raised 35 million ISK for Icelandic environmental NGOs at a benefit event in Harpa. And when Icelander Kristján Kristjánsson went on Facebook asking for help in locating a new kidney, he wasn’t just met with likes, but offers from twenty people! Charitable indeed.

APRIL

April proved to be a super positive month, as Icelanders retained the title of Europe’s Chlamydia Capitol, a crown we’ve proudly worn for the past decade. Educators were more sensible, however, as upper secondary school teachers reached a compromise with the state negotiator, ending a three-week strike, and university teachers managed to settle before their planned strike actions during exams. Airport staff also reached an agreement that saw an end to costly strike actions. Oh, and a sixteen-year-old cat named Örvar was reunited with its owner after going missing a whopping seven years ago.

MAY

According to the annual “State of the World’s Mothers” report, issued by Save The Children, Iceland is the world’s fourth best country in which to be a mother. Which maybe didn’t provide much consolation to local parents as primary school teachers went on strike. Airplane pilots also went on strike, remaining grounded for a while, before the government passed a law making

CONTINUES OVER



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The Year In | Their Own Words



What's Important

Gunnar Nelson

fighter, winner, Zen-master

At the end of 2014, I have a baby boy. His name is Stígur Týr Nelson, and he's growing bigger and stronger every day—he's seven months old now, so he wasn't there at the start of the year. I've also been training a lot in 2014, competing three times in the UFC, with two wins and one loss [incidentally, Gunnar's first professional loss], but overall it went pretty well. I've learned a lot and look forward to taking on 2015.

What's in store? Oh, more of the same really, I'm going to keep training and spending time with my family. We're hopefully moving to a new house soon, where we can make ourselves more comfortable. And then, there will probably be a few fights in the coming months. The worst-case scenario would probably be if I and everyone I hold dear were to suddenly die, with me being the last to go.



Ultra Modern Fairy Tale

Birgitta Jónsdóttir

Pirate Party MP,

Poetician, chair of IMMI

I LOVE crisis. It is the only time where we as individuals, and we as a society, get the power boost to achieve fundamental transformative changes. We nearly managed to get some serious changes through a new constitution written by and for the people of Iceland. However, those in power during the last term failed to understand the urgency of acting swiftly, for the window for real changes is usually very short during times of crisis.

Our transformation is stuck in a Sleeping Beauty coma, and the nation has not realized that its wet (r)EVOLutionary kiss is the only thing that will awaken the fair princess. All of a sudden we are out of the fairy tale, straight into the full-on zombie apocalypse. All the oldies are back in power due to the sleepwalkers' fairy dust of cheap election promises.

The current situation in Iceland is so bad that a new crisis of some sort is unavoidable, hopefully this year, before the octopus zombies take over everything again.



The Bearable Lightness Of Being

Sigurður Mar Jónsson

Government Press Secretary

Iceland is not devoid of problems. However, when the situation elsewhere is examined, the Icelandic problems seem rather trivial. This does not change the fact that we need to deal with them.

The state of affairs in this country is shaped by a lot of what goes on in the wider world, but at the same time we are sheltered from many of the difficulties that are proving the hardest for others to overcome.

You could say that our small size and geographical position are at the same time our biggest benefit, and our worst drawback. Those who run businesses and provide services often wish that the home market were greater, others consider our sparse population an advantage—few countries are less densely populated than Iceland. This increases the cost of maintaining an infrastructure, but shapes Icelanders as a nation. At the same time, it seems to make the country desirable in the eyes of the ever-growing number of visitors we receive from all over the globe.

Iceland rates high by most of the yardsticks that are used to measure nations' prosperity. In some areas, we are on top, such as in terms of civil liberties, the status and rights of minority groups, equality and health. Of course, we shouldn't take for granted that this will perpetually remain true, and the recent doctors' strike reminds us that our competitive position is difficult now that it's easier than ever for specialists and well-trained professionals to sell their talents to the highest bidder.

Iceland has changed fast over the past few decades, and it will continue to change in the foreseeable future. Possibly, the main controversies of the next few years will revolve around how—and whether—those changes will be directed or controlled.



Years Of Strife

Þórður Snær Júlíusson

Editor, Kjarninn

We are in many respects at a better place by the end of 2014 than we were at the year's beginning. Inflation is negligible,

the GDP is likely growing (although the numbers are conflicting) and steps have been taken to rescind the currency restrictions.

However, we have rarely engaged in as many heated debates over fundamental issues as we did in 2014. The unjust "debt correction," attempts to withdraw Iceland's EU application without a referendum, the deferment of environmental laws, the regional relocation of public institutions, submachine guns, the leak affair, mosques, state funding of cultural affairs and how the tax burdens should be divided between citizens. And the year of course ended amidst a doctors' strike, with the healthcare system in limbo.

This year will, unfortunately, be no less marked by strife. Chief among them will likely be the impending general wage negotiations, where we seem to be heading towards the biggest conflict we've seen in decades. The results will have a widespread effect on the nation and its well-being. We will also suffer through fights about a remodelled fishery management system, the nature pass, a repeat of the EU struggle, a changed framework programme, the ever-increasing income and opportunity divide, and the next steps towards lifting the currency restrictions.

It's hard to determine the coming year's optimal outcome. The most attractive scenario would see Icelanders' discourse reaching a level of higher civility, along with Icelandic politicians' work methods; and it would entail society's chief operators abandoning their "us vs. them" worldview. In a small and tightly knit community such as ours, where private interests are apparently (and regrettably) at all times protected at the cost of common welfare, this might be a pipe dream at best.



The Idiots Had Their Way

Grímur Atlason

head of Iceland Airwaves

Icelanders are amongst the privileged few. Our problems are typical first world problems. But we tend to whine, complain and feel sorry for ourselves. This choir of self-pity was the foundation of 2014. A nation that receives 150 requests for asylum per year is lighting the bonfires of Islamophobia. In comparison, Sweden receives 84,000 applications for asylum annually. Our government plays the self-pitying, frightened and ignorant citizens like a flute. Instead of repaying our debts, the old "me! me! me!" has taken over, and 100 billion ISK are burned for nothing. I'm sorry to say it, but 2014 is the

year the idiots had their way.

According to the Chinese Zodiac, 2015 is the year of the Green Sheep. This sounds like a perfect year for Framsóknarflokkurinn ("The Progressive Party"—the name makes no sense at all). Luckily, in the rest of the world sheep are not exclusive to Bjartur and Framsóknarflokkurinn. I choose to focus on the gentle and positive aspects of the sheep, and will assume that 2015 will work out better than 2014.

For the sake of nature, for the sake of education, for social welfare, for prosperity, we will get rid of this government ASAP. Fuck Yeah!



Is This What You Wanted?

Karen Pease

programmer

I find our race to the bottom unbelievable, along with the velocity at which we're moving. I would have never imagined that Iceland could turn into the United States in the span of a year, as we import submachine guns and rush to dismantle our welfare and healthcare systems.

But, this is Iceland today. A nation whose doctors have been on strike for six weeks, a nation where corruption and blatant abuse of power have become so common that encountering honesty, candour and/or competency is an exception.

Are your actions being scrutinized by a member of the press? That's fine; you can charge them with slander and defamation. Failing that, you could just purchase the newspaper and have them fired.

State budget running on empty? That won't stop us in lining the pockets of our wealthiest oligarchs. Hurry, we must abolish the fishery tax!

We've become a nation of privatization and outsourcing, one that Ayn Rand herself would take pride in. So let's gift our natural wonders to heavy industry—most people won't be able to see them anyway, unless they fork out for that nature pass.

Whoever could be pleased with these developments? Is this what you were asking for when you voted for the governing parties? What were you thinking when you picked these extremely dangerous people to lord over you?

I see no hope until the next elections. Happy New Year.

2014 IN BRIEF

their labour struggle illegal. On a more positive note, the government's household debt relief was outlined, although the final product was a far cry from what had originally been promised: it wasn't financed by foreign vulture funds (rather, by taxpayers themselves), and it didn't benefit everyone—just property owners. Shucks.

JUNE

As celebrated anarchist comedian mayor Jón Gnarr stepped down after a single term in office, Reykjavík city council elections saw the Social Democratic Alliance form a new four-party majority under the leadership of Dagur B. Eggertsson. No surprises there. The campaign season was unfortunately marked by the Progressive Party's reactions to the realization that it would likely fail to get a Reykjavík representative elected for the second time in a row. The party went into full-on desperation mode, resorting to playing the trusty Islamophobia card (which has proved so fruitful for their Scandinavian counterparts). During the final stretch of campaign season, the Progressive candidates' platform focused on revoking the city's land allotment to the Muslim Association of Iceland (with its 465 members) to build a mosque. Tasteful? Hardly. But it did earn them two seats on the council.

JULY

An estimated 11,000 people participated in Reykjavík's annual SlutWalk, and 3,000 attended an anti-war "die-in" rally to protest Israeli air raids on Gaza. Iceland's representative to the UN, foreign minister and PM all publicly condemned the attacks. And sadly, Iceland's marimo population, fondly known in Icelandic as "kúluskítur" (or "shitballs"), faced extinction due to increased levels of pollution in their Lake Mývatn habitat. But hey, badass Icelandic athlete Annie Mist Þórisdóttir finished in second place at the 2014 CrossFit Games, despite a back injury!

AUGUST

Do you remember Geir H. Haarde, the former PM who asked god to bless Iceland when the economy collapsed and was eventually charged and found guilty of negligence during his time in office? In August, we appointed him to the position of ambassador to Washington DC! Good job, everyone! Still, it wasn't as great as seeing 90,000 people show up for the annual Reykjavík Pride parade (that's a fourth of the nation, folks). Perhaps in celebration, an eruption started in the Holuhraun area. It was

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So What's This Order Of The Falcon I Keep Hearing About?

Words by Kári Tulinius @Kattullus
Illustration by Lóa Hjálmtýsdóttir

In a better, more entertaining world than ours, the Order of the Falcon would be Iceland's premier superhero group, featuring Captain Fisherman, Doctor Feminist, and Sterkálfur, the World's Strongest Elf. In our reality, the Order of the Falcon is the medal that the Icelandic State bestows on whomever it pleases. It has been in the news lately because in mid-December the President gave the Prime Minister the Grand Cross of the Order of the Falcon.

That last phrase still sounds like it's out of a comic book.

It was done almost in secret. No press releases were sent out, no photos were taken, in fact the media did not learn about it until someone noticed that his name, and that of the Speaker of the Icelandic Parliament, had been added to the list of recipients on the President's website. When the media revealed this, it caused an uproar.

Why? Politicians are always giving each other stuff like that. They're like friendship bracelets for grown-ups.

Things did not improve for the current Prime Minister when it came out that the previous Prime Minister, Jóhanna Sigurðardóttir, had refused the Order of the Falcon three times. This reminded people why they liked her in the first place (her principled refusal to be given a piece of shiny metal) and also why she lost popularity during her time in office (her principled refusal to let the media know she had refused the piece of shiny metal).

Ah, so people are upset that the current Prime Minister didn't refuse the sparkly thing?

Sort of. But as both the President's Office and one of the Prime Minister's assistants pointed out, it is traditional that a Prime Minister be awarded the Grand Cross. Most people serving in the office since the founding of the Order of the



Falcon in 1921 have received it. However, after the 2008 financial crash, the public has become a lot more critical of politicians, so things that were once tolerated now cause outrage.

Isn't the point of politicians in a democracy to be a target for the public's dissatisfaction with society?

That and to provide employment for people who make medals. Though to be fair to politicians, they do take care of a

lot of the boring stuff that makes a society function, for instance by deciding who should be recognized publicly for their good works. That is the popular side of the Order of the Falcon. People like that individuals who have dedicated their life to the arts, charity, or the benefit of society for limited rewards, are given a token of appreciation. What causes anger is when people are given shiny bits of metal for attaining a particular political office, or doing their job as a bureaucrat

or a businessman. Their salary should be compensation enough, without them being given something called a Knight's Cross.

But why does an army-free state like Iceland want to give people something called the Knight's Cross?

That is only lowest level of the Order of the Falcon. The others are, in ascending order of sparkliness: Commander's Cross, Commander's Cross with Star, and Grand Cross. These can be given to anyone. However, the final and highest grade can only be given to heads of state, and that is the Chain with the Grand Cross Breast Star, which does resemble the name of some medieval torture implement. The reason for these ridiculous sounding titles is that the Order of the Falcon was established when Iceland was a kingdom.

Iceland had kings? I bet they had crazy unpronounceable names like King Hjörólúðvík and Þórvígbrandlákur.

The Kingdom of Iceland had only one king, Christian X. Despite the name, he was not a bi-religious follower of Malcolm X, but the tenth king of that name to rule Denmark. In 1918 Iceland gained sovereignty over its internal affairs, but retained the Danish king as head of state. Christian X felt that a new kingdom needed its own set of sparkly friendship bracelets, so he established the Order of the Falcon, as the heraldic symbol of the King of Iceland was a gyrfalcon, which is native to Iceland.

Why does the Order of the Falcon still exist if Iceland is no longer a kingdom?

When Iceland became a republic in 1944, the role of the president was modelled on the king. In fact, the first president had previously served as the king's regent in Iceland. So along with other functions, the president became the Grand Master of the Order of the Falcon. And secret leader of a group of superheroes who protect Iceland against supervillains and alien invasions.

over in four hours, only to commence again in a spectacular fashion, shooting up magma plumes some 60 metres into the air—and it's still going strong.

SEPTEMBER

One of Iceland's park rangers gave an American family a bollocking for daring their son to jump into freezing Flosagjá rift at Þingvellir National Park. The boy crawled up onto a ledge, freezing and shivering as his parents laughed, unaware of the grave danger they had placed him in. Meanwhile, the Icelandic police, generally known for their kitty-filled Instagram account, brutalised (read: stabbed) Liberian asylum seeker Chaplas Menka while in custody. Police authorities have since said the whole incident was an accident.

OCTOBER

An Akureyri man found himself on the wrong end of the law for burying his beloved, deceased pet Chihuahua, Prins, in his backyard. This is apparently illegal, as he learned when local health authorities phoned him up demanding he disinter the body and bury it somewhere else. Medical doctors also exercised their right to limited strike for the very first time, earning much sympathy from the general public. On a more positive note, Afghani asylum seeker Ghasem Mohamadi, who had gone on hunger strike to protest his planned deportation, has been allowed to stay in Iceland. Welcome, Ghasem!

NOVEMBER

As the weather started cooling down, a new wave of protests started—an informal gathering of 4,500 demanded that the government and elected officials do their job with integrity. A tall order, perhaps, but the protesters certainly had their hearts in the right place. And after the police and coast guard miserably failed to retain the 250 new submachine guns that they acquired from Norway on the down-low, authorities were thoroughly ridiculed and have since promised that they will return the arms. Eventually. Probably.

DECEMBER

Icelandic composer Jóhann Jóhannsson was nominated for a Golden Globe for his work on the film 'Theory Of Everything,' while coastal patrol vessel Týr rescued 408 migrants drifting some 165 nautical miles off Malta's coast. Good job! And during the middle of Alþingi's discussions about the government's budget proposal, PM Sigmundur Davíð decided to take a vacation without notifying the relevant people. When the Grapevine reported on his impromptu vacay, the PM's press secretary got in touch and urged us to "reconsider" the story (which we promptly failed to do). Meanwhile, the PM was discretely awarded the highest national order of Iceland for his exemplary service. Shortly thereafter, it was revealed that his predecessor, Jóhanna Sigurðardóttir, had been offered said order three times, but refused every time, stating that she did not believe her work to be any more important or worthy of recognition than that of others. Bravo.

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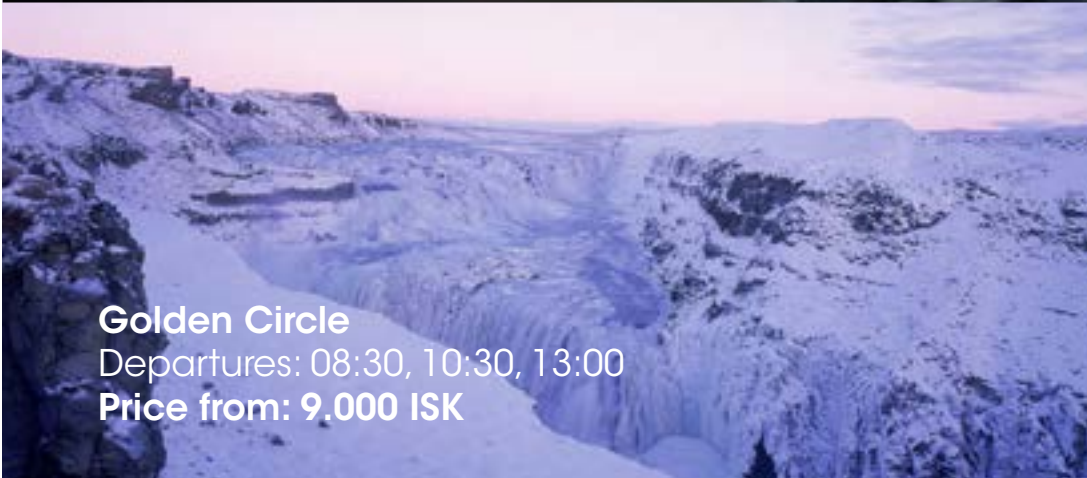


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Selfie Nation

Inspired by Foreign Journalists, Part II

“The untamed, distant and cool Iceland”

Words by *Ásgeir H. Ingólfsson*
Artwork by *Lóa Hjálmtýsdóttir*

“A few reasons why Iceland is the best place in the world”

Those are random headlines I spotted on Icelandic news sites the day I wrote this article. Both stories report on articles that appeared in the foreign media. On any given day over the past five years or so, I probably could have found similar headlines. Judging by the Icelandic media, foreigners are simply going mad for Iceland, at an unprecedented rate.

But what changed? Icelandic nature is mostly the same as it was prior to 2008's economic collapse (except for the parts that have been destroyed by dams and aluminium smelters, of course), Reykjavík is still the same city, our towns remain the same towns, our villages the same villages, the countryside the same countryside, and so on. Of course we have seen a few positive changes that some of the praise could be credited to—but the most significant contributing factor, however, what really changed, was the marketing.

Get inspired!

The “Inspired by Iceland” PR campaign was launched in the wake of the 2010 Eyjafjallajökull eruption. It eventually turned into a government-funded institution called Promote Iceland. Like most government-funded institutions, Promote Iceland publishes a detailed annual report of its activities, the latest of which covers the year 2013. This report states that:

“This year, Promote Iceland invited representatives from about 100 media outlets to visit the country on organized media trips. In addition, Promote Iceland assisted some 800 journalists in organizing their trips to Iceland, and also worked closely with the PR offices of different arts and festival organizers to help out with such trips.”

This is interesting: while political and financial powers continue suffocating Iceland's media (via withholding funds and unprecedented interference in general), we operate an entire government

institution that flies over at least one hundred foreign journalists every year.

Meanwhile, it is highly unlikely that Icelandic journalists' trips abroad number in the hundreds. The number is certainly nowhere near the nine hundred that were either invited or assisted in visiting Iceland in 2013. I have personally gone abroad for journalistic reasons five times over the last six years—four times to attend film festivals, and once to report on the then-recently independent Kosovo and the aftermath of the Bosnian war. I always had to pay my own expenses, save for three free nights spent at a Croatian hotel. This is the reality of many local journalists—and not just the freelancers. If the funds simply weren't there, this situation would be more acceptable. But, we certainly seem to have money to go around for subsidizing journalistic travels. Alas, only in one direction.

Look at us! Look at us!

A nation certainly has some issues if it keeps yelling: “Look at me, look at me!” while never bothering to look at others; if it would rather broadcast foreign TV shows about fictional Icelandic elves than fund its own programmes about other nations.

Indeed, paying others to talk about ourselves and then loosely translating their words for our local news seems like a contradictory media policy. Using those existing funds to enable some of our own journalists to go abroad and make real, lasting connections with the outside world—not just ones based on empty



flattery—could serve as basis for a much more dynamic cooperation with the outside world, in journalism and other fields.

We seem stuck in a hollow praise-relationship with the outer world. We eagerly await the next words of praise, and post them right on our collective Facebook pages the moment they arrive.

As a nation, we started shooting selfies exclusively, way before it was fashionable. And our selfies are meta-selfies, photos of other people's portraits of ourselves.

This development been ongoing since the crash of 2008. During that time, the number of PR specialists in Iceland has kept growing, as the number of actual, employed journalists steadily decreases. This is, in part, the work of a government that employs PR personnel for almost every ministry, a government that prefers to pay people for controlling the news that is being reported rather than help journalists come by the necessary funds and resources to actually report the news.

Of course, a government that's allergic to criticism welcomes this development. But for the society it serves, it is less than thrilling. Surely, a steady stream of foreign journalists to the country, balanced with a steady stream of Icelandic journalists reporting on and seeking the viewpoint of the outside world, would create the sort of dynamic dialogue that we are sorely missing.

Finally: as the title indicates, this article is a sequel. Four and a half years ago, 23 foreign journalists were invited here to report on Icelandic musicians. At the time, I penned an article that seems worthy of a revisit:

Inspired by Foreign Journalists

The Cannes Film Festival, Roskilde and Glastonbury. Those festivals have at least two things in common: all are among the most famous and prestigious cultural festivals in the world—and no Icelandic newspaper sent a correspondent to any of them in 2010.

We all know the reasons—the local media suffers from budget cuts, while fewer and fewer journalists can afford to fund such trips out of pocket. This is just one of the luxuries that we had to forego post-collapse, right? Yet, the problem runs deeper. There was rarely money—or ambition—to be found for such trips during the boom years. There is little acknowledgement of how productive journalistic trips abroad can be as important for the Icelandic media as the translation of world literature is for our literature, because without it, local media and local literature will quickly become stale.

One possible solution is to offer state grants for projects or trips too expensive for the newspapers to fund on their own—but such a fund is nowhere to be found in Iceland (such journalism funds, both state run and private, are quite common in Europe). The money for such a fund nevertheless seems to be there, as 23 journalists were recently sponsored by the government to go abroad for a concert. Those 23 journalists work for esteemed publications and I have no doubt that they are good journalists.

But none of those journalists are Icelandic. They came from esteemed international media outlets such as Danmarks Radio, Politiken, Sunday Times, Dazed & Confused, NME and Die Welt,

and they attended concerts with Hjaltaín and the National Symphony Orchestra (fourteen journalists) and For a Minor Reflection's album release show (nine journalists). Most of those journalists came from big media companies, media companies that ought to be able to pay themselves for visits abroad, unlike their Icelandic counterparts.

This initiative would have made me happy if it signified a newfound generosity towards foreigners, but on the contrary it's really a symptom of a deeply rooted apathy about the outside world. Our interest in the outside world seems nonexistent, except when the outside world is talking about us. As long as it's positive. If not, we put our heads in the sand and speak of envy and mean foreigners who pick on the little island.

This has nothing to do with the love of music or journalists—on the contrary it suggests that artists mostly have value as long as they attract tourists and journalists only have value if they can be used for promotional purposes.

This play, then, reaches surreal heights when detailed articles (yet usually devoid of criticism) appear in the Icelandic media about the trips foreign journalists took in the country to speak about Icelandic bands. By now, I don't only have to read the foreign media to get proper coverage of foreign culture—I also have to read it to get proper coverage of Icelandic artists.

The latter article originally appeared in Icelandic in the now defunct website Kistan on July 27, 2010.



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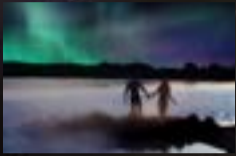
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A Tale Of Ice And Fire (But Mostly Wind... And Not Much Sun)



Words by *Hildur María Friðriksdóttir* @hildurmf

Hildur María Friðriksdóttir is a geophysicist at the Icelandic Met Office.



Icelanders are obsessed with the weather. That shouldn't come as a surprise to anyone who's ever been here: the weather is no joke. If you don't keep a close eye on forecasts and weather-related news, you might miss out on the few good days of summer, end up stuck somewhere in a snowstorm or—on rare occasions—drive right into the latest eruption's ash cloud. In that spirit, we present some peaks and ebbs of 2014, as it pertained to our friendly in-house meteorological expert.

Now, it would be a bit extreme to say that this was a good year for Iceland in terms of weather. While temperatures might have been slightly above average, so was precipitation—and we had our first volcanic eruption in over three years...

In the beginning there was...

The year 2014 started with the usual snowstorms, but despite the weather being bad, there were quite a few opportunities for Icelanders to partake in their favourite winter sport: skiing. The Northern Lights were also a common sight, no doubt to the pleasure of our foreign visitors. February is the coldest month of the year here, but temperatures in Reykjavik during the month were above average—a smashing 1.7°C (35°F).

March wasn't any better. The island suffered heavy snowstorms, particularly in the north, and many roads were shut for days, causing people to finally read that Scandinavian thriller they got three copies of for Christmas.

Easter came with the usual cold spells for that time of year. April 15th is the day by which all cars must have their winter tires replaced with summer tires—however most people ignored that law this

The unlucky guests at the Westfjords' Rauðasandur festival in July had to be rescued from heavy winds, which were so intense that not only were tents and loose items flying everywhere, but outhouses as well.

year due to a hailstorm and the roads being covered in ice.

Tourist-spotting

Iceland has a lot of public holidays (or, as the locals call them, "red days"), one of which is The First Day of Summer ("Sumardagurinn fyrsti," the first Thursday after April 18). Somewhat ironically, that day almost always sees snowfall—but not in 2014, where we had temperatures going up to 14°C (!!!). By the way, that's about the temperature where you start really seeing who's a local and who's a tourist (hint: the locals all don shorts and t-shirts while tourists are still decked in full winter regalia).

The weather from there on was surprisingly pleasant. People kept firing up their BBQs, watching the Eurovision Song Contest and being generally cheerful until the month of July, where it rained for pretty much the whole entire month, at least on the south coast. The typical summer weather map of Iceland usually shows rain in the capital and clear skies and sun in the north and east. The most popular summer vacation for Icelanders is thus to drive around the country; that way you might be lucky enough to catch maybe a bit of sun somewhere sometime. Except when I did it last year and accidentally followed the rain the whole way around the country.

A year for goths, vampires and most festivals

2014 was a great year for goths and vampires, though! The total amount of sunlight we had was way below average at 420 hours, which is 180 hours less than average over the last decade.

There was a record amount of festivals this year, with most of them being very successful—all but one. The unlucky guests at the Westfjords' Rauðasandur festival in July had to be rescued from heavy winds, which were so intense that

not only were tents and loose items flying everywhere, but outhouses as well.

It was a big year for the northern end of Vatnajökull National Park. In July, one of the largest recorded rockslides since the settlement of Iceland happened next to lake Askja, causing a tsunami that reached 20-30 meters in height. Fortunately, the rockslide happened late at night, so there were no people in the area at the time and no one got hurt; had it happened earlier in the day, there were people in the area who might not have been able to escape.

Eruption erection

On August 16, an intense seismic swarm started in the Bárðarbunga volcano, where a lava tunnel began to form laterally out in a northeastward direction from the Bárðarbunga caldera. Then, fourteen days later at about ten km north of Vatnajökull, the lava tunnel reached the surface, causing an eruption that is still ongoing, four months later. If there's anything Icelandic people love reading about more than the weather, it's earthquakes and volcanic activity, so this eruption seized all of our attention during the autumn months.

After the 2010 eruption in Eyjafjallajökull and the 2011 eruption in Grímsvötn, both scientists and the general public have been mostly concerned about dangers related to ash. This particular eruption caught everyone off guard because, unlike the previous eruptions, it wasn't ash that caused a problem, but rather gas pollution. There's not a lot that can be done when it comes to natural gas emissions such as these, so people just have to follow the news and try not get too exposed to the air outside when the wind blows in their direction. As such, most weather-related news in September and October was related to pollution from the volcano.

Thankfully most people were not affected too badly by the gas, but sales of asthma medication increased quite dramatically as a result. After four months of continuous activity, the eruption's lava flow has now reached 1.1 km³ in volume, the largest volume of lava produced since Laki in 1783 (which was a slightly more sizeable 14.7 km³). The area is still closed

off to everyone but scientists and the press, but it is possible to book observational flights when the weather (and your wallet) allows.

Any way the wind blows

Enough fire for now, it's time for storms. Usually when hurricanes from the Caribbean move over the colder waters of the North Atlantic they die down and we don't really see much of them, but at the end of August, Hurricane Cristobal managed to make it all the way to Iceland. There are warnings put out in all news media when storms like this are on the way, so people can secure any loose items they might have lying around outside. This is particularly important near the end of summer, when there is a high chance of stray lawn furniture all over the place. Despite every warning, flying trampolines are a common occurrence in the first big autumn storms.

Winter came late this year. It was a bit windy in October, but we had a mostly warm November, with average temperatures in Reykjavik at 5.5°C (42°F), which is 3.2°C above the ten-year average. Icelandic winters are often characterized by frequent storms, but the stormiest period of the year turned out to be December. Wind speeds of up to 65 m/s (234 km/h, 145 mph) were recorded in Hamarsfjörður before the meter broke, and the wind charts showed colours representing the highest numbers the scale can represent. The meteorologists must have seriously considered adding a new colour to the scale.

Flights were cancelled and people were asked to pick their children up from school, and everything that could blow away did, including rooftops and people. A video of people in Reykjavik struggling to walk across a road went viral, since they were rather blown down a hill into an underground parking lot. Fortunately, the wind eventually died down and most people got to enjoy a picturesque white Christmas (including ice-rink style pavements).

In summary: Mostly windy, a pretty shitty summer, and rain in July. Somebody somewhere owes us our 180 hours of sunlight, but who cares, ELDGOS!

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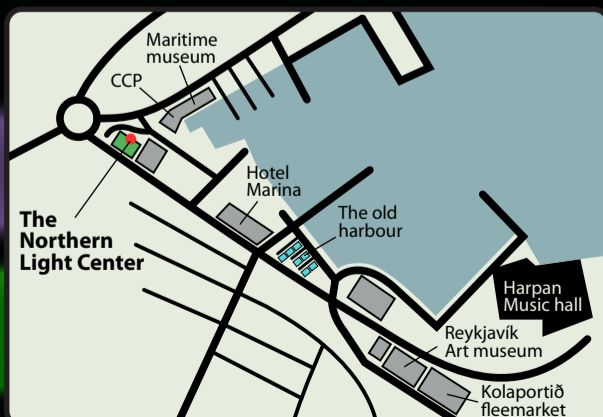
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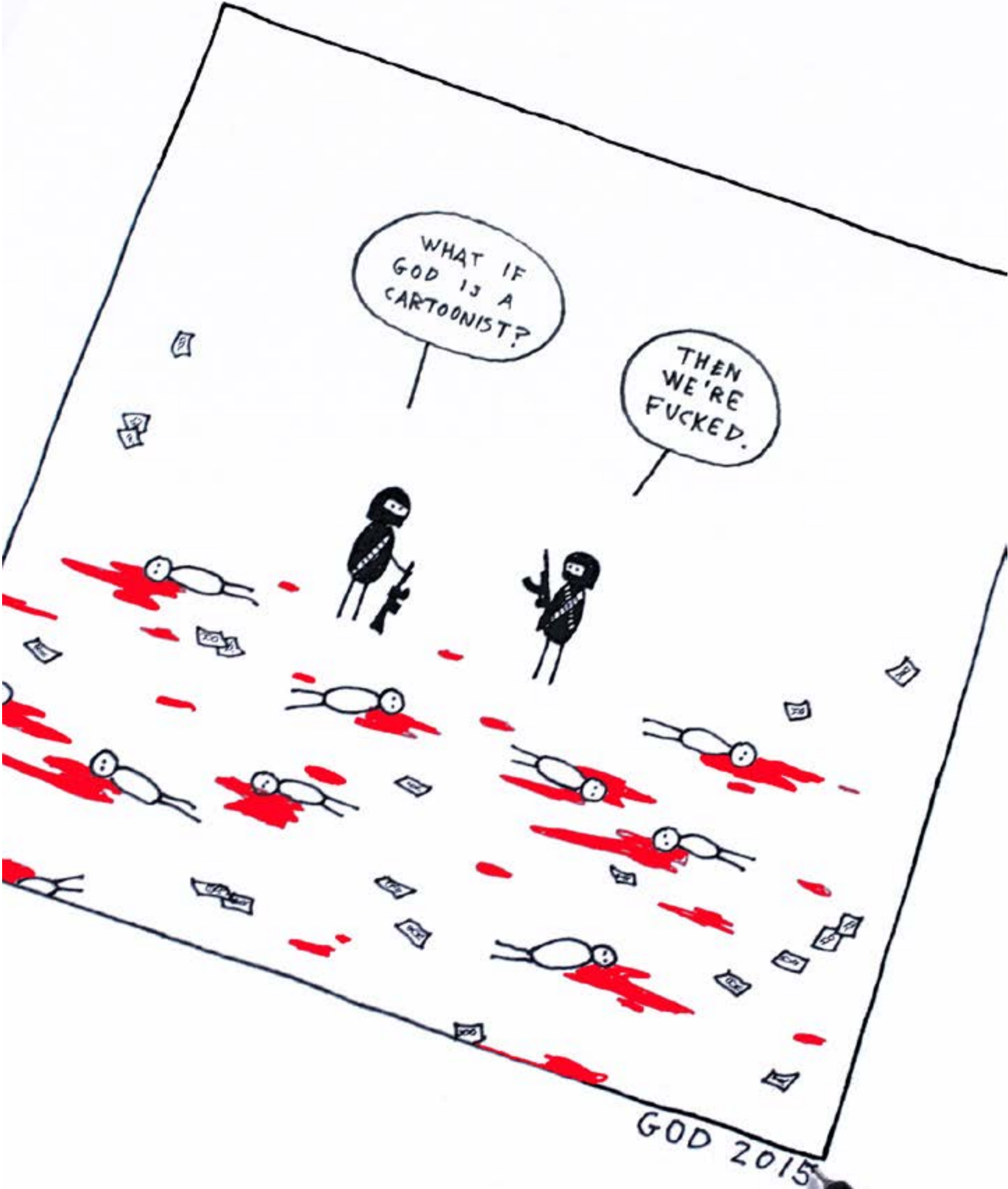
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The Feminine Ways

Icelandic Fine Art in the year 2014

Words & artwork by *Ásmundur Ásmundsson, Fine Artist*

At the beginning of a new year, it is absolutely necessary to take an honest inventory of the preceding one's victories and mishaps in the field of the fine arts. The Reykjavík Grapevine is not the right platform for an honest and moral artistic introspection, as this publication is for tourists. When one stops to ask oneself a question (publicly), I believe in asking nicely.

I have a positive outlook on life, and I think the hard questions should be swept under the rug until times are more favourable. Criticism should always be constructive, but I prefer to avoid it altogether, because of our difficult situation. Everyone is trying to do their best, and this is the time for a celebration of the finer things in life. "The Disunion Demon," as the great writer Guðmundur Andri Thors likes to call the negativity and anger that seem to have taken hold of the nation, must be knocked out for good, because he seizes every opportunity to the push people further apart, women and men. The feminine and the masculine. This is not a good idea!

1. The New Sincerity

The year started out with a bomb: B.O.M.B. I am talking about the nine-screen music video installation 'The Visitors' by Ragnar Kjartansson at Gallery Kling and Bang. The wonderful artwork caught the world's imagination, and it is safe to say that its author not only completely defeated me (figuratively speaking), but also conquered the artworld (by storm!). Why is the work so special? Well, for one the music is gorgeous; comforting and melancholic at the same time. Somewhere between Damien Rice and Bon Iver, but with that unique Icelandic sound that we at the Reykjavík Grapevine love so much.

The visitors in this lyrical piece are Ragnar himself and his bandmates, each located in a separate room in the "dilapidated" but elegant Rokeby Farm in upstate New York. The bandmates communicate with each other telepathically, which enables them to jam together with a very resounding and harmonious outcome. The musicians also seem

to communicate with the spirit of the house itself and its owners. The owners are good friends with Ragnar and patrons of the arts. They have decorated the house in a beautiful Selby-like way.

I admit it—I fell into a trance. It was not unlike taking a nice warm bath, as the artist himself does in the most elegant scene, where he sings the profound verse: "Once again I fall into my feminine ways." Another scene of beauty and simplicity is Kría Brekkan playing the cello in a nightgown. Absolutely stunning!

I was not the only one in a trancelike state; the whole audience was lying on the floor like dead bodies in the battlefield of Big Bethel. I have only seen this kind of behaviour among jaded art viewers once before, and that was at the Tate Modern, when Ólafur Eliasson (another Icelandic!) showed his Big Sun. This was before the credit crunch, when the sun still shone on our part of the world, like there was no tomorrow. But now is the time of the feminine, and Ragnar Kjartansson delivers the moon in all its originality. And he does it with utmost sincerity, but at the same time with top-notch irony. And this perfect combo is what makes Kjartansson's work so fresh. Ragnar is the king of the New Sincerity.

2. Beautiful Male Friendship

The odd couple Hreinn Friðfinnsson and Kristinn E. Hrafnsson collaborated and paid homage to one another at their wonderful solo exhibitions at i8 gallery and Hverfisgalleri, respectively. Hreinn Friðfinnsson, born in 1943, is an elegant man and a frontrunner of Icelandic conceptual art. His works, of-

ten referred to as lyrical and sentimental, are made to evoke strong emotions in the viewer, and are successful at doing just that. Kristinn E. Hrafnsson, born in 1960, is on the other hand a hard worker in the field of Icelandic post-conceptual art, with a strong philosophical thread, a ponderer of time, space, movement, relativity and the Icelandic language.

Hreinn Friðfinnsson's exhibition bore a hilarious title: 'A portrait of a Sculptor as a Sculpture, with a Sculpture by the Sculptor'. Kristinn's show had an equally rib-tickling name: 'The Big Dipper'. The former centres on Friðfinnsson's videos of the young sculptor, Friðfinnsson's protégé of many years, performing everyday feminine tasks and ingenious actions in various public and private places throughout the beautiful city of Reykjavík. In this series of vignettes, the stout sculptor tries to reclaim the child within with the help of instructions given by the old master. It seems to have had a beneficial effect on both of them.

In return, Kristinn Hrafnsson made an equally captivating tribute to his hoarier in a photo series titled 'Nocturne on the Last Quarter', where the elder's bald but very brainy head represents the moon. The moon of course signifies the negative, the passive and the wet. Once again, the artists hopelessly fall into their feminine ways.

3. The Women

"The Pearl Necklace" is a brand new, all-female sculpture park. It is located under the Japanese cherry trees (commemorating the victims of Hiroshima and Nagasaki) at Hljómskálagarður Park. The sculpture park is "in memory of the foremothers of



Icelandic sculpture." The mostly minuscule works of these pioneer women have been renamed after book titles of the nineteenth century novelist Jón Thoroddsen

I was not the only one in a trancelike state; the whole audience was lying on the floor like dead bodies in the battlefield of Big Bethel.

elder, the first novelist in Iceland. Notably, "Lad and Lass" by Þorbjörg Pálsdóttir, "Son" by her sister Ólöf Pálsdóttir, and "Man and Woman" by Tove.

The name of the park has angered feminists with its blatant reference to pornography, but I believe the officials were actually thinking of women's passion for glamour and expensive jewellery, so that criticism seems a little far-fetched. My personal favourite sculpture is

Nína Sæmundsson's "The Little Mermaid," located in the cherry pond. The work is based on H.C. Andersen's fairytale, but the story behind Nína's sculpture is also a fairytale in the making. Whether it will have a happy ending remains to be seen.

The work was originally placed in the pond in the year 1959. On New Year's Day of 1960, the statue was blown into smithereens by avant-garde artists and thugs, and was soon forgotten. Forty years later, Smáralind, Iceland's biggest shopping mall, opened its doors on the outskirts of Reykjavík. The fact that the mall resembles a giant phallus when viewed from above makes the story more intriguing. "The Little Mermaid" by Nína was the centrepiece of the mall's décor, and made many children happy until the amusement park (where the sculpture was located in front of an old-fashioned French carousel) was closed down few years ago.

If it wasn't for "The Pearl Necklace" and the generous donation of the mall's owners, the sculpture would most likely have been forgotten again. City officials held their breath on New Year's Day, anxiously waiting to find whether the sculpture would survive the festivities. It did, and a well-known theatre director was quoted saying that "The Little Mermaid is still alive and gulls have been busy slowly dressing her in a beautiful wedding gown."

Maybe it's just me, or the name of the park, or the Japanese trees surrounding the pond, but last thing the bird droppings remind me of is a wedding gown.

The Elfschool

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The Year In | Music

Óbó

A year in the life

Words by Ólafur Björn Ólafsson, Musician

We asked Mr. Óli Björn Ólafsson to write us a letter and talk little bit about the year 2014 as it pertained to him, since it was kind of monumental in his life. Yup, the local legend-slash-player of instruments for many of your favourite Icelandic bands (there's a Tumblr dedicated to him out there) finally managed to release a solo album, 'Innhverfi'. And it's pretty goddamn wonderful (see, for instance, the Straumur list of 2014's best releases elsewhere in this issue).

You should read Óbó's letter and then go like his Facebook page ([facebook.com/obotheband](https://www.facebook.com/obotheband)), and then check out the delightful 'Innhverfi'!

In contrast to the year 2013, I mostly spent 2014 at home, in the land of ice and snow.

Early in the year, I decided to finally release the solo album I had been working on (on and off) for about eight years. Considering that it takes less than half an hour to listen to, and that it has only seven songs, I must ask myself: What took me so long? (Or rather: What was I thinking?)

Other projects included designing the soundscape for the inside of a stranded whale in a gigantic devised theatre show by the harbour called Fantastar, as part of the Reykjavík Arts Festival.

I felt privileged to play percussion in Valgeir Sigurðsson's "Wide Slumber" project alongside a cast of great musicians, also a part of the Reykjavík Arts Festival.

Then I made music for a hilarious comedy at Borgarleikhúsið. I had a lot of fun with that one.

My favourite concert was seeing Pekka Kuusisto play a mixed bag of Bach and Steve Reich in the great

Midsomer Murders Festival at Harpa. When I grow up, I want to play like him. I was very impressed!

I finally managed to finish Mo Yan's 'Life And Death Are Wearing Me Out', a wild and funny novel and my favourite book of the year (although it was published in 2006).

Frikirkjan has been one of my favourite concert venues, ever since I saw Bill Callahan and Joanna Newsom perform there almost a decade ago. I was thus very excited to stage my album release concert there, as part of Iceland Airwaves. That huge altarpiece with JC on it was the perfect backdrop for my stuff.

Most of all, I was very glad to spend most of the year at home with my family, after having spent so much time abroad in the preceding ones. Some might even call that the comeback of the year.



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Welcome To The Dark

Snow, darkness, SAD

–Is it time to hibernate?

Words

John Rogers & Elín Traustadóttir

Photos

Sébastien van Mallegem & Nanna Dís

Winter is upon us. It's here. Enshroud your very being in short, frosty days with only a few hours of sunlight, followed by long, frozen, windy nights. Repeat. Repeat. Repeat.

Some handle it just fine, getting cosy at home as the weather settles in. But the less fortunate ones, the ones who really feel the lack of Vitamin D, will suffer from Seasonal Affective Disorder, SAD. They will struggle to get out of bed until spring arrives. Not being able to wake up in the morning becomes standard for many people; their lives become a bleak, sunless pit of frozen darkness. It's hard.

If winter is your least favourite season: we hear you. January in Iceland can really suck. It has the shortest days and the coldest temperatures, which can in turn lead to a lack of energy, mood swings and difficulty sleeping, to name a few common side effects of SAD.

Still! There's hope! Whether you're happily withdrawing into your home, feeling a bit drained, or struggling with the trials of full-blown SAD, there are plenty of things to do to brighten your days and your life. In this issue, we take a look at some options and activities—be they attending the first Icelandic music festival of 2015, Dark Music Days, or making the most of Reykjavík's many picturesque corners; or taking some advice from a psychologist or sleep specialist.

What we mean to say is: we have some suggestions on getting through the bleakest midwinter.

And, here's some cold comfort: we're already past the worst. Winter Solstice, December 21, marked the shortest day and the longest night of the year, when the North Pole was tilted away from the sun at 23.5 degrees. It's already getting better by the day.

From now on, your days will continue to get brighter, figuratively and literally. And, hopefully, our tips will help speed up the process.



Dark Side

SAD Times

We spoke to an Icelandic sleep specialist about the effects of winter—and how to fight back

When I meet working psychologist and PhD student Erla Björnsdóttir, it's already dark outside. Reykjavík's streets are becoming treacherous as compacted snow freezes into sheets of slippery ice, and the streetlights have been lit for a couple of hours already, throughout the late afternoon. People clutch their hot drinks in the coffeehouse, and a barman lights candles on the tables. The atmosphere is tangibly hushed as the winter season hangs over the city.

Around 101's many downtown bars and cafes, sleep issues become a common topic of conversation at this time of year. Whilst some locals carry on as normal, others spend many extra hours in bed throughout the dark Icelandic winter, rising at noon as the sky finally begins to brighten. Others still toss and turn all night, becoming strung out, unwell and drowsy.

SAD is real

"Melatonin sets the internal body clock," Erla explains, "and morning light is important for melatonin production. In winter, people don't see the morning light until 11am, when they're probably in the office and too busy to look out the window. Then, when they leave for the day, it's dark again. So they don't have enough melatonin, which can cause sleep difficulties."

Alongside other symptoms—such as lethargy, low moods and even full-blown depression—winter sleep dysfunction comes under the term Seasonal Affective Disorder, also known by the somewhat apt acronym SAD. A quick Googling of SAD reveals an ongoing debate within the medical community, with some doctors and psychologists questioning the existence of the condition.

"Well, it definitely exists," says Erla, "but we need new studies to measure it. My feeling as a working psychologist is that SAD rates are high here. There are many of people suffering from a lack of energy, sleeping troubles, and a feeling of constant drowsiness in the darkest months. Right now is the peak time in my clinic—we have a long waiting list."

SAD can get bad

SAD can cause all kinds of problems, from increased sick days at work, to an impact on people's relationships and social lives. Erla says the rate of drop-outs at Iceland's high schools and universities peaks in the winter as young people struggle to maintain a normal schedule, as does the number of people reporting

symptoms of depression.

"Depression in general, and of course SAD, can get really bad," she explains. "People can feel unable to get out of bed at all—what would help them most is to see people or take a walk, but they really just can't. Some people cannot get out of bed, mentally and physically, when they suffer this. So it can be serious."

Stop the clocks

When people suffer these kinds of problems, their first port of call is often their doctor. "Icelandic people have the world record in hypnotics use," says Erla. "Last year there were eight million sleeping tablets prescribed here, which is crazy. Sometimes it is necessary to use antidepressants, and I certainly have nothing against that. But in some age groups we have 70% using sleeping tablets, when long-term usage is very bad for your health. We need to admit that something isn't right here—and I think the lack of daylight has something to do with it."

With this in mind, Erla is part of a large-scale study to find out more about the sleeping habits of Icelanders in the dark months that will examine, amongst other things, whether a change to the clock might benefit those having trouble.

"We'll send out questionnaires to 10,000 Icelandic people this January," says Erla, "not necessarily about SAD, but about their general sleeping habits. We want to know if Icelandic people are sleeping less than those in nearby countries. The data from this study will be very helpful in deciding whether changing the Icelandic clock would be helpful."

But with so little daylight available, how would a clock shift help? "It would move what little daylight we have to the morning," says Erla. "We actually used to have summer and winter time here in Iceland—I think it was in 1969 when it was decided to stick to the summer time. If we changed the clock by just one hour, we'd get six more weeks of light mornings, which could really help people suffering from these problems."

Today, we fight back

There is also a range of practical measures that sufferers can take. Erla recommends that people take lýsi (cod liver oil) or Vitamin D supplements throughout the winter, as well as simple but effective routines like exercise, socialising, balanced meals and



"Some people can feel unable to get out of bed at all—what would help them most is to see other people or take a walk, but they just can't. Some people mentally and physically cannot get out of bed when they suffer SAD. It can get serious."

avoiding excessive consumption of alcohol and caffeine, particularly late in the day.

"I also highly recommend SAD lamps," she says. "There are recent studies showing very promising results. You have to make sure to use the right kind of lamp, an approved 10,000-lumen lamp, and to use it correctly, when you wake up, for half an hour. That should boost your energy and help you sleep the following night. At the sleep clinic, all of us have a lamp on our table. Between Vitamin D and sun lamps, this can help alleviate mild symptoms."

If those measures don't work, there are psychologists in Iceland who offer specialised treat-

ments, such as cognitive behavioural therapy. But it can be a prohibitively pricey process. "The government doesn't help out with the cost of these treatments," says Erla. "I think this is one reason that we see such an abnormal level of sleep medicine usage—it's more affordable for people to go to see the doctor and get a prescription, but it can be difficult to get into a psychologist's office."

Searching for solutions

Erla is also involved in a forward-thinking project that moves to remedy this via an online service for those unable to pay for private therapy. "We have a web treatment now here in Iceland at www.betrisvefni.is, also available in Norwegian at www.somnify.com. The concept is one I think we'll see more and more in the health system—that is, internet-based interactive treatment. It's an Icelandic entrepreneurial project by myself and two other young doctors, trying to find solutions for these problems."

So, armed with Vitamin D supplements and sunlamps, and with new studies and an English-language self-treatment website on the way, perhaps people can sleep a little easier this winter.

Darker Still



If you're living in Svalbard, three hours of sun is a luxury

Photo

Paal Lumd

www.shutterbirdproduction.com

Although at 64° N Reykjavík is the world's northernmost capital city, the most northerly permanently populated site on Earth is Svalbard. Located at 78° N, this Norwegian archipelago is about halfway between the edge of continental Europe and the North Pole. Winter there is a three-month-long period of constant night, in which a transient 2,600-strong immigrant population live, many of whom are drawn to the earning potential of the 15% tax rate and strong Norwegian currency. We asked Erla Jóhannsdóttir, an Icelander who's living on Svalbard this winter, how the Svalbard blackness compares to Icelandic winter.

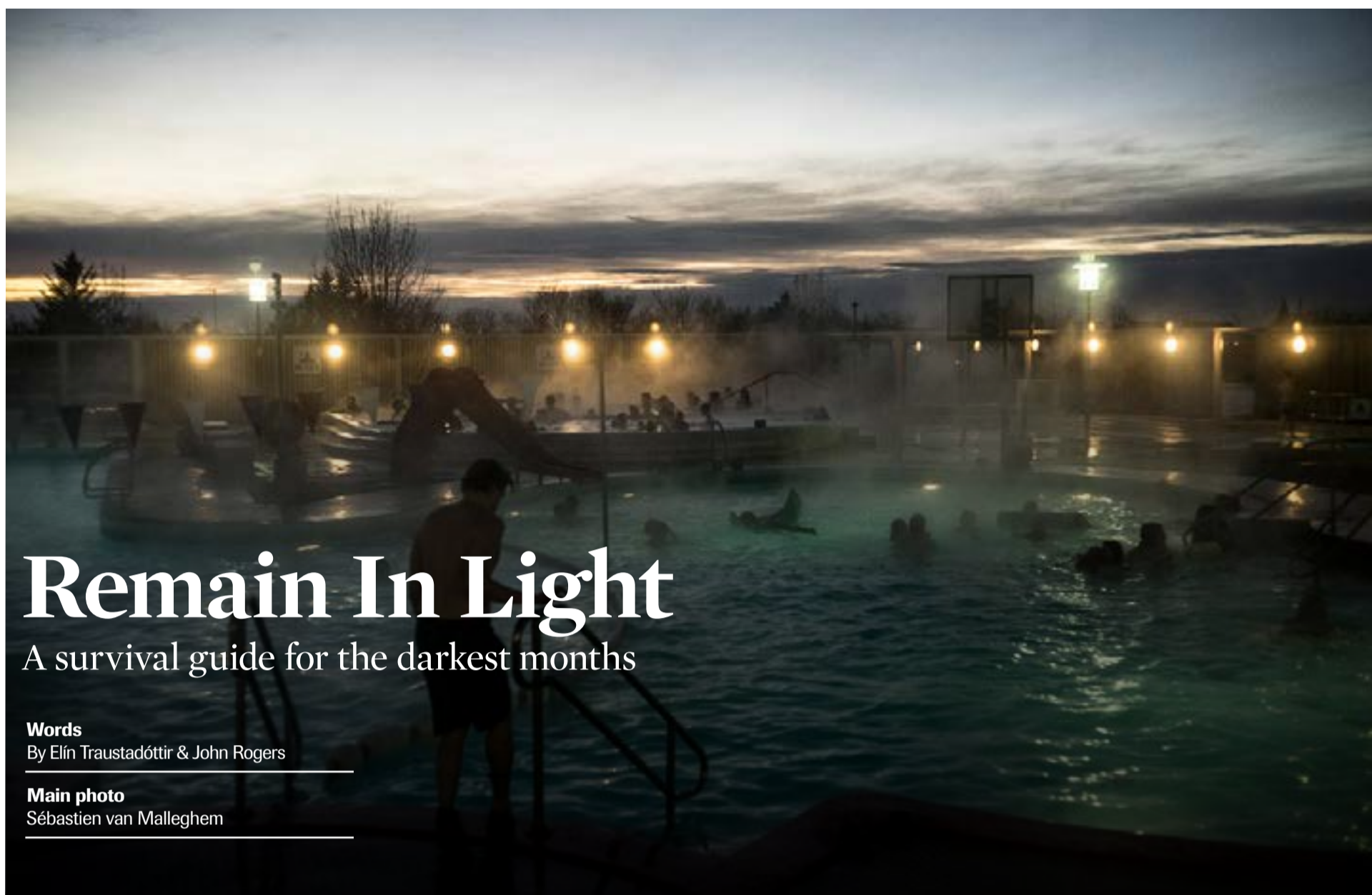
"Locals in Svalbard talk just as much about the light as Icelanders do about the weather, so there's a lot to say," she writes, communicating via Facebook Messenger. "When my boyfriend was preparing me for the 'dark season' last fall I was all like, 'Yeah yeah, I'm an Icelander, I know all about it!' But little did I know as I was boarding the plane in Tromsø, I was having a precious moment with the sun. I haven't seen daylight since, and won't see it again until the middle of February."

It's a huge difference, even from the three-hour days of peak winter in Iceland, and mentally challenging for sure. The darkness messes with the tempo in your life, and you have to make an effort to create a routine. For the first two weeks it seems a bit funny and exotic, but soon enough you feel how it affects your system.

"The most common practices for dealing with it are overdosing on Vitamin D, and going to the solarium. I haven't been to the solarium since I was sixteen! And, well, for many many locals, consuming alcohol is a popular way of surviving the never-ending night. I would say that people don't talk much about depression here... more like just get drunk and deal with it. It's very much a cowboy way of living up here. There are a lot of coal miners."

Luckily I'm very good at sleeping in after years of training in Iceland! My best advice for anyone living in a place with a short window of daylight in the winter is to go outside and absorb all the light you can, while you have the chance, and then enjoy the dark for the rest of the day."

If you're interested in finding out more, check out www.svalbard.net.



Remain In Light

A survival guide for the darkest months

Words

By Elín Traustadóttir & John Rogers

Main photo

Sébastien van Mallegem

In Reykjavík and beyond, there are some activities that are available only in the winter season. January can be made into a lively month, with a few ideas and a bit of willpower—never before has the frozen city pond looked as inviting, or a glögg by the open fireplace seemed so tempting.

The hardest part is often deciding to do something and getting going, so push yourself to get out of the house and you'll rarely regret it. Instead of dozing the morning away, you can flick on a SAD lamp, down some lýsi, pull on some colourful clothes, and head out into the snow.

Catching the few rays that are available is best done towards noon, so it's best to get moving when the pink sunrise is reflected from the snowy streets and mountains. After 3pm it'll get gradually darker, and that's when you can line up some fun stuff from the list we've assembled for you.



Enter the glacier

January is peak season for winter tourism in Iceland. This is the season to head out to Vatnajökull on an ice caving day trip to experience the glacier's vast and ever-changing ice caverns. There are a few companies offering trips, operating buses from Reykjavík for an early start—with any luck, you'll see the sunrise as you reach the southern coastline.

glacierguides.is
extremeiceland.is



Get wet on purpose (for a change)

Hire a car and head out in search of wilderness hot springs on the south coast (there's a handy guide in our last issue, and on our website), or treat yourself to a fancy spa day at the Blue Lagoon. For those on a budget, hit the city's geothermal pools with their naturally hot water, steam rooms and outdoor hot pots. Nobody has ever felt worse after doing these things, that's a promise.

swimminginiceland.com



Don't be an arsonist

There's no reason to go mental and set stuff on fire for the light, FYI. Just go sit by the fireplace at Uppsalir Bar at Hotel Reykjavík Centrum instead.

hotelcentrum.is



Keep watching the skies

The Aurora Borealis is in full swing in January, and offers a famously fantastic spectacle, from a spectral green glow to dancing blues and pinks. You'll have to stay alert to see it—keep an eye on the aurora forecast, or take a tour when the

chances are at their highest. Twitter is useful for real-time updates, but get out quickly if you hear the lights are out—they can be gone for the night after a dazzling ten-minute display.

www.is.gd/auroraiceland/
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Hit the slopes

There are two skiing areas, Bláfjöll and Skálafell, both within a 25-minute drive from Reykjavík. There are buses available to either, and you can hire all the gear you need for just under 5,000 ISK.

skidasvaedi.is



Be mothlike

There's a lighthouse at the picturesque Gróttta area, on the city's western shore, which can be reached on foot via a causeway at low tide. Yoko Ono's peace tower shines bright from Viðey Island in the city's harbour, although boat rides to the island only operate at weekends in winter. Because it's freezing out there tbh.

videy.com/
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Get high

The Perlan building has a gelato parlour, a restaurant, and unencumbered views looking in all directions, and is open until 21:00 each night. Loft Hostel's roof terrace offers a great view of snowy central Reykjavík and white rooftops. Kolabrautin, the restaurant at the top of Harpa, has a two-for-one cocktail happy hour 16:00-18:00. Hallgrímskirkja church tower is open until 17:00 every day and offers beautiful views, especially

at sunrise and sunset.

hallgrimskirkja.is/perlan.is
lofthostel.is/kolabrautin.is



Dress to kill

While many Icelanders choose to wear black at this time of year, make an effort to wear colours instead. Bright colours are proven to positively affect mood, so playful socks, scarves and hats will help exorcise the demons of darkness. Check out downtown stores like Gyllti kötturinn, Kiosk and Spútnik to brighten up your wardrobe.

gylltikotturinn.is
kioskreykjavik.com/
facebook.com/Spuutnik



Eat stuff

This one is for your own health and sanity. Don't forget the Vitamin D supplements and to stock up on avocados, berries, bananas for vitamins—and anything colourful, just for the fun of it. There's a healthy, tasty selection of food at the well-lit white-cube health restaurant Gló if you feel like eating out, and an oat milk latte at Reykjavík Roasters will do wonders for your spirits.

glo.is/reykjavikroasters.is



Walk on water

When the city's covered in snow, you'll find downtown Reykjavík's pond, Tjörninn, deeply frozen. This is your signal to go and cross it, always with a company!

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hotelcentrum.is

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videy.com/
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www.visitreykjavik.is/tjornin-pond



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Straumur



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www.straum.is

Words

Óli Dóri & Davíð Roach

Photo

M-Band

We at Straumur wish all you readers a happy new year, and hope 2015 will be a blast for all of us. But, before we dive head-on into the New Year, it's time to reflect on what just happened. Behold, our absolute favourite Icelandic albums and songs from last year:

Best albums

10 **ASONAT**

CONNECTION

9 **GUSGUS**

MEXICO

8 **BEN FROST**

AURORA

7 **FM BELFAST**

BRIGHTER DAYS

6 **BÖRN**

BÖRN

5

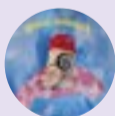
OYAMA
COOLBOY



Oyama's 'Coolboy' is packed full of dreamy shoegaze, wrapped in a combination of sounds that form a tight union.

4

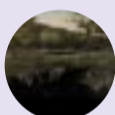
GRÍSALAPPLÍSA
RÖKRÉTT FRAMHALD



Grísalapplísa's sophomore effort, 'Rökrétt framhald' (which roughly translates as "A Logical Next Step"), is not as logical a step forward as the title suggests. In contrast to the band's debut, this record is all over the place—while 'ALI' was much more of a concept album, 'Rökrétt framhald' features a tight selection of songs that work better on their own.

3

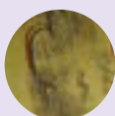
ÓBÓ
INNHERFI



With 'Innhverfi', Icelandic music mainstay (and frequent Sigur Rós keyboardist) Ólafur Björn Ólafsson, Óbó, has made a wonderfully alluring album. Free from the clichés that are often associated with the kind of music Óbó plays, 'Innhverfi' was one of 2014 most pleasant surprises.

2

PINK STREET BOYS
TRASH FROM THE BOYS



'Trash From The Boys' is one of the most exhilarating rock albums unleashed upon Iceland in recent memory. Released on cassette via Lady Boy Records last fall, the album viciously attacks all senses at once, tantamount to a blow to the face.

1

M-BAND
HAUST



Hörður Már Bjarnason's first LP as M-Band, 'Haust', is a dark soulful techno record that sometimes recalls Gus-Gus at their best, with a little bit of Jon Hopkins thrown into the mix for good measure. The highlight of the album is the splendid "Ever Ending Never", with haunting vocals build around a repetitive, bouncing synth line.

Best songs

10 **BOOGIE TROUBLE**

STEINUNN

9 **PÁLL IVAN**

EXPANDING

8 **MYNDRA**

DISTANT LOVER

7 **PINK STREET BOYS**

EVEL KNIEVEL

6 **FM BELFAST**

THE END

5

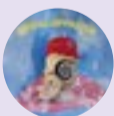
M-BAND
EVER ENDING NEVER



Like GusGus, Jon Hopkins and Caribou on a massive bender in Berlin. A long night, but you wish it would never end.

4

GRÍSALAPPLÍSA
FLÝJA



Grísalapplísa diversified their sound on their second album, as heard on "Flýja" ("Escape"), a dark ballad that's equal parts Lou Reed, Serge Gainsbourg and Bob Dylan. The string arrangement's exceptional, too.

3

GUSGUS
CROSSFADE

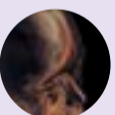


Full of nostalgic references to the origins of dance music, which double as sexual innuendos. Högni's bright baritone in the chorus serves as the perfect tonic for Daníel Ágúst's dark verses that are drenched in reverb.

2

GANGLY

FUCK WITH SOMEONE ELSE



Iceland's answer to FKA Twigs. Brooding and futuristic triphop featuring a trio of mysteriously unknown voices that are scrambled and bent like radio signals from a far-away galaxy.

1

PRINS PÓLÓ
PARÍS NORDURSINS



There was no question about it. The dirty synth bass throbs, kick drum on every beat and funny lyrics analyzing the main players in an archetypal Icelandic fishing village, push "París Norðursins" over the top. Concise, witty and an arrow through the heart of a nation.

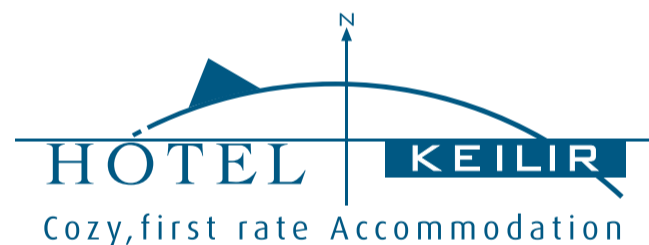
For more detailed lists (in Icelandic, but with YouTube embeds and stuff), head over to www.straum.is



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Behold! The Reykjavík Grapevine's Third Annual Music Awards!

Text by Haukur S. Magnússon

Photo by Baldur Kristján



As a thank you for making SONG OF THE YEAR, we teamed up with Hótel Búðir to get Prins Póló a free night of rest and relaxation at the wonderful retreat.

The following is true: We at The Reykjavík Grapevine really like music. You could say we love it. We love music. Every goddamn person involved in this publication lives and breathes music every hour of every day. Every hour. It's true.

As a matter of fact, many of us were initially drawn to Reykjavík (and subsequently became involved with The Reykjavík Grapevine) following a long-standing fascination with the city's vibrant music scene and the myriad of wonderful people that make it up.

In light of this, it makes sense that we would celebrate the music scene that inspires us daily with The Reykjavík Grapevine Music Awards. It's not like the Grammys or anything—there's no red carpet ceremony (there is a kickass party for the victors and their friends, though)—but everyone gets something nice, like a meal at a fancy restaurant or a year's supply of guitar strings.

The idea boils down to this: we want to honour some of those wonderful people who make living on the edge of this desolate rock on the edge of the Arctic Circle bearable, enjoyable even. We want to heap them with praise and bestow fun prizes upon them.

It's our way of saying a little thank you in recognition of all the entertainment, inspiration and food for thought and conversation that musicians bring to the inhabitants of our chilly northern isle.

We want to show our love, because we can.

As always, you should feel free to fret and disagree with our panel. You could even write us a letter telling us why (for the last time: if it's not an asshole letter, we promise to print it and everything!).



Band Of The Year 2014 Prins Póló



As a thank Prins Póló of being BAND OF THE YEAR we teamed up with our three-time best goddamn restaurant SNAPS for a invite to a luxurious dinner party at the restaurant.

Song Of The Year 2014 Prins Póló — París Norðursins

There was never any doubt as to the song of 2014. The results were fixed from the get go. Our prestigious panel barely bothered discussing the category, let alone arguing their choice. The debate went like this (we have it on tape): “So, song of the year... ‘París Norðursins’, right?”

“Right.”

“That’s alright then. What’s up next?”

After we thoroughly pestered them to give us something to write about in this category, a panel member finally remarked:

“‘París Norðursins’ is a just about as perfect as a pop

song can get. The melody, the beat, the lyrics, the atmosphere and the attitude all wonderfully complement one another, coming together to form a perfect harmony of pure pop bliss that the world’s most celebrated songwriters would be thrilled to accomplish. With ‘París Norðursins’, Svavar Pétur and his cohorts have earned a permanent placement in Iceland’s pop history. It is most certainly the song of 2014.”

Those who have closely followed the development of Reykjavík’s music scene over the past decade or so have undoubtedly derived much joy from watching Prins Póló grow from strength to strength in recent years.

Prins Póló is the solo venture of one Svavar Pétur Eysteinnsson (joined on stage by his wife Berglind and their friends Kristján Freyr and Benni Hemm Hemm), who made his first appearance on Reykjavík’s stages in the early noughties playing with twee quirksters Rúnk (“Masturbation”) and quickly made a name for himself as a unique, fiercely independent and perennially DIY-minded artist. Throughout the decade, he further cemented his reputation through his work with indie rock outfit Skakkamange (where he is also joined by his wife), before making a name for himself as a hyper-creative cultural instigator-slash-entrepreneur, founding and running an independent book/music/art/design store and called Havarí, which doubled as a cultural hub and meeting spot for Reykjavík’s artists and musicians in the decade’s latter half.

A graphic designer by trade, Svavar further made a mark on Icelandic underground culture by creating book jackets, album covers and posters for his contemporaries, honing his uniquely original, ever-evolving aesthetic while actively supporting local artists.

Despite many successes and impressive projects, Svavar seemed destined to forever remain in the underground, an artist’s art-

ist, influencing popular culture from the sidelines as his uncompromising attitude ensured he would never appeal to the masses.

As the years have passed, Svavar’s aesthetic remains just as eccentric, his stance just as compromising. But something weird has been happening lately. Svavar Pétur’s various projects (the latest one is a line of vegan sausages) have been gaining fans in the unlikelyst of places, and chief among those is Prins Póló.

The Prince’s rise to glory has been a slow and steady build-up that no one really saw coming. It finally reached a tipping point during the summer of 2014, when the band exploded all over Iceland’s airwaves via top pop hit “París Norðursins,” which was embraced equally by every facet of Icelandic society, from ‘modern rock’ radio to commercial MOR stations to vapid tabloids and TV stations.

All of the sudden, Prins Póló is everywhere, beloved, revered and celebrated. The band of 2014, without doubt or question. And the best part is: aside from a natural, gradual evolution, his approach and aesthetic have remained the same throughout, as dedicated to the DIY spirit, as supportive of the underdog, as inclusive and welcoming as ever before.

Everyone loves an underdog proposition, and it’s with a lot of pride that we crown Prins Polo The Band Of 2014.

The Prince Speaks

We called up Svavar and asked what advice he would give to today’s loser teenagers who harboured hopes to become Band Of The Year 2030.

This is what he told us:

“It took me a while to accept the fact that I had absolutely no shot at athletic glory, and I would never be crowned Mr. Iceland in a beauty pageant. But, when I did, there were no obstructions. It was just me and the guitar.

But, armed with a guitar you can go anywhere. One doesn’t need to be the world’s greatest guitarist. Being the world’s worst guitarist is also an advantage. And you don’t need to know how to read music and you don’t need to be good at math. You don’t really need to be good at anything. You can be both ugly and stupid.

But you can never be lazy, because that will result in absolutely nothing.

What’s important is this: you need to believe in yourself, and do what you want. Don’t get stuck doing what others want to do. Music isn’t something you want to do. Music is something you need to do. And this is true of all creation. It has to happen, and while it’s happening, other things just need to wait.

Album Of 2014 M-Band—Haust



As a thank M-Band for making ALBUM OF THE YEAR, we teamed up Flybus for year ticket from and to the airport.

As our team of experts quickly discerned, 2014 was, in fact, a pretty damn good year for Icelandic music. We had esteemed veterans like Ben Frost, GusGus and FM Belfast dropping major releases, while newcomers such as Börn, Pink Street Boys and Óbó hit hard with some unbelievably accomplished debuts.

After much debate and discussion, our team reached the conclusion that 2014 best goddamn album was the work of a bright young whipper-snapper who just a short while ago crashed onto

the scene and started making waves. We are of course talking about M-Band, the musical outlet of one Hörður Már Bjarnason, whose stunning debut album ‘Haust’ (“Fall”) absolutely captivated anyone who came across it.

Quoth the panel: “At the start of 2014, Hörður had already proved beyond doubt that he is one of the most talented musicians of his generation—not only through his solo work as M-Band, but also as member of bands like Nolo, Retrobot, and next-big-thing Tonik.”

“Expectations were high, but Hörður really came into his own with M-Band in 2014. After a couple of years of development, ‘Haust’ turned out to be a beautiful and fully-formed work that incorporates both structure and spontaneity—from pounding 4x4 rhythms to simmering, poetic ballads and squalls of electronic noise, ‘Haust’ is a wonderful debut led by powerful creative instincts. An instant classic.”

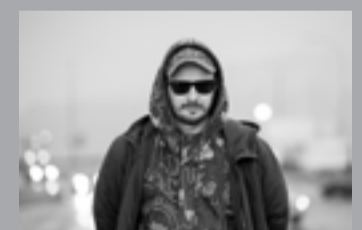
The Panel



Anna Ásthildur is one of the newer arrivals to the local music scene. She brings a fresh perspective on what’s happening, gleaned via her varied work with Icelandic Music Export, the You Are In Control conference and the Icelandic Music Awards. She’s also part of a downtown DJ duo called Myth & Lazybones, and is an active enthusiast of electronic music. That Anna, she’s so great!



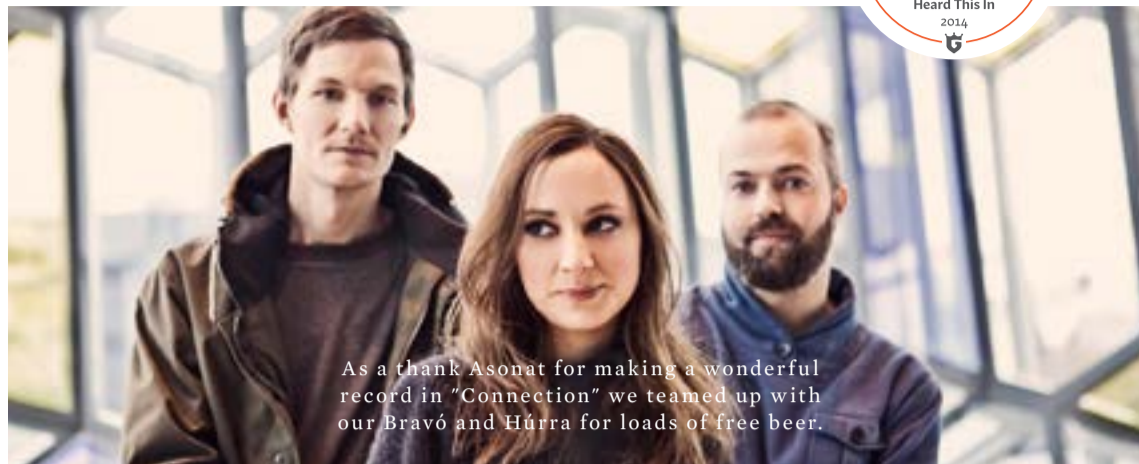
Óli Dóri is a well-known advocate of new and exciting music—Icelandic and international—via his long-running radio show Straumur (tune in to X-ið 977 Monday nights at eleven pm) and through his website, Straum.is. He can regularly be found playing records at downtown’s top bars and clubs, and writes a monthly new music column for the Grapevine. Óli has top-notch taste, and follows the local scene with eagle eyes. We love that guy!



The third man is none other than local music legend **Egill Tómasson**. He’s the longest-serving member of the Iceland Airwaves team (involved in the festival’s production since the beginning, pretty much), and has as such amassed a truly in-depth knowledge of Iceland’s music scene. Every year, Egill closely observes the hundreds of homegrown applicants the festival receives, attending gigs, listening through demos and dealing directly with most of the bands. Few people know more about Icelandic music than Egill, so it is an honour and a privilege to have him on our

You Should Have Heard This In 2014!

Asonat—Connection



As a thank Asonat for making a wonderful record in "Connection" we teamed up with our Bravó and Húrra for loads of free beer.

The "Most Overlooked" category is where we try to shine a light on releases that might have fallen under the radar for whatever reason, and people just need to hear. Right now.

And this is pretty great, because, as we learned in our discussions, one of 2014's

best releases was also one that failed to register with most casual music listeners.

"It's not really surprising that Asonat's 'Connection' didn't top any charts upon release—they are after all a fairly unknown group whose members have mostly operated on

the fringes up until now. But it is a great album that will appeal to almost anyone who gets the chance to give it a chance. Electro veteran Ruxpin's wonderful songwriting filtered through the band's unique and highly evolved soundscapes and topped with

the Björk-like stylings of singer Oléna make 'Connection' worthy of anyone's attention. For starters, check out album high-points "Quiet Storm" and "Before It Was" Don't miss out."

Band To Watch 2015!

Fufanu



As a thank Fufanu for being awesome, we teamed up with Sushi Samba to invite Fufanu to a luxurious dinner party for six at the restaurant.

The experts all agree: Fufanu is THE band to watch in 2015.

"Fufanu totally knocked the socks off almost every international industry and

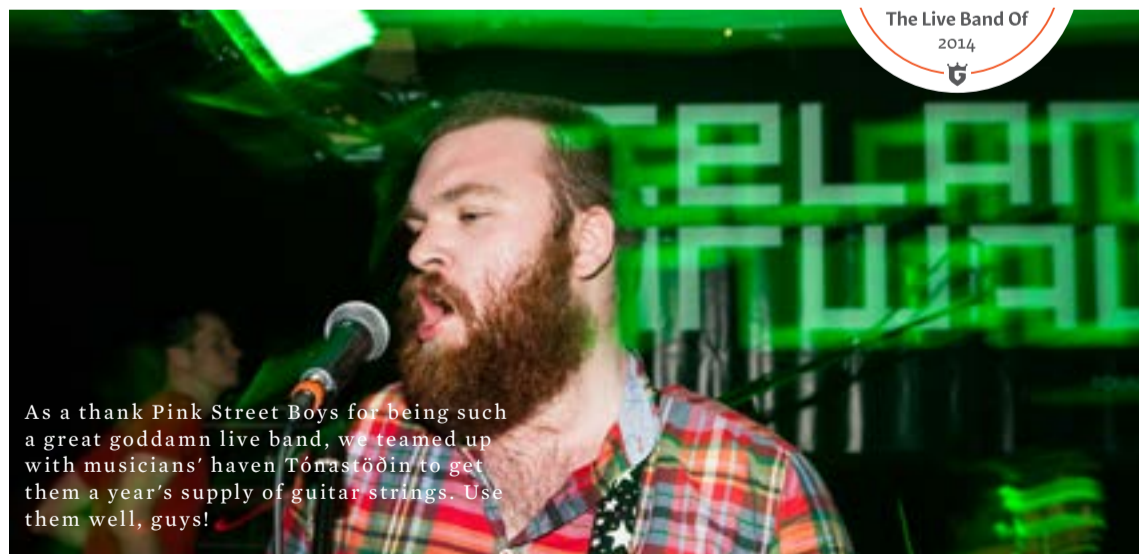
media representative that attended Iceland Airwaves 2014, and it's no wonder: when Fufanu are good, they are REALLY good. As the band sails

full-force into 2015, they are aided by an impressive record deal and some crucial celebrity endorsements—it is truly All Eyez On Fufanu, 2Pac-style."

"Make sure you don't miss out."

Live Band Of 2014!

Pink Street Boys



As a thank Pink Street Boys for being such a great goddamn live band, we teamed up with musicians' haven Tónastöðin to get them a year's supply of guitar strings. Use them well, guys!

Picking the best live band of 2014, was a no-brainer, as anyone who witnessed Pink Street Boys in concert in 2014 will attest.

And, as we learned, our panel certainly witnessed Pink Street Boys in concert

last year.

"Pink Street Boys are the band that Reykjavik so desperately needed. Their take on sleazy garage rock may sound almost offensively basic at first listen, but whenever they take the stage, the gang—and they

are a gang—morphs into a force so in-your-face and brutal that the audience can be driven into a state of sheer hedonistic insanity. They might not be able to command a stadium at this point in their career, but then they aren't the

kind of band you want to experience in a stadium. You need to be able to smell their body odour. You need to see them now."

Breakfast

Brunch

Lunch

Happy Hour

Dinner

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k-bar

Band To Remember Þeyr



As a thank Þeyr for being awesome, we teamed up with Kolabrautin to invite Þeyr to a luxurious dinner party.

We made up the “Band To Remember” category especially for all you tourist-types (who might imagine that Icelandic music got off to a start with Ásgeir or Of Monsters And Men), so that you might learn about some of the wonderful, wonderful artists that preceded today’s hip modern artists. Think of it as a sort of public service, and a sign of respect and gratitude.

This year, our panel unanimously agreed: “Whoever hasn’t heard Þeyr already, needs to hear Þeyr already. They are the quintessential Icelandic band; creative, mysterious, iconoclastic and fiercely individualistic.”

You need to listen to Þeyr. While you wait for their catalogue to download, read Dr. Gunni’s take on the band’s story, below.

In 1981, a flock of serious men came out of the woodwork clad in long black overcoats. They probably clutched a Joy Division or a Þeyr record under their arms. Þeyr didn’t start out as the deep young thinker’s go-to band, though. No sir, in 1979 the band approached Svavar Gest, a record mogul from another dimension, bearing two corny pop songs that were representative of the music they were making at that time. Svavar liked the songs well enough to agree to finance a Þeyr album to be released on the SG label that he’d run since the early 60s.

The band Þeyr were a group of friends who had been dabbling in music since the mid-70s. They started to record their pop songs during the winter of 1980, and had about half of a LP ready when they decided to take the summer off. During the summer of 1980, the band got hip to all kinds of new sounds through friends and relatives—both progressive new wave and modern art music, such as Schönberg’s. When the recording sessions commenced in the fall, Þeyr’s sound was totally transformed. Also there had been a lineup change: those who didn’t surrender to the new sound were ceremoniously dismissed.

Þeyr were on a roll. The band added two guitarists to their ranks, Guðlaugur “Godkrist” Óttarsson and Þorsteinn Magnússon, who had played in Eik, a progressive band that the Þeyr boys had loved during their formative years. His transformation to the new style was celebrated with a ceremony during a Þeyr concert in February of 1981. He spoke of being “freed,” as his long hippie hair was shorn on stage.

Iceland’s first new wave band

Þeyr were called the first “new wave” band in Iceland and had a very “new wave”-ish stage presence. The members behaved like spastic robots and sometimes the gigs would start with the members carrying in a coffin containing the band’s singer, Magnús Guðmundsson. During the first song, long and tall Magnús would rise from his coffin, and proceed to loom over the crowd like a cross between Frankenstein and Dracula in his long black leather coat, gravely singing and frozenly staring into the distance.

Þeyr and their close circle of friends got involved with all kinds of mysterious ideologies. Occultism and mysticism coloured the music and the band’s outlook. The regular Þeyr fan tried his best to understand what Aleister Crowley, Nicolai Tesla, Wilhelm Reich, the Illuminati and all the other stuff Þeyr harped on was all about.

The band’s first 7 inch was called ‘Útfrymi’ (“Ectoplasm”)—and included “Life Transmission,” an ode to Joy Division’s Ian Curtis, who had taken his life the year before. The record came with a propaganda sheet where the band declared that they wanted to have spiritual intercourse with the Icelandic nation. The record was released on the band’s own label, Eskvímó, like most of their other records.

Inducing tropical climates

Þeyr were pranksters. When ‘Íður til fóta’ (“Innards at feet”)—a 10inch featuring four accessible new wave songs—was released in September of 1981, the band issued a press release claiming the album was equipped with a weather control device. At that time there was only one radio station in Iceland. “It is remarkable that during the days that the radio plays the record, Iceland experiences an almost tropical climate,” they stated.

The band’s second LP, ‘Mjötviður Mær’, saw release in December of 1981. The term “Mjötviður” comes from Old Norse mythologies, which is interesting since the band’s main ideologist, Hilmar Örn Hilmarsson, would much later become the high priest of Ásatrúarfélagið, the religious organisation for those who practice belief in the Old Norse gods.

It is a diverse album, its songs ranging from the soft instrumental song “Mjötviður” to the driving “Rúðolf”—soon to be every drummer’s favourite, due to Sigtryggur Baldursson’s signature beat. Also to be found on the album are experimental tracks such as “Iss” and “2999,” which features the sounds of a bulldozer that happened to pass the studio. The album got rave reviews in the Icelandic media, the consensus being that Þeyr were now in the top league of Icelandic rock bands.

Read the full story at www.grapevine.is

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13:00	13:00	13:00	13:00	10:00	10:00	10:00	13:00	13:00	13:00	13:00
			17:00*	14:00	14:00	14:00				
				20:30**	20:30		17:00*			

* From 15 May to 15 September
** From 15 June to 31 July




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Words
John Rogers

Wow, tourism really did dominate the landscape of debate here in 2014, didn't it? We here at Grapevine have spent more time experiencing, arguing, analysing and pondering the effects of tourism on Iceland than maybe anything else. And there was some serious food for thought amongst it all. Are the tourists trampling our puffins and eating all our shark? Are we all going to wake up with a bulldozer outside of the house about to raze the buildings to the ground to build new hotels? Is Gulfoss going to LITERALLY EXPLODE FROM ALL THIS FOOTFALL?

Amidst the much-needed and overdue conservation talk, hundreds of thousands of holidaymaking individuals came and left Iceland. And most of them seemed to have a pretty great time. It was fun for us to sift through the stories they submitted to our TOURIST OF THE YEAR comp.

Here are some honourable mentions:

- » **The Hodson family**, who had a valuable camera go missing from under their many noses, only to have it returned in a mysterious fashion that could only have been those pesky elves carrying out their mischief.
- » **Maria Freestone** and her friends, who expressed their admiration of the landscape by dancing on it wherever possible, and filming themselves doing so (ronk-a-donk).
- » **Kristen Read** and her friends, who hired a car in Keflavik, and quickly discovered a flat tyre, and then a flat spare tyre, but didn't let it stop them: they drove around the country anyway.
- » **Brendan Canty** (unfortunately not the Fugazi drummer as far as we can tell) made a great film from lots of shaky handheld footage that we felt really captured the essence of an Icelandic road trip.

AND THE WINNER IS...

Of the multitude of reasons folks cite when attempting to explain that peaceful trance Iceland exerts on its visitors, we noticed that for many it's the small things that make their trip special. Brendan Abbott remarked that when he bought a hand-knit sweater in a far-flung rural craft store, the shopkeeper knew Lóa, the woman who'd knitted it, and told him some small facts about her for a truly personal touch. Observations like these display a mindful and keen-eyed approach to travel, and we enjoyed them the most, perhaps.

Bearing that in mind, we were particularly taken with Kara Deniz's account of her search for a moment of peace amidst the busyness of everyday life.

Kara didn't find her most memorable moments drenched in the roaring of Seljalandsfoss or soaking up the party chaos of Kaffibarinn. She found them sitting on the rocks of Reykjavik's harbour, taking an early morning walk through empty streets, listening to the silence of her guesthouse bedroom. Kara came to Iceland not demanding an experience—not to tick things off a pre-determined wish list—but with a blank canvas: open minded, attentive, and curious about what she would find here.

Kara also pulled off some pretty great writing in her submission. Read her story: it's right here.

So. After much deliberation, we decided to name Kara our TOURIST OF THE YEAR. Congratulations, Kara. You get a free trip to Iceland, for you and a buddy!

Absorption

"I've always felt interested in Iceland," says Kara, after we told her over the phone of her winning entry. "I don't remember what sparked it. So when the opportunity came to travel to Europe, I suggested an Iceland stop. I spent time downtown, sat in Kaffitár, and watched the people walking by, watching how they spoke and interacted. I really wanted to get a sense of the people, that's how I travel. We went running along the harbour and I sat in the rocks and looked out and just absorbed it all. We went around the bar scene. Our outward flight was early, when it was still dark—it was over quickly, but it made a big impression."

"I do like to pick off the hot spots when travelling, but they never entail the most

memorable things that happen—those tend to be more observational. One such time was getting up on a Saturday or Sunday morning, when the shops and cafes were still closed and nobody was really awake yet. I stumbled across the sculpture garden by Hallgrímskirkja [at the Einar Jónsson Museum]. There was just one other person there, who sat on a bench. I took pictures of each sculpture and the plaques. To me those small moments are the most memorable. I am somewhat introverted by nature, and I feel like I need space and time to just be and think. Iceland gets that—there's a sense of real calm. It's a unique culture."

THE GRAND PRIZE

A trip to Iceland for two, including air travel provided by Icelandair, plus three nights at the stylish Reykjavik Hotel Marina (and drinks at GV HQ)—was provided in collaboration with Inspired by Iceland. "Honourable mentions" each get a bunch of Icelandic goodies.

"My one regret is that I haven't had the opportunity to travel outside of Reykjavik. The city is wonderful, but I feel like the tourism advertising Iceland as a stopover is ironic, as it's more of a destination in itself. It's fitting with my style to rent a car and just get out there and discover things for myself—to interact with the space and nature a little. I think

I'd like to see it in person and get a sense of what the rest of the country looks like."

So, Kara: now's your chance to get out there! Enjoy the trip, and thanks for your mindful approach to tourism and your thoughtful account of your time here. Now you'll get the chance to get out of the city and find some more peaceful moments out there in the wilderness.

Now, read her winning essay.

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Kara's Story

I haven't picnicked on an iceberg or searched for my own lost self. I was perhaps a rather boring tourist, from an outsider's perspective. I didn't flirt with death by nature, and I didn't lose myself.

I did find something, though, that I hadn't been looking for. I found in Iceland something rare in our modern world.

I found: silence.

I found it in 2009, the first time I visited Iceland. As I sat on the harbour, breathing in the clean air and looking at Mount Esja, I felt it. It was the stillness I'd never felt before. I became aware then for the first time that silence wasn't the absence of sound. It wasn't the absence of anything. It was the presence of peace. The world was calm and I was, too, for the first time in a long time.

After that, I never heard the silence again. Since 2009, I'd travelled to Istanbul, Amsterdam, London and Lisbon. I'd gone into the woods in the United States and sat by still ponds, but there was always that something—a cricket, a bird. There was the sound in my mind of the phone calls unanswered as I took time to walk in nature, or the voice of my relatives or friends. I needed that silence. It completed something in me in a way that I hadn't felt before.

Years went by, and it seems the world became more stressful for everyone. As technology expanded, it made the world smaller, and brought us together while pulling us apart. The phones and emails flooded. Everyone's lives became busier. The world became even more rushed.

Just when I felt at the end of my rope, by fortune a stopover on a work trip in 2014 brought me back to Reykjavík. I didn't have time to go to the glaciers or Gullfoss. I wanted to visit the Goat Lady, but that took time I didn't have. I was in a hurry. I never did get to experience the geysers, or to ride a horse. At the Blue Lagoon I was hardly a special tourist, more of a cliché. I lost count of all the other

American accents I heard through the steam, clutching plastic cups with beers in their hands.

On my second day, I sat on the rocks near Harpa, looking out at the mountains. I focused on the still water and waiting for that silence, that silence I craved for so many years, and which I felt in that same spot five years ago. Just then, a Caterpillar construction truck ploughed by me, putting rolls of grass into the openings in the cement. The workmen yelled at each other while the engine roared. The silence was lost before it was found.

What if I would never experience it again? What if Iceland had lost that singular quality? Since I'd been there before, there was considerably more construction going on, and more noise. I mean, come on, the place now even had a penis museum!

That night, as I sat in my guesthouse room on Gunnarsbraut, which faced the garden in the back, I finally felt it. The moment was full, of peace, serenity. I was calm. I would hope that other tourists to Iceland experience the same thing, but even if it's my own personal connection, I appreciate it nonetheless, or maybe even more. The silence was there and it lasted until I absorbed all of it, enjoyed it for all that it was. I smiled and continued reading The Reykjavík Grapevine. Örvar the cat was found! The Icelandic sense of whimsy was strong as ever. The painting of puffins and white horses stared at me from the wall.

I may not have done anything wild and wonderful like hike a mountain, get lost on the North Atlantic or discover elves, but I'd like to think I've discovered something truly special about Iceland. And it's more than I need to keep me coming back.

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Three Lessons From 2014

Katrín Jakobsdóttir
chair of the Left-Green Party

I think of 2014 as the year in which we learned three important things about our society and the world we live in. First, through new research into inequality—such as Thomas Piketty's 'Capital in the Twenty-First Century' and various studies on trickle-down economics and the legacy of neoliberal policies—we have come to realize what we always suspected: Inequality will only get worse unless we really decide to do something about it. And we have to, as its effects are proving detrimental to the general public. Unfortunately, we see a reverse development in Iceland, with various government policies that will further increase the gap between the rich and the rest.

"These two phenomena, rapid environmental change and growing inequality, are probably the biggest sources of conflict in the modern world."

A second fact that we are confronted with is that of climate change. In 2014, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change delivered its fifth assessment report on the issue, giving even more serious warnings than ever before. As the panel makes clear, it is time for immediate and substantial action to reduce carbon emissions. We have seen a reverse development in Iceland, the current government having undermined most of the efforts to reduce emissions instated by its predecessors.

These two phenomena, rapid environmental change and growing inequality, are probably the biggest sources of conflict in the modern world. It is a sad state of affairs that too many believe that conflict and disagreement can only be resolved through the use of force, a solution that rarely works, as history has repeatedly demonstrated.

And, finally: We have seen how precious and important real democracy and real protection of human rights is for the people of the world. At the same time, we have witnessed how easy it is to erode and undermine these them, leaving those on the periphery to lead a life devoid of necessary freedoms, opportunities and security.



Growth
Alexander Dan
author

There is something growing on my back. I can't see it, but I know it's there.

At first I thought it was a zit, oozing viscous fluid, troubling my back as I went to sleep. As it grew it felt more like a boil, throbbing and seething with pain. My sleep became more distraught, festered with murky visions of lumbering mountains rising and falling with each breath, their lava-filled innards rotten and boiling out.

I tried piercing it with a red-hot needle, but I could not see where it was and every time I felt like I found its exact spot I stabbed myself, just missing the aching centre of the boil. I asked my wife to pierce it for me, but when she looked she saw nothing there.

I could not lie on my back because of the bump that had formed there. My dreams were vivid, senseless journeys

through an alien but familiar landscape, accompanied by man-sized flies, their smiles made from crooked fishbones.

There is a hump on my back. I cannot walk upright anymore. It itches all the time. I tried scratching it, but quickly pulled my hand back in pain. It was bleeding from tiny puncture marks, almost as if I'd been bitten. I asked my friend to take a look, but he said there was nothing there. I just had bad posture is all, I just needed exercise, to have a positive attitude, to try this new diet he was on.

Every day I see more people walking hunched over, pained expressions on their faces, still sweating from whatever nightmare they have just woken up from. But there's nothing there. Nothing that I can see. But I know it's there.

There is something growing on my back. But there's no need to worry. It'll work itself out. No need to worry. It'll be fine.

It'll work itself out. It'll work itself out. It'll work itself out.



We Need A Revolution
Lilja Rafney Magnúsdóttir
MP, Left-Green Party

Nature was generous to Icelanders in 2014: the ocean provided, the land was fruitful and we were visited by an unprecedented amount of tourists. If we weren't stuck with our godforsaken government, we would be doing well as a nation, overcoming the recession, strengthening our foundations and infrastructure and increasing general equality. We should have learned, from bitter experience, to steer clear of the policies that caused the collapse, we should have turned from the path of greed, inequality and the privatization of our shared resources.

We are instead being lead back to the slaughter at Mammon's altar, having climbed right back on the very same carousel that we crashed in the collapse, with no end in sight.

At the beginning of the New Year, we as a nation must shake off our slumber and refuse to be seduced back into the swamp. We need to get rid of the cursed government as soon as possible—before it manages to lay even further waste to our welfare and educational systems, our society's foundations—and instate one that places an emphasis on equality, justice and sustainability.

What I am calling for is a revolution, a revolution that begins in the heart and mind of every individual. Together, we can defeat the destructive course that's embodied in the latest state budget, where heavy burdens are placed on the least fortunate of us, and the wealthy and powerful are pampered and subsidized.

We as a nation are at a crossroads. We have every opportunity to make a good life for every Icelander from Kópasker to Reykjavík; we can well afford to maintain great healthcare and educational systems, to and foster equality and to protect our nature. It's in our hands.



**A Bottom Line For
Culture, Nature And
Life Itself**
Ragnhildur Sverrisdóttir
communications officer,
Novator

2014 was the year of the Excel spreadsheet. Not in business, where it belongs, but in politics. It's all about the bottom line.

"2014 was the year of the Excel spreadsheet. Not in business, where it belongs, but in politics. It's all about the bottom line."

I'm all for spending wisely, especially when politicians are portioning out taxpayers' hard-earned money. It's the "wisely" part I worry about. Politicians seem to actually think that you can somehow divide everything into debit and credit.

Most people know better. We certainly need to make sure that the taxpayers' money used to run the state broadcaster is used wisely, but in that case "wisely" is not the same as "turning a profit." Culture is not profitable. But creative people tend to panic and start to fill in their own cultural spreadsheets with all kinds of direct and indirect debit, hoping that the politicians will believe that culture pays in the one sense they understand, because they seem to be utterly incapable of comprehending that something can be rewarding in any other sense.

I worry that we won't stop at taxing books, but will try to figure out a bottom line for literature, that we won't stop at nibbling at radio programmes, but will put a price on culture as a whole, that we will actually start to believe that we can calculate the value of nature. I'm worried that we forget that most of us tolerate Excel as a necessary evil while what makes us tick are other things.

And we have to be able to throw a lifeline to those who will never be able to show a healthy bottom line.



Hope And Change
Kristján Hrannar
musician

The year that just passed was insane for both me and my family. My battle with alcoholism and (at the time unbeknownst to me) co-dependency continued. I went into rehab in February, only to relapse in April. I was subsequently admitted to a closed psychiatric ward after a suicide attempt. My parents kicked me out, putting my pregnant wife in a very unexpected and terrifying situation.

It wasn't until June, when I started simultaneously battling my alcoholism and co-dependency, that I made some recovery. My wife didn't leave me, although the relationship was hanging on a thread. I am so lucky to be a family man today. The life I have now is better than I ever dared hope for. So yes, 2014 was quite eventful!

For the future: As a society, I think we're heading towards more transparency in the political field. It's easy to be pessimistic and go on about how populist movements are getting more shameless and power-hungry. But I think it's due to the fact that the internet and the new media aren't letting them get away with as much bullshit as they used to. Bad decisions, ignorant politicians and blatant corruption are now more visible than ever—but I sincerely hope that's not because there's more of it going around. The media's responsibility has never been so vital in shaping the social discussion, and this will remain true throughout 2015.



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Words Elín Rós

Photos Anna Domnick



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Distance from Reykjavík
Langjökull: 97.3km



“Golden Circle! Langjökull glacier!” Our enthusiastic driver Hjörleifur Kristjánsson, “Hjöllli” to us, calls out the day’s destinations as he presents the gigantic truck that will chauffeur us around. His demeanor indicated that the “ooohs,” “aaahs,” and “wows” emitted by the group in response came as no surprise, as he pointed to the extended steps that appeared from underneath the coach like a magic carpet. Photographer Anna Domnick and I took our seats, wiggling with excitement for the upcoming trip.

Hjöllli, an energetic and informative man, is a member of the Icelandic rescue team, the ICE-SAR, and a true connoisseur of extreme sports—perfect for the job. He started bombarding us with information as soon as we sped up Lækjargata, heading out of the city. Anna and I sat at the back with our gear and equipment spread out all over the five-seat row, and listened attentively to every word. As our excitement intensified, we became slightly agitated.

A high-level fun fair!

“Those here are marshmallow fields and this, what do you think this is? A cloud factory!” Hjöllli announces as we pass

an impressive chimney, furiously spurting out steam from the earth. After a scenic stop at Þingvellir, we had arrived at Gullfoss and Geysir—the lords of the Golden Circle—where new arrivals to our group flocked to the coach: an Icelandic couple and an English-speaking father with his two sons. Our journey continued, our final destination fast approaching.

“Impassable,” read two signs on each side of the road shortly after Gullfoss, and a blanket of snow loomed ahead. “Buckle up, you don’t know who I am,” Hjöllli shouted as he hit the accelerator pedal, causing the decked coach to skate on the snowy surface. The glacier received us with open arms, and there was no going back. Civilisation was far behind.

Crossing the glacier, we spotted a few hunters carrying rifles on their backs, quietly searching for tasty ptarmigan for their Christmas dinners. Our snowmobiling instructor would later tell us that those hunters were seeking their prey in all the wrong places: “They’re wasting their time trying to search for ptarmigan here,” he noted, adding that glaciers aren’t very hospitable to living beings. He then informed us that the layers of ice

beneath us spanned hundreds of metres.

The sun was slowly rising and its mango colour was striking against the blue sky, projecting an intense sunlight onto the snow that stung in my eyes. I knew they would recover, but I could only pray for my stomach to do the same. An intense sensation of motion sickness overtook us as we skated and bounced along the curvy road. We gasped and uttered sounds of terror as we raced down the steep slope and flew through the air before hitting the next one. My travel companion became so ill that she moved to the front where she sat right next to the driver. The skating and bouncing was surely done to entertain and impress the guests, and everyone else seemed to enjoy it very much.

I, however, had to do my best not to throw up in my seat.

On our own

When I finally took my first step on the glacier, it felt like what I imagine being on the moon must feel like. Certainly, my appearance underscored the notion, as I was wrapped up in ice gear: thick overalls and a 66° North down coat underneath, my head engulfed in a black globular

helmet that rendered me temporarily deaf. I looked like a sofa. A cold smack of air hit my squashed face and the sound of the cracking snow under my feet ran up my body like lightning.

Our instructors showed us to the snowmobiles and quickly briefed us on the proper safety precautions. “The ice is really thin in some places, so you want stay on the beaten path,” they stressed. A reminder from before—a deep crack in the ice right next to the road—made this easy to believe. Each passenger got a personal snowmobile, but those lacking in confidence could opt to ride with a buddy. Perhaps unsurprisingly, photographer Anna and I were the only ones that went for the latter option.

Of course, we soon found ourselves at the back of the chain, struggling to steer the machine and trying hard not to fall off. Everyone, including an eleven-year-old boy, overtook us as we stalled the snowmobile a number of times (this was usually caused by us driving off track, or our attempts to make sharp turns). Quietly awaiting help as the others showed off in the hills and the talented instructor did his tricks eventually saw us losing all confidence. Not only did

we suck at this whole snowmobiling thing, we were also stalled by having to stop and shoot photographs at regular intervals.

A few rounds on the glacier was “all” we had time for, but the effort that it took us was embarrassing. Indeed, an hour’s ride makes for quite the workout, as you employ basically every single one of your muscles. The key to a successful ride, I learned, is balancing out the snowmobile when you make a turn. Keeping up the speed is important too, but I can’t remember why.

At the end of the day, our entire group was blissfully high on adrenaline and glacial beauty, with several members enquiring about longer tours. Anna and I glanced knowingly at one another, secretly relieved that this ordeal was over. I took a last look at the breath-taking scenery: the mountain of ice, hidden lagoons and ice cracks that reflected my helplessness.

Finally, safe and sound on the coach to Reykjavík, I told myself I must do it again one day. Then, we all fell asleep like children being driven home from the playground.

Langjökull

Langjökull is the second largest ice cap in Iceland after Vatnajökull, measuring at 953 m², 50km long and 15-20km wide. Its last eruption was back in 925 AD.

Langjökull was the setting of where the pieces of the nuclear-blasted Iron Giant fell in the 1999 animated science fiction film of the same name.

Scientists have raised concern over the melting of the glacier due to global warming, with some fearing it may be completely gone in as little as 150 years.



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We Need 1,000,000 Humans, Stat

Dr. Gunni
writer, musician

At the end of 2014, we find ourselves inhabiting a Western welfare state, a pretty good one thank you very much. However, we need about a million more people to make things more interesting and fun.

The coming year will bring endless nagging about our horrible government and the garbage Progressive Party. This will ultimately prove inconsequential, because the bourgeoisie will inevitably fall for whatever new hocus pocus tricks our rulers will come up with for the next elections.

The year's optimal outcome—since it's not very realistic to imagine we'll get an extra million people to Iceland by the end of 2015—is that some great new political party will make itself known. Some-

thing one can support and identify with, a party with a vision for the future and a goal of making Iceland (even) better. The worst possible outcome is terminal stasis—and/or an eruption in Breiðholt.



Shattered Conceptions

Atli Bollason
DJ, writer, scholar, flâneur

In 2014, we saw that politicians are not afraid to attack institutions and ideals that some of us had—naïvely, I admit—come to take for granted. We thought we all agreed to keep public radio alive; we thought we all wanted lower taxes on culture and healthy foods and a higher asking price for natural resources; we thought we were forever free to roam our

own country; we thought we were kind and tolerant and peaceful and welcoming; we thought we had agreed to fight inequality and safeguard the communal; we even thought our politicians—also those we disagreed with—were mostly intelligent and ultimately reasonable and well-meaning people.

All of these conceptions were shattered. We have come to understand that a political system that allows for such rapid disintegration of our social structures and values must be seriously flawed.

In 2015, the divide between the reactionary and the progressive margins of Icelandic society will come into sharper focus, and the near-perfect image of the quirky, chipper, innovative and liberal nation under the Arctic Circle that we like to recognize in the mirror will crack.

Here's hoping we won't have another seven years of the bad luck we had in 2014.



Hope In Dangerous Times

María Lilja Þrastardóttir
journalist/provocateur

The year 2014 has left me asking what it really means to be Icelandic, and whether that might be something I should feel embarrassed about. Because looking back, I kinda do.

For Iceland, last year was marked by a plethora of major scandals, especially in the fields of politics and law enforcement. We witnessed our politicians and oligarchs make sickening attempts to shut down any and every attempt at investigative journalism. We were subjected to the nature pass, attempts to militarise our police force, Biggi the cop, Hanna Birna, livestock farmers' systematic mistreatment of animals, a corrupt dairy monopoly, the Progressive Party... the list goes on. And on. And on.

We also witnessed the collapse of the Icelandic healthcare system as our government diverted funds to a small group of homeowners, to enforce a so-called "correction."

We are now learning that the our the State Church will also get its very own "correction" from the state, while thinly veiled nationalists (fascists?) try their best to stir up fear against Muslims, mosques, and anyone of foreign descent (along with "foreign food" (!?!)).

These are some dangerous times, for Iceland and for the rest of the world. I sincerely hope that the year 2015 will be the year of public uprising, where we unite to fight corruption, racism and inequality.

May the force be with us!

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Sónar Reykjavík is back!

We talked to them!

Words by
John Rogers

Photo
Todd Terje

After reading about all the SAD and darkness in this issue, are you now dreading the dark and icy stretch of February? Well don't shit yourself quite yet, friend, because the Sónar festival has fixed that for you.

After reading about all the SAD and darkness in this issue, are you now dreading the dark and icy stretch of February? Well don't shit yourself quite yet, friend, because the Sónar festival has fixed that for you.

For the uninitiated, Sónar is an event franchise that started in the balmy climes of Barcelona back in 1994. Over the years, it's developed a mighty reputation for unearthing new electronic music, becoming a veteran festival brand—today, Sónar has run festivals and events in over 50 international locations, from LA to Buenos Aires to Frankfurt to Tokyo. In 2015, it'll once more swap the shades and flip flops for some warm extra layers and head to Iceland, bringing with it a choice menu of cutting-edge electronica music and all kinds of assorted cross-genre wonderment.

The three-day party, which runs February 12th-14th, is once more housed in the various rooms of the Harpa concert hall. It has proved something of a hit with hard-partying techno-tourists over the last couple of years, eventually selling out in 2014, and tickets are apparently going fast after the announcement of big names like Skrillex, TV On The Radio, Todd Terje and Jamie xx, along with a host of local talents including Ghostigital, Mugison, Samaris and Sin Fang.

Grapevine is on board

Because of all this awesomeness, Your Friends At The Grapevine signed up to be an official Sónar media partner for 2015. What does this entail? Well, we'll be covering it a bunch. We probably would have anyway. To celebrate this, we caught up with the festival manager Björn Steinbekk for a few words about what's going on as the festival draws near.

How is the festival coming along? What are you guys doing now in the preparations?

As we are very fortunate to have a close group of people working now on Sónar Reykjavík for the third consecutive year,

and as we enjoy the support of the local music scene and our partners in developing the festival, it's kind of business as usual. We're making sure the artists are tended to, arranging logistics such as flights, hotels, and technical riders. We're talking to the media people that are coming over for the festival. In essence this is the time where the promoter learns whether his preparations have been good or bad, and I think we are in a good shape for our 2015 edition.

Are there any new surprises in the works for the lineup?

The reception to the lineup has been better than we could have hoped for. We can honestly say that we can't find a 3,300-capacity festival in Europe offering same kind of artists, in size and popularity. We are thrilled and happy on behalf of our audience.

Are there challenges in bringing the event to a comparatively small country like Iceland?

The Sónar brand has made all the difference—that, and us creating a history as Sónar Reykjavík, creates an attraction that makes most of the challenges seem insignificant. The support of Icelandair, City of Reykjavík and other of our partners has also been vital in getting the festival at the place where it is now.

Are you guys happy to be partnering with Grapevine?

It seemed like a natural thing—Grapevine does a great job in covering music and cultural activities in Iceland. We just hope we can bring something interesting to the paper and its online platform.

Keep an eye on www.sonarreykjavik.com this week for more exciting news.

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Words by

Snorri Páll Jónsson Úlfhildarson

Artwork

Magnús Dagur Sævarsson

ZEN

Ring the bells! Ring the repetitive alarms—the irresistibly itching reminders of circular memories! Pull the triggers! Ignite the fuzes of colourful calorie bombs—the highly explosive redeemers of repressive histories! Entrepreneurs of all progressive Lebensraums, reunite! Artfully insert your edgy index fingers into the generous soil! May infinite amounts of holy bread and healing circuses pompously flood the farmsteads of your enemies' sacrilegious lands! Pray for a final solution—for a fulfilling end to their growths, to their gains, to their plagues, to their poisonous breaths!

SHRINE

An over-voiced clergyman pauses, sneakily blowing his allergic nose. Below him, the fireworked cult remains catastrophically silent as a Goliath worth of a ping pong ball—electrified by heretofore unheard-of mass of convictions—methodically jumps between glittery heads breeding undisputed earth connections par excellence. Eyes get shut, mouths mopped, tongues cut, ears chopped, chins knocked, lips clinically sewed up. All the other cheeks are turned—deadly strokes returned.

WEIGHT

A cross fucks the crescent. A crescent sucks the cross. In the basement of an abandoned monastery, at the top of a steep mental hill crowned with thorns of woven thunders, a foamy muzzled veteran monk spans a praying crowd of freshly captured mujahideen. Tied up and chained to the wall, a livestock of Dalai Lama copycats and Rastafarian fridge magnet designers steadfastly operate the spiritual cogwheel—harmoniously chanting a tranquilizing mantra of a “fountain flowing deep and wide, deep and wide, deep and wide...” All is hidden—incest is the nigger of the sensual world.

HEAVEN

Legions of powdered pigeon feathers fall gently from the love-polluted firmament.

Quietly settling on privatized puzzles of reflectional debris scattered around the cemented desert. Finely chopped up by state-subsidized butchers. Lined up in flaming barricades of disciplined fossils during the never ending second ahead of the ever approaching vehemence. Finally transferred—via clandestine labyrinths of Nobel Prize plumbing—deep into the ravening nostrils of runaway marionettes.

FIX

Suddenly, seemingly unallied bus drivers mightily strike, staging an unforeseen coup as they abandon their means of production en masse, leaving on the acridly buzzing radios—the inevitably to-be-shot heralds of moderate etiquette: forcefully balanced neutrality. As unrestrained herds of four-legged humanimals flock to the mesmerizing flashmob, the in-between voice shouts out the utterly greatest of last year's backbreaking news. A choir of soprano smartphones enlightens the sky.

HIVE

A THIEF TOOK. A COP SERVED. A KILLER SHOCKED. A JUSTICE CUT. A POLITICIAN DID. A COMMENTATOR SAID. A VOTER CROSSED. AN ANARCHIST BROKE. AN ARTIST STRIKED. A POET DOTTED. A CONVEYOR TRAVELLED. AN ENTERPRISE SOARED. A HUNTER SHOT. A VESSEL SUNK. A HERO SAVED. A VAGABOND LOST. A LETTER EXPLODED. A LOVER BETRAYED. AN ANIMAL ATE. A CREATOR MADE. A BELIEVER DOUBLED. A TERRORIST DROPPED. A DIRECTOR HEADED. A SAVAGE BEHEADED. A NOBODY WAS. A NATION WAS NOT. A NOTION WAS MAYBE. A MEDIUM WORKED.

MORE

The shit hits the fan. And the fan shit the hits. And the hits become popular clicks. Two sides to antagonize without risking. Five ways to swim without touching water. Seven days to spend in a bottomless hot spring of glory without losing oxygen. Nine peculiar lives to lead without noticing. Ten or eleven explicit commandments to keep in a bulletproof safe by a chartered

accountant. Twelve months to count—to count in and count out. Equally many apostles to bat without blinking.

KNEE

At the centre of a royally ornamented square, surrounded by fishhook-like flagpoles and haunted crystal meth palaces, a hole in the ice-covered ground draws 360 degrees attention. Around it, a uniformed brass band of malformed misfits plays Strawberry Fields. A jet black and empty faced, genderless mortal—its iron-coated neck garnished with endangered snakes—monotonously repeats a forbidden refrain from the forsaken innards of innocent bystanders: “Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world.” BOOM! A geyser of distilled saliva kills infidels in thousands.

FLU

Raindrops travel upwards—the traffic heads backwards. Delicatessen enter the rectum—exit the mouth undigested. Disliked letters leave the screen via candle wax fingers, silently downwards the blossoming spinal cord, into the over-nourished earth of original words. From deserted rooftops, leftover filmmakers turn their lenses to a carnivalesque battalion of semi-headless creatures, carried by bastards of angles and apes, ceremoniously marching towards an omniabsent tomorrow of unwritten territories, atonally trumpeting a radically realistic demand: “NO MORE REALITY!”

GONE

The first becomes last. And the last becomes next. And the next becomes fast. And the fast becomes text. And the text becomes question that's vexed. Silver coins and plastic stripes join long-defeated forces. Sugar-coated toxic fruits ride overdone pieces of decadent horses. Mobs of filthy zeros float an inch above nullpunkt—blatantly looting the lungs of last monkeys standing. Gangs of pinioned birds sing missing pseudo-psalms from future crashes—a tickling strain of absinth fills the air.

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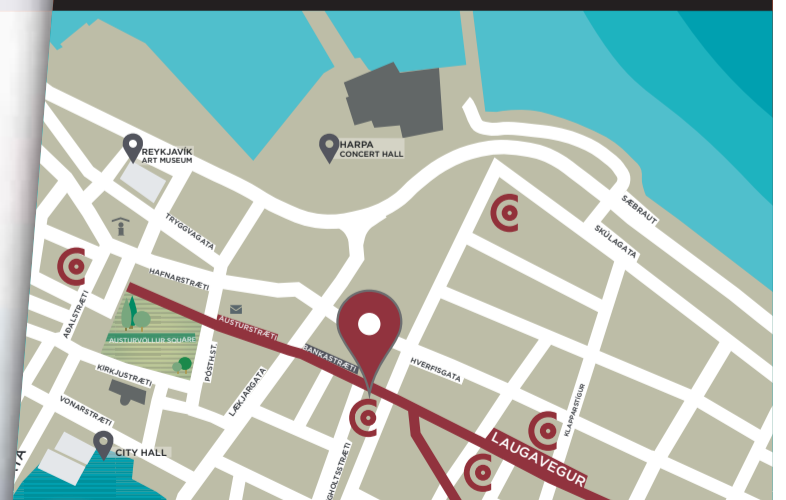
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The Cost of Cancer

Month 1:
A diagnosis



Words by *Catharine Fulton*

In the wake of the holidays one year ago, after far too many baked goods, chocolates, wine, assorted festive meats and accompanying sauces, and just about everything else one might binge on during the merriest of seasons, my husband and I had a running gag. One of us would ask, “So, what did you get for Christmas?” To which the other would deadpan, “Fat. I got fat for Christmas.” Say what you will, but it cracked us up.

This year I got cancer.

How’s that for a punch line?

On New Year’s Eve there is a one-hour pause in the pre-midnight explosions of fireworks and the country falls silent as a staggering majority of Icelanders gathers in front of their television sets to watch the *Áramótaskaup*, a sketch comedy show that serves to summarize and make light of the top news and political events of the previous year.

This year’s “Skaup” was heavy on references to the country’s failing healthcare system and the lengthy (though very recently resolved) doctor’s strike that has created a backlog of 700 surgeries, 800 CT scans and x-rays, and some 3000 outpatient treatments.

In one scene, a nurse is working her way down a waiting list of patients to inform them that they are next in line for treatment. But, oh, they’ve all died in the meanwhile.

In another skit, a woman sits across a desk from two doctors and is told she has cancer. The treatment will be too expensive, so she opts to just die. But it’s not all bad news... the doctors are mightily thrilled to be moving on to new, high-paid jobs in Norway the next day!

Is the situation really so dire? Just how costly is it to have cancer in Iceland?

Just two and a half weeks (as of print date) into my experience with the C-word and my running tally is 22,742 krónur. That brings me up to the point when I was told, “You have cancer.”

The exorbitant services I’ve sought for this cost?

- Three visits to my general practitioner.
- One ultrasound.
- One Fine Needle Aspiration (a biopsy).

As I’m new to this cancer rodeo, I can’t say that I know what lies ahead of me. As with most institutions, it seems that each piece of the puzzle is only aware of what is happening within its own borders thus far and cannot hint at what its adjacent piece may look like. I do know that surgery is in my near future, meaning time off work, and— skipping over any other treatments I may undergo before I get the stamp of “cancer-free”—prescription medications to be taken every single day for the rest of my life.

I have thyroid cancer, so while it is presumed at this point that my treatment will be straightforward—at least according to the pieces of the puzzle I’ve been given thus far—it also means a lifetime of hormone replacement therapy. An expensive lifetime.

Doesn’t Iceland have a universal healthcare system? It does, indeed, and that healthcare system subsidizes the full cost of hospital stays, and partial costs of visits to general practitioners and specialists. There is also a prescription drug payment system in place—revamped in May 2013—that sees patients paying for their prescription in three stages. In a cycle that resets each year, patients are required to pay the full price of their prescriptions until a certain cap is met, at which point the prescriptions are subsidized 85% and, finally, 92.5%.

For patients like those with cancer, or other long-term or chronic illness, this equates to a prohibitively high annual expense in addition to ongoing specialist costs.

With my own cancer putting me just 20K in the hole to date, it hasn’t been too hard a financial punch. But I’m still waiting for the punchline.



In The Year 2000, Ants Will Have Conquered The World

Icelanders in 1971 predict the future

Words
Helgi Hrafn Guðmundsson & Vera Illugadóttir

Photo
Lemúrin

In 1971, the magazine *Samvinnan* gathered a panel of Icelanders to predict the state of the nation and the wider world in the year 2000, 29 years into the future. The fifteen-person panel was made up of respected scholars, scientists and politicians—including several MPs and future Prime Minister Steingrímur Hermannsson.

Over three nights of lively discussions, the panellists covered a wide range of topics. One panellist surmised, for example, that by the year 2000, Iceland would be reduced to a Japanese fishing station. Another managed to predict the coming of the internet, imagining a TV screen in every home where one could view any page from any book.

Many panellists were pessimistic for the future, harbouring rather outlandish and dystopian ideas of the world in the year 2000:

“They will have managed to transfer learned knowledge between animals, by moving certain brain-acids from one animal to another. This, of course, is highly dangerous.”

“Recently scientists invented a special hormone which can cure dwarfism. I can imagine that in the year 2000, or in the first decades of the next century, humans will be standardised, so that every male is 1.71 meters tall, everyone wears the same type of clothes and has the same shoe-size.”

In the year 2000, there will be no more death.

“They will have started shrinking humans, to make room for everyone on Earth.”

“In the year 2000, male humans have been abolished, as they will have become as useless as the males of some bird species.”

“By then, ants will have conquered the world.”

“In the year 2000, every Icelandic family will consist of husband, wife, one child and a foreign ethnologist.”

“The death penalty of the future might involve being sent to some kind of a galactic Siberia. Political prisoners will be sent to space, as well as others who do not conform to the prevailing political system.”

“Cosmic awareness will be highly developed, and a ‘cosmic council’ will be established for the entire universe.”

“They will have started building habitats on the ocean floor, or at least summer cottages. If people start settling there, a separate mankind will develop, and then we will see a great war between landlubbers and the seapeople.”

“At the turn of the century, no one will be allowed to pass away in peace and quiet. There will be kine-biological fights over each dying man between various institutions which cut up our bodies into a thousand pieces.”

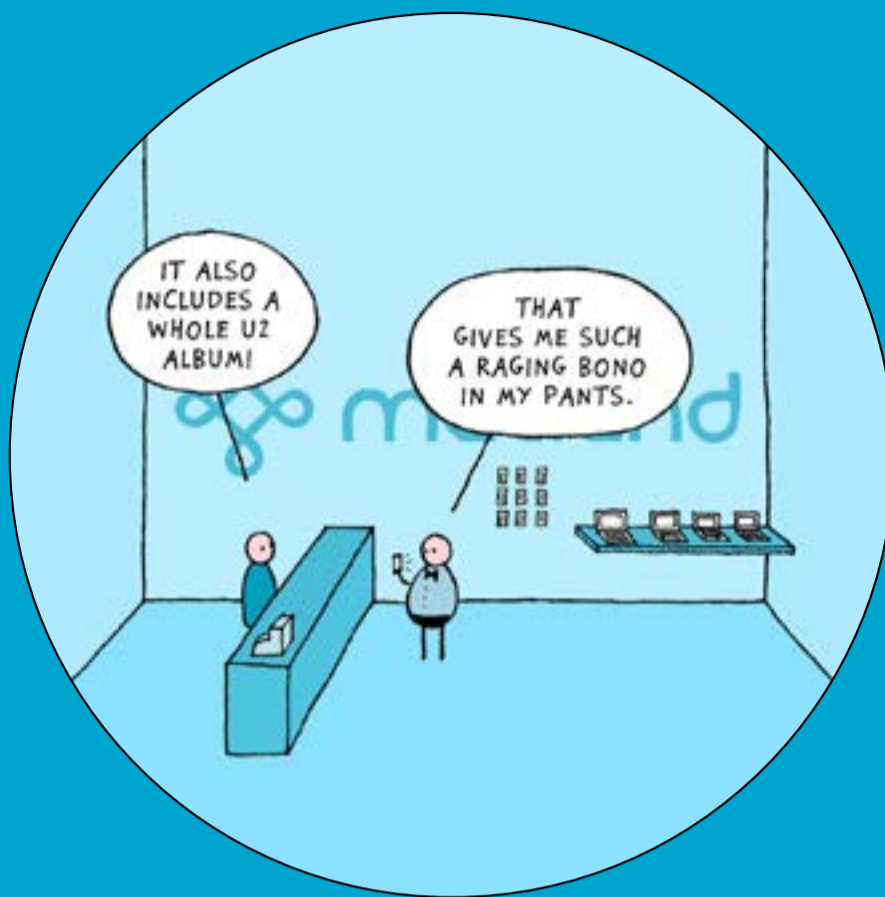
“It is thought that it is possible to transfer humans electronically from one place to another, by dissolving the body and re-assembling it, but on the other hand it is said to be more difficult to transfer the soul using this method.”

“In the year 2000, there will be no more death.”

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P.6



"We have set the course for the abolishment of currency restrictions and the settlement of the collapsed banks' estates. If done right, these acts will completely transform the Icelandic nation's standing."

Progressive Party MP Vigdís Hauksdóttir sure is optimistic about the coming year!

P.34



"We are now learning that the State Church will also get its very own "correction" from the state, while thinly veiled nationalists (fascists?) try their best to stir up fear against Muslims, mosques, and anyone of foreign descent (along with "foreign food" (!?!))."

Journalist María Lilja Þrastardóttir sure is pessimistic about the coming year...

P.14



"If you don't keep a close eye on forecasts and weather-related news, you might miss out on the few good days of summer, end up stuck somewhere in a snowstorm or—on rare occasions—drive right into the latest eruption's ash cloud."

Icelandic weather is no joke, but if it were, then last year would have been a bad one...

P.23



"The most common practices for dealing with it are overdosing on Vitamin D, and going to the solarium. I haven't been to the solarium since I was sixteen! And, well, for many many locals, consuming alcohol is a popular way of surviving the neverending night. I would say that people don't talk much about depression here... more like just get drunk and deal with it. It's very much a cowboy way of living up here."

In our feature, we explain SAD and the effects of darkness. We like to complain a lot about the lack of sunlight in Reykjavík, but Svalbard is an even rougher place.



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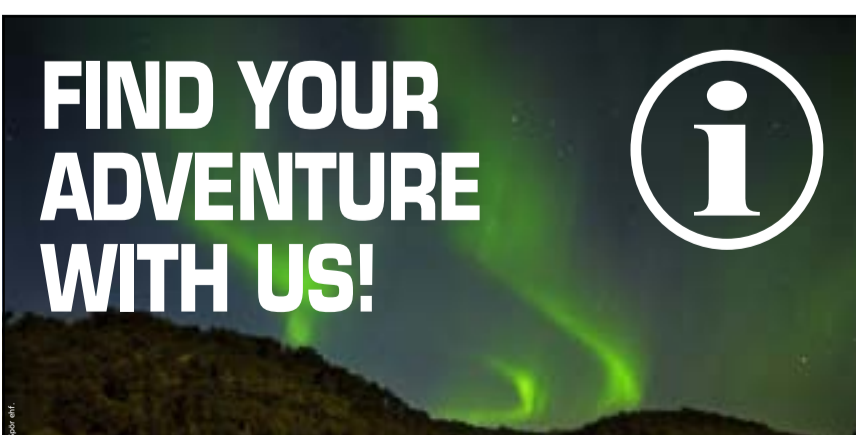


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Issue 1 - 2015

www.grapevine.is

Your essential guide to life, travel and entertainment in Iceland

29-1
Jan Feb

Dark

Music

Days

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[see inside for details](#)

Photo by Nanna Dís

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MUSIC

CONCERTS & NIGHTLIFE

Jan 8 – Feb 5

How to use the listings: Venues are listed alphabetically by day. Events listed are all live performances, with troubadours and DJs specifically highlighted. For complete listings and detailed information on venues visit listings.grapevine.is. Send us your listings to: listings@grapevine.is.

Friday January 9

Bravó
22:00 DJ Ísar Logi
Dillon
21:00 Mercy Buckets / Conflicts / Icarus
Dubliner
20:00 Troubadour Andri
Gaukurinn
22:30 Severed / Blood Feud / Aeterna
Harpa
19:30 Iceland Symphony Orchestra: New Year's Concert
Húrra
21:00 DJ KGB
Kaffibarinn
21:00 Lagaffe Tales DJ Night
Mengi
21:00 Splashgirl
Prikió
21:00 DJ Danny Ledon & Moonshine
Stúdentakjallarinn
21:00 DJ Matti

Saturday January 10

Bravó
22:00 DJ Einar Sonic
Dillon
21:00 302's Rockabilly Party With DJ Smutty Smiff
Dubliner
20:00 Troubadours Garðar / Ingvar
English Pub
21:00 Troubadours Biggi / Hjálmar & Dagur
Harpa
16:00 Iceland Symphony Orchestra: New Year's Concert
19:30 Iceland Symphony Orchestra: New Year's Concert
20:00 Camerata Øresund: Händel's Messiah
Húrra
23:00 DJ Óli Dóri.
Kaffibarinn
21:00 DJ Alfons X
Mengi
21:00 Kira Kira
Nordic House
20:00 Jazz Duo 23/8: Tribute To Jazz Singer Monica Zetterlund
Prikió
21:00 DJ Logi Pedro

Sunday January 11

Bravó
21:00 DJ Atli Bollason
Dubliner
22:00 Troubadour Andri
English Pub
21:00 Troubadour Danni
Hressó
19:00 Jazz Jam Session
Húrra
20:00 Lowercase Nights
Kaffibarinn
21:00 DJ Krystal Carma
Mengi
21:00 Buddy Wakefield
Nordic House
15:15 Hlín Pétursdóttir Behrens, Pamela de Sensi & Eva Pyri Hilmarsdóttir: Songs in the Blossom of the Flute

11
January



I Am What Lamb
Slam Poet Buddy Wakefield

Mengi

Óðinsgata 2 (F5) | ☎ 21:00 | 2,000 ISK

Is there anything more Icelandic than listening to verse at a BYOB venue? Surely. For instance, this event takes place in English, and secondly, the poet hails from Seattle, WA. That said, **Buddy Wakefield** is here to share his unique voice: a comedic romp of lyrical language coupled with heartfelt rumination on the human spirit. Think Bob Dylan rodeo clown crossed with a staccato barber shop quartet where the three other members got too drunk to show up. Basically, he is a world champion spoken word artist, and he's not to be missed. **YOU**

9
January



Hardcore Histrionics
Icarus / Mercy Buckets / Conflicts

Dillon

Laugavegur 30 (E5) | ☎ 22:00 | Free!

Dust off your wax wings and get ready to fly too close to the sun. Or, more likely, feel the burn as you mosh to this hardcore line-up. You may spend all night 'Ascending//Descending' to have a smoke when the balcony gets crowded. Don't feel conflicted and show no mercy drinking buckets of beer. This will be a show, a hardcore show—something worthy to perch slightly above Chuck Norris, but not too high. We all know how that ends. **YOU**



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MUSIC

CONCERTS & NIGHTLIFE

Monday January 12

Bravó
21:00 DJ Madame Mélancolique
English Pub
21:00 Troubadour Tryggvi
Húrra
20:00 Monday Night Jazz
Kaffibarinn
21:00 DJ Pabbi

Tuesday January 13

Bravó
21:00 DJ Intro Beats
Dubliner
22:00 Troubadour Andri
Húrra
21:00 DJ Ísar Logi
KEX Hostel
20:30 KexJazz
Prikið
21:00 Berndsen

Wednesday January 14

Bravó
21:00 DJ Davíð Roach Gunnarsson
Dubliner
22:00 Troubadour Gísli
English Pub
21:00 Troubadour Arnar
Húrra
20:00 Kría Brekkan / Just Another Snake Cult / Katrín Helga / DJ Óli Dóri
Prikið
21:00 DJ Introbeats
Stúdentakjallarinn
21:00 RAKI

Thursday January 15

Bravó
22:00 DJ Ísar Logi
Café Rosenberg
21:00 Helgi Júl & Band
Dillon
21:00 Fox Train Safari
English Pub
21:00 Troubadours Magnús & Ívar
Harpa
19:30 Iceland Symphony Orchestra: Young Soloists
Húrra
20:00 Sindri Eldon & The Ways / Jón Þór / DJ Ernir
Prikið
21:00 DJ KGB

Friday January 16

Bravó
22:00 DJ Styrmir Dansson
Café Rosenberg
22:00 Boldoir Singing Troupe
Dillon
21:00 VAR
Dubliner
20:00 Troubadours Kjartan / Garðar
English Pub
21:00 Troubadours Ingi Valur / Biggi
Gaukurinn
22:30 Alcoholia / Hemúllinn
Harpa
20:00 Todmobile and Steve Hackett: Genesis
Húrra
21:00 DJ Ívar Pétur
lðnó
20:00 New Year Concert and Dance
Kaffibarinn
21:00 DJ Kári
Prikið
21:00 Emmsjé Gauti

Saturday January 17

Bravó
22:00 DJ Steindór Grétar Jónsson
Café Rosenberg
22:00 Svavar Knútur & Guests
Dubliner
20:00 Troubadours Gísli / Andri
English Pub
21:00 Troubadours Hjálmar & Dagur / Eiki & Steini
Gaukurinn
22:00 Bómbers: Motörhead Tribute Band
Húrra
21:00 Vio Album Release Show / DJ KGB
Kaffibarinn
21:00 DJ Kári
Prikið
21:00 DJ Árni Kocoon

Sunday January 18

Bravó
21:00 DJ Björn Teitsson
Dubliner
22:00 Troubadour Andri
English Pub
21:00 Troubadour Danni



16
January

And You Thought Rapping In English Was Hard
Emmsjé Gauti

Prikið

Bankastræti 12 (E4) | 🎧 22:00 | Free

Emmsjé Gauti began his rap career when he was but thirteen years of age, and has been a feature of the Icelandic hip-hop scene since. Don't be fooled by the image of a blond, Icelandic, pre-teen rapper: this guy is no joke. Much of his music has a base melodic hip-hop score that makes it enjoyable even for those of us who are less enthusiastic about the genre. Also, Icelandic rap, a syllabic Rubik's Cube, is just neat in and of itself. **AM**
Photo by Axel Sigurðarson

Harpa
19:30 The Chamber Music Society #3
Hressó
19:00 Jazz Jam Session
Húrra
20:00 Lowercase Nights
Kaffibarinn
21:00 DJ Pilsner

Monday January 19

Bravó
21:00 DJ Styrmir Dansson
Café Rosenberg
21:00 Reykjavík Blues Company
English Pub
21:00 Troubadour Ingi Valur
Húrra
21:00 Monday Night Jazz

Tuesday January 20

Bravó
21:00 DJ Snorri Helgason
Café Rosenberg
21:00 Yngvar Örn & Band
Dubliner
22:00 Troubadour Andri
Húrra
21:00 DJ Andropov
KEX Hostel
20:30 KexJazz

Wednesday January 21

Bravó
21:00 DJ AnDre
Café Rosenberg
21:00 Elín Ey (blues)
English Pub
21:00 Troubadour Ellert
Háskólabíó
20:00 Tubular Bells for Two
Húrra
21:00 DJ Myth / Lazybones
Kaffibarinn
21:00 DJ Alfons X

Mengi
21:00 Good Moon Deer
Prikið
21:00 Vinyl Wednesday: DJ Petersen & White

Thursday January 22

Bravó
22:00 DJ Atli Bollason
Café Rosenberg
21:00 Jóhanna & Band
Dubliner
22:00 Troubadour Garðar
English Pub
21:00 Troubadours Hjálmar & Dagur
Harpa
19:30 Iceland Symphony Orchestra: Macbeth and Kullervo
Húrra
21:00 Friyrkjan Poetry Night / Nolo DJ Set
Prikið
21:00 DJ Vrong: Blæti Vol. 1

Friday January 23

Bravó
22:00 DJ Óli Dóri
Café Rosenberg
22:00 Margrét Eir & Páll Rósinkranz
Dillon
21:00 Solar
Dubliner
20:00 Troubadour Garðar
English Pub
21:00 Troubadours Biggi / Eiki & Steini
Gaukurinn
22:00 Rythmatik
Húrra
21:00 DJ Styrmir Dansson
Kaffibarinn
21:00 DJ Símon FKNHNSM
Prikið
21:00 DJ Stinnson Classics
Stúdentakjallarinn
21:00 DJ Víðir og Dýrið

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MUSIC
CONCERTS & NIGHTLIFE



15
January

He Is The 10%
Sindri Eldon & The Ways / Jón Þór / Bárújárn

Húrra

Naustin (D3) | 📞 20:00 | 1,000 ISK

Frontman of **Sindri Eldon & The Ways** says: "I'm a better songwriter and lyricist than 90% of Icelandic musicians, my mother included." Whoever his mother may be, Sindri Eldon plays a mean brand of garage rock with his Waves. At this Húrra gig, they are joined by Reykjavík's Best Kept Secret™ indie rocker **Jón Þór** and seldom-seen surf punk heroes **Bárújárn**. This will undoubtedly be a bizarre, wonderful rock night. You've been warned. Now go have fun! **STM**

Saturday January 24

Bravó
22:00 DJ MAD HOUSE
Café Rosenberg
22:00 Magnús Einarsson & Band
Dillon
21:00 Rythmatik
English Pub
21:00 Troubadours Alexander & Guðmann / Hjálmar & Dagur
Gaukurinn
22:00 HELLVAR
Húrra
22:00 Boogie Trouble / DJ Óli Dóri
Prikið
21:00 DJ Egill Cali

Sunday January 25

Dubliner
22:00 Troubadour Andri
English Pub
21:00 Troubadour Danni
Harpa
19:30 The Chamber Music Society #4: Bach's Cello Suites
Hressó
19:00 Jazz Jam Session
Húrra
20:00 Lowercase Nights
Kaffibarinn
21:00 DJ Krystal Carma

Monday January 26

Bravó
21:00 DJ Baron Eyfjörð
Dubliner
22:00 Troubadour Andri
English Pub
21:00 Troubadour Tryggvi
Húrra
20:00 Monday Night Jazz

Tuesday January 27

Bravó
21:00 DJ Ríkhartður Cuellar
Café Rosenberg
21:00 Ginaldinn
Dubliner
22:00 Troubadour Andri
English Pub
21:00 Troubadour Ingi Valur
Húrra
21:00 DJ Madame Melancolique
KEX Hostel
20:30 KexJazz

Wednesday January 28

Bravó
21:00 DJ Pilsner/2.5
Café Rosenberg
21:00 Maríó
Dubliner
22:00 Troubadour Gísli
English Pub
21:00 Troubadour Arnar
Mengi
21:00 Foot in the door
Prikið
21:00 Vinyl Wednesday: Lord Kincaid

Thursday January 29

Bravó
21:00 Möller Records Heiladans Showcase Night
Café Rosenberg
21:00 Músakk
Dubliner
22:00 Troubadour Garðar
English Pub
21:00 Troubadours Alexander & Guðmann
Húrra
21:00 DJ Pabbi
Kaffibarinn
21:00 DJ Krystal Carma

Prikið
21:00 DJ Introbeats

Friday January 30

Bravó
22:00 DJ KGB
Dubliner
20:00 Troubadour Gísli
Húrra
20:00 Stand-up comedy / DJ Simon FKNHNSM
Kaffibarinn
21:00 DJ Intro Beats
Prikið
21:00 DJ Kocoon

Saturday January 31

Bravó
22:00 DJ Simon FKNHNSM
Café Rosenberg
22:00 KK Band
Dubliner
20:00 Troubadours Kjartan / Garðar
English Pub
21:00 Troubadours Arnar & Ingunn / Biggi
Húrra
21:00 Straumur DJ Set
Kaffibarinn
21:00 DJ KGB

Sunday February 1

English Pub
21:00 Troubadour Danni
Hannesarholt
16:00 Poetry Songs (Ljóðasöngur)
Hressó
19:00 Jazz Jam Session

Monday February 2

Café Rosenberg
21:00 Reykjavík Blues Company
Dubliner
22:00 Troubadour Andri
English Pub
21:00 Troubadour Ingi Valur

Tuesday February 3

Café Rosenberg
21:00 Næmi
Dubliner
22:00 Troubadour Andri
English Pub
21:00 Troubadour Tryggvi
Harpa
17:00 Phantoms of the opera: Kristján Jóhannsson, Gissur Páll Gissurarson & Garðar Thór Cortes

Wednesday February 4

Café Rosenberg
21:00 Ari & Vala
Dubliner
22:00 Troubadour Gísli
English Pub
21:00 Troubadour Ellert
Mengi
21:00 Robert Black

Thursday February 5

Café Rosenberg
21:00 Eiki & Byltingarboltarnir
Harpa
19:30 Osmo Vänskä & Symphonies no. 3
Kaffibarinn
21:00 DJ Yamaho



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

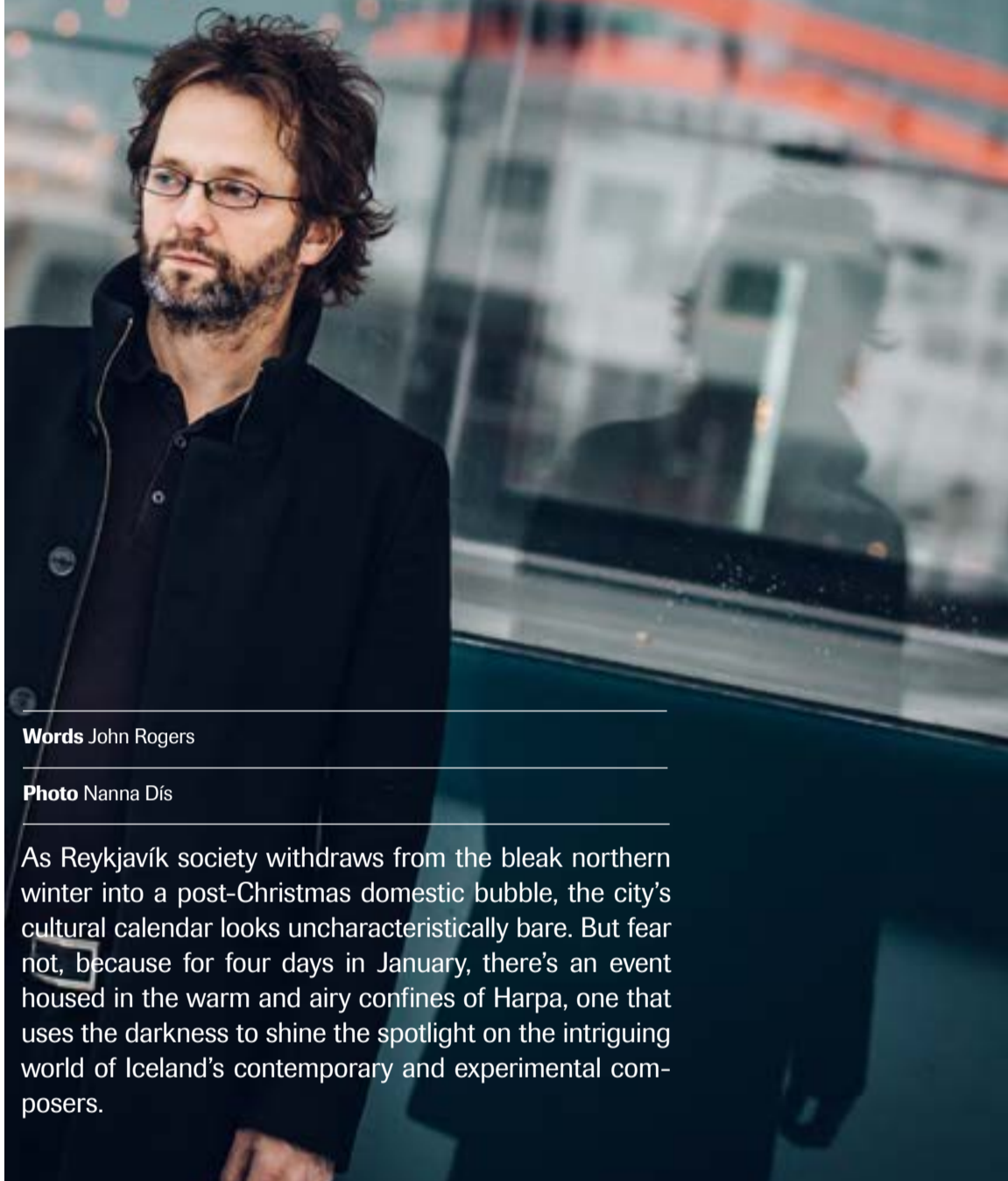
Food is served from 10 until 22 every day. On Thursday, Friday and Saturday nights, after the kitchen closes Hressó heats up with live music. Weekends, DJs keep the party going until morning, with no cover charge

MUSIC

CONCERTS & NIGHTLIFE

Music For Dark Days

A survival guide for the darkest months



Words John Rogers

Photo Nanna Dís

As Reykjavík society withdraws from the bleak northern winter into a post-Christmas domestic bubble, the city's cultural calendar looks uncharacteristically bare. But fear not, because for four days in January, there's an event housed in the warm and airy confines of Harpa, one that uses the darkness to shine the spotlight on the intriguing world of Iceland's contemporary and experimental composers.

Dark Music Days



The festival runs January 29 - February 1



darkmusicdays.is

Dark Music Days (Myrkir Músíkdagar, in Icelandic) has been running since 1980, beginning as a biannual event. "When the festival began," says artistic director Kjartan Ólafsson, sitting in the Harpa cafe, "there was nothing much happening in Reykjavík from the end of November, right through till March. It was just a very dark season—much darker than now. The lights of the city have probably made a difference. And maybe this building too; Harpa is certainly a beacon in the dark."

Kjartan took the reigns of the festival when he became the chairman of the Society of Icelandic Composers in 1989. At the time, the festival—like many others across Europe—was suffering from dwindling attendance. Kjartan decided to try a new approach.

Young contemporaries

"We started putting an emphasis on Icelandic music," he explains, "because as well as this gap in the cultural calendar, there was also the need for a new platform for contemporary and experimental music. So, instead of me leading the festival as a traditional artistic director, we decided to try to perform as many interesting pieces as we could. This is my way of directing—to have it open, let it breathe freely, and keep these simple rules in place."

This had an immediate effect, galvanising the city's more ambitious young

composers and musicians to come out of the woodwork and start contacting Dark Music Days about presenting their work.

"Of course, when they asked, we said yes," says Kjartan, "and so the festival naturally started to feature more new work and first performances. As a result, it's more diverse now than ever before. All that started with the inclusion of young people—both in the audience, and as composers and performers. There were six or seven concerts and for perhaps 500 people. Today, we have over twenty concerts and around 3,500 people coming along."

With the country under deep snow and deeper darkness, it seems to follow that most of the audience at this time of year would be local. But winter tourism is on the rise, and the niche that Dark Music Days is carving out is piquing the interest of the outside world in its own right. "We have an increasing number people from both Europe and America coming along," says Kjartan, "including the artistic directors of other events. The festival has grown a very strong identity over the years—it's around 70-80% Icelandic music, much of which has not been performed before. So if you come to this festival you can see something new, and specific to Iceland alone. We don't play contemporary music that's 50 years old—the music at Dark Music days represents the time we are living in now."

New School thinking

Kjartan is also uniquely positioned to see upcoming talents via his work as a professor of composition at the Icelandic Academy of the Arts, where he has taught for nine years. "I'm seeing the same thing there," he says. "When the curriculum opens up and becomes more flexible, the students immediately start to find a more personal pathway, and then transition towards the festival. It's an excellent platform to see their work coming to life. The younger ones get involved with the festival—they join the society, and the board—they are the ones that will take over, after all, when we're all in the old people's home."

Dark Music Days comes at a time of the year when Reykjavík's many cultural creators and organisers are hibernating, and offers them a chance to emerge for a while. "It's a time for writing books and composing, when you are sitting in a smaller world, and reading, thinking, creating," says Kjartan. "People come out from that bubble, and into the festival, for an interesting and valuable conversation about culture. So Dark Music Days has that quality of meeting and exchange too."

And darkness itself has long been a muse for artists, representing things glimpsed or unknown. "Darkness holds things on the edge of vision," Kjartan finishes. "In the sagas, darkness held an exciting hidden world. Perhaps that's like music itself—it can never tell you exactly what it means, but it can give you an idea."



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FROM 19-22

Italian
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from 17-19

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CHECK OUT THE NEW

REYKJAVÍK CITY MUSEUM

COMPRISING 5 TOP MUSEUMS:



Árbær Open Air Museum



The Settlement Exhibition



Reykjavik Maritime Museum



Viðey Island



Reykjavik Museum of Photography



More information in the Museums & Galleries section.



ART

OPENINGS AND ONGOING



So That's What You Do With An Art Degree
'Cityscape' by Snorri Þór Tryggvason, Pétur Stefánsson and Snorri Eldjárn Snorrason

Spark Design Space, Klapparstígur 33

Klapparstígur 33 (E5) | Jan 15 - Mar 4 | 🕒 12:00 - 16:00 | Free!

After struggling to find work in their field in Iceland, architects Snorri Þór Tryggvason, Pétur Stefánsson and Snorri Eldjárn Snorrason put their Iceland Academy of the Arts degrees to use in creating a detailed watercolour map of the Reykjavik city centre. The map took 3,000 hours to make, and is comprised of 146 A3 size watercolours drawings, which are now on display and for sale at the gallery. This project has become the basis of their company, Borgarmynd, where they specialise in illustrated maps, event branding, infographics, web design, and 3D modelling. **AM**

The Living Art Museum 'Crowd Show' by Örn Alexander Ásmundason

Multimedia artist Örn Alexander Ásmundason describes the show, possibly in jest, as having faced a lot of resistance from the board of the Living Art Museum, as he refused to conform to the standards set out by the art world. He adds that it's composed of artworks that somehow ended cobbled up together. The show is a part of the Cyclorama series, and has a special opening party on January 10 from 17:00 to 19:00.

Opens January 10
Runs until February 6

The National Museum of Iceland 'Húsin í bænum' by Kristinn Guðmundsson

This photography exhibit features pictures of houses from downtown Reykjavik ca. 1875-85 by photographer Kristinn. The photos are meant to show the spirit of the times, and the formation of contemporary Reykjavik.

Opens January 17
Runs until May 17

'Where, Who, What?'

In this exhibition, unlabelled works from the archives of the Icelandic Photography Museum will be put on display in the hopes that visitors can identify them.

Opens January 17
Runs until May 17

Reykjavik Art Museum Hafnarhús 'All the Small Things' by Cory Arcangel

The American artist Cory Arcangel is a pioneer who combines digital technologies with art. In this solo exhibition are presented new works by Cory, as well as a selection of seminal early works which he's re-configured specifically for the exhibition.

Opens January 31
Runs until April 12

Reykjavik Art Museum Kjarvalsstaðir

'The Pulse of Time' by Einar Hákonarson

Einar Hákonarson, one of Iceland's best known artists, is an expressionistic and figurative painter. The works in this retrospective span the artist's career for over 50 years, from juvenilia and student works until 2014. There are special artist talks on January 25, February 15 and March 15 at 15:00.

Opens January 17
Runs until March 15

'Poetic Colour Palette, from the Kjarval collection'

Jóhannes Sveinsson Kjarval occupies a special place in the history of Icelandic culture and art, as one of the country's most beloved artists. Kjarval's subject matter falls into three main groups: landscapes, portraits, and fantasies or works of imagination; a selection from all three groups will be on display.

Opens January 17
Runs until March 15

Jan 8 - Feb 5

How to use the listings: Venues are listed alphabetically by day. For complete listings and detailed information on venues visit listings.grapevine.is. Send us your listings to: listings@grapevine.is

Opening

Anarkía

'Anarkía Norr' by Guðmundur Birkir

This is an exhibition of the abstract painter Guðmundur Birkir (Norr). For his work he uses any materials available, such as wooden sticks, metal wires, brushes, scrapes or spatulas to create different textures. There is a special opening party on January 9 at 17:00.

Opens January 9
Runs until February 1

ART67

'RASSAR Í SVEIT' by Jóhanna Bára Þórisdóttir

Jóhanna is the guest artist of the month at ART67, where she shows her new exhibit which translates as "butts in the countryside." There is a special opening party on January 10 from 14:00 to 16:00.

Opens January 10
Runs until January 31

ASÍ Art Gallery

'Komasvo'

Six Icelandic artists collaborate on an exhibit that examines in great detail the intersection of art, sports and the free market through an experiment, in which pieces that don't get enough attention will get the red card and be removed.

Opens January 31
Runs until March 1

Borgarleikhúsið

'Mrozek. Life Is Worth Living' by Pawel Chara

Pawel followed the Polish poet Slawomir Mrozek 2010-2013 and took pictures of him living his everyday life. Slawomir was slated to visit Reykjavik last year, but fell ill and then passed away. To celebrate his life, Pawel's photographs were put together for a special photography exhibit in Warsaw last year, which has now been brought to Reykjavik.

Opens January 10
Runs until January 18

Hafnarborg

'Development' by Hekla Dögg Jónsdóttir

'Development' is a sculpture, a performance piece, and it can involve the participation of the viewers through influence in the development of the piece. It is a completely independent world, where creation, mediation, processing and reception all take place at the same space. Artist Hekla Dögg creates a platform where all steps of filmmaking are made visible in a live movie studio. A constantly changing movie is shot in said studio and then developed and shown to viewers in a simple film theater.

Opens January 17
Runs until February 15

Mokka Kaffi

'Fall of the Wall and the Velvet revolution' by Snorri Hilmarsson

This photographic exhibition honors the 25th anniversary of the Velvet Revolution in Prague - a peaceful student manifestation and protest against communist regime on 17 November 1989 and the fall of the Berlin Wall. Snorri created the piece while studying in Prague and used an old Russian camera the original LOMO.

Opens January 9
Runs until February 5

THE NATIONAL MUSEUM OF ICELAND

Along with the permanent exhibition that features Iceland's history from settlement to present day the museum offers a variety of exhibitions during the year, e.g. on Icelandic silver and photography.



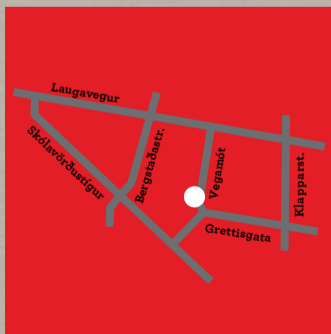
ÞJÓDMINJASAFN ÍSLANDS
National Museum of Iceland

www.thjodminjasafn.is
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WHAT'S INSIDE

Reykjavík Map | Happy Hour Guide | Places We Like | Best Of Reykjavík | Practical Info

Reykjavík

January 8 - February 5

Keep it in your pocket

FOUR WEEKS

The Grapevine picks the events, places and what to experience in the next four weeks

14 January **Music**
Strange Musical Fantasy



Kría Brekkan / Just Another Snake Cult / Katrín Helga

Húrra | Naustin (D5) | 1,500 ISK

This January concert of multi-instrument musical sages takes place one month before Cupid comes to make a fool of you. **Kría Brekkan** takes time off from sheep mid-wifery and chicken welfare to serenade willing listeners. **Just Another Snake Cult**—self-described existential fantasists—will bring you to a happy place and then question your right to be there. And **Katrín Helga Andréddóttir**'s sweet, soothing voice and killer lyrics will bring a smile to your face. This will be a night where your dreams and nightmares meet for a drink and you won't want to wake up. **YOU**

January 17

DEAD MAN'S HAND So where can you find a Lemmy approved Motörhead tribute band featuring a Norwegian metal veteran—where Doom is his middle name? **Gaukurinn** is your place! Head bang with **Abboth Doom Occulta**: lead singer of the **Bömbars**, a, Motörhead tribute band. There is nothing more badass than grown men donning leather, yelling quarter-century-old songs at you. Don't fret. It will probably be a great time. You might see your dad there. Admission: **3,000 ISK**. **YOU**

January 17

LULLING ME SOFTLY **Vio** is a very young band—formed in 2014, they won the annual Icelandic battle of the bands (Músíktílaunir) last year, and are now releasing their debut album, with an album release show at **Húrra**. These four strapping boys from Mosfellsbær play slow and mellow guitar-driven indie rock that is perhaps less than suited for mad party antics, but might just be great for calm and cosy winter days. Don't be surprised if it lulls you to sleep, though... **STM**

23-25 January **Food & Drink**
Great Chieftain 'O The Puddin'-Race!



Robbie Burns Supper

KEX Hostel | Skúlagata 28 (E7) | 5,900 ISK

Celebrate the Scottish national bard with the Edinburgh Society in Iceland! Go for the haggis and whisky, and stay for the music and poetry. After the bagpipes' drones die, and the haggis is no more, enjoy performances by musical acts Two Wings and Hanna Tuulikki. There is limited seating for this event, so if you are interested make sure to sign up. Dust off your kilt, pull up your socks, but don't bother brushing your hair; it's time to party, Bob Cluness-style. **YOU**

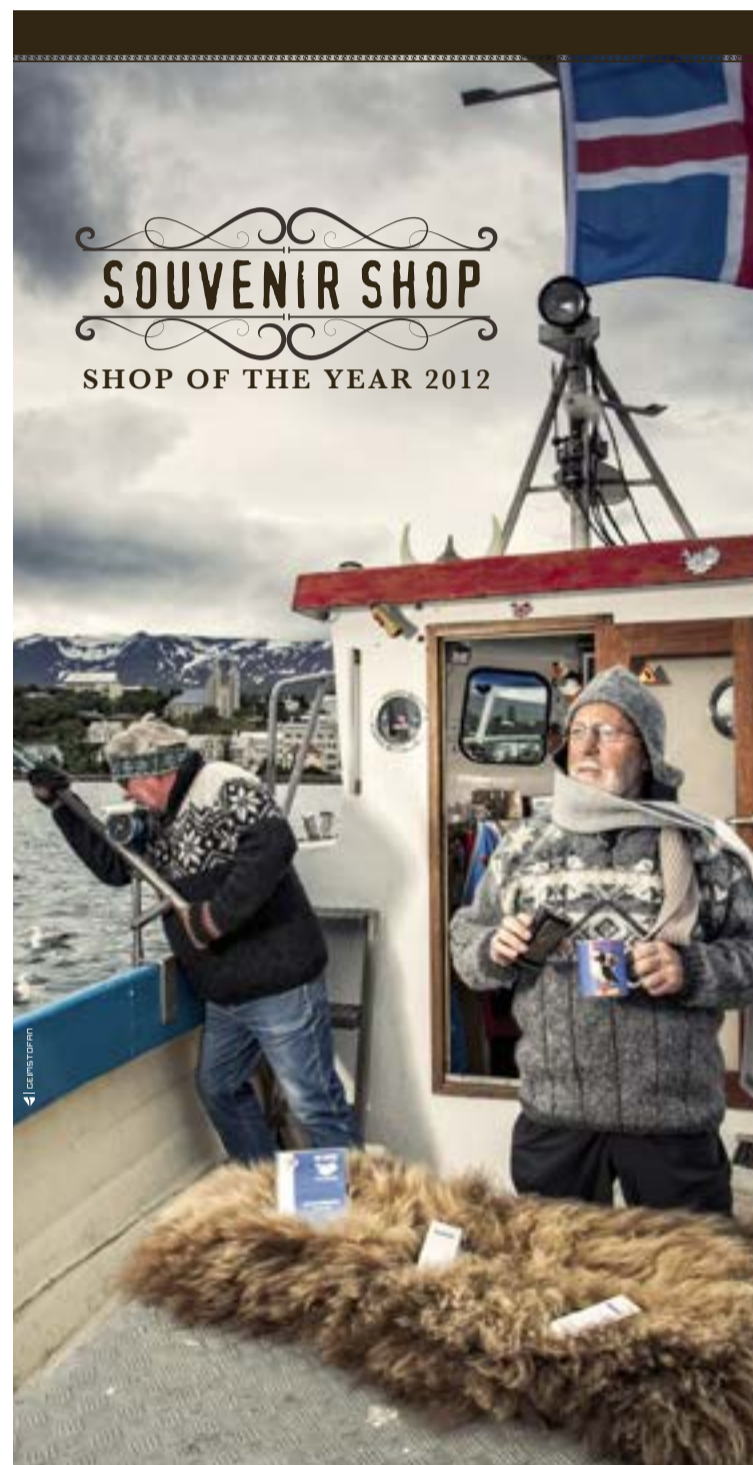
10-19 January **Art**
Insight Into A Master



'Mrozek. Life Is Worth Living' by Paweł Chara

Reykjavík City Theatre | Listabraut 3 | Free!

Paweł Chara's photographic exhibition, 'Mrozek. Life is worth living' opens on January 10. The images were shot between 2010-2013 and feature the Polish poet Sławomir Mrozek, whose works have been performed in Iceland in the past. Sławomir passed away in August 2013, but this exhibition offers the opportunity to get an insight into the daily life of a master who had a big heart and loved life. **AM**



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and 11-21 Sundays

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MAP

Places We Like

Eating

1 Grillmarkaðurinn

Lækjargata 2a

Grillmarkaðurinn (The Grill Market) is renowned chef Hrefna Rósa Sætran's latest culinary venture (you might recognise her from Fish Market). With a specially crafted grill made to withstand extreme heat, Hrefna and team serve up juicy Icelandic dishes to the carnivore's delight. Since opening for business in the summer of 2011, GrillMarket has continually enhanced the quality of life for Reykjavík foodies...

2 Forréttabarin

Nýlendugata 14

Forréttabarin literally means "the bar of starters." It is situated close to the harbour in an abandoned warehouse of some sort. The decor is rugged, yet stylish; spacious with high ceilings and big windows. Similar to the tapas approach to dining, the restaurant serves small simple courses with few, but well chosen, ingredients.

3 Hraðlestin

Hverfisgata 64a

The faster and more affordable cousin to one of the top restaurants in the country, Austurindiafélagið, flavour is never compromised by promptness at Hraðlestin. Their short selection of authentic Indian cuisine is cooked with the finest ingredients, the spices are masterfully blended and the experience is wholly satisfying.

4 Kopar

Geirsgata 3

This restaurant offers a terrific setting with truly tempting menu featuring a diverse and imaginative selection of land and sea-based ingredients. Expect to have to book well in advance, though, as the place is too packed for walk-ins to be a reliably option.

5 Yummi Yummi

Hlemmur, Hverfisgata 123

After long years of lamenting the lack of quick, greasy and satisfying Asian fast-food in town, the owners of Thai super-restaurant Ban Thai have graced us with this pan-fried saviour! The dishes are super cheap at 1000 ISK each, the service is superfast but totally fresh and what seems like a small dish will stuff you full. They now do home delivery as well! Oh, happy day.

Drinking

6 Tíu Dropar

Laugavegur 27

Located in a small, cozy basement on Laugavegur, Tíu Dropar is one of Iceland's oldest cafés. During the day it serves a selection of coffee, tea and food (including grandma-style pancakes), and during the night it turns into a French-styled wine bar.

Useful Numbers

Emergency number: **112**

Medical help: **1770**

Dental emergency: **575 0505**

Information: **118**

Taxi: Hreyfill-Bæjarleiðir: **588 5522**

BSR: **561 0000**

Tax-Free Refund

Iceland Refund, Aðalstræti 2, tel: 564 6400

Tourist Information

Arctic Adventures, Laugavegur 11,

tel: 562 7000

City Centre, Aðalstræti 2, tel: 590 1550

Iceland Excursions - Grayline Iceland, Hafnarstræti 20, tel: 540 1313



7 Mengi

Óðinsgata 2

Mengi ("Set") was born as a place to host intimate shows where artists get to perform in front of small crowds. Hosting anything from art performances, lectures and workshops to music gigs, Mengi snugly seats 50 people. Admission is generally 2,000 ISK, but guests are free to bring their own drinks.

8 Loftið

Austurstræti 9

Loftið offers some of the best cocktails to be had in the city. On a typical weekend you will find this place filled with older Icelandic yuppies or older yuppie foreigners swallowing old and expensive alcohol dressed like the prosperity period of 2006 never ended. This vibe is achieved with a super strict entry policy and a dress code that makes very few exceptions. If you have the money, this is the place to go!

9 Dillon Whiskey Bar

Laugavegur 30

A flawless mix between grungy and classy, Dillon Whiskey Bar dominates their little stretch of Laugavegur. Crammed most nights with rockers, metalheads, and tourists looking for a place to mumble AC/DC songs into their beer, Dillon boasts a wide selection of over 100 whiskies and hosts some of Iceland's better hard rock bands on the weekends.

Public Transport

The only public transport available in Reykjavík is the bus. Most buses run every 20-30 minutes (the wait may be longer on weekends) and the price per fare is 350 ISK for adults and children. Multiple day passes are available for purchase at select locations. Complete route map available at: www.bus.is. Tel: 540 2700. Buses run from 07:00-24:00 on weekdays and 10:00-24:00 on weekends. Main terminals are: Hlemmur and Lækjartorg.

Opening Hours

Bars and clubs: According to regulations, bars can stay open until 01:00 on weekdays and 04:30 on weekends.

The Icelandic Travel Market, Bankastræti 2, tel: 522 4979

Trip, Laugavegur 54, tel: 433 8747

Pharmacies

Lyf og heilsa, Egilsgata 3, tel: 563 1020

Lyfja, Laugavegur 16, tel: 552 4045 and Lág-
múla 5, tel: 533 2300

Coach Terminal

BSÍ, Vatnsmýrarvegur 10,

tel: 562 1011, www.bsi.is

Domestic Airlines

Air Iceland, Reykjavíkflugvöllur,
tel: 570 3030, www.flugfelag.is

Eagle Air, Hótel Loftleiðir, tel: 562 4200

Shops: Mon-Fri 10:00-18:00, Sat 10:00-16:00, Sun closed. The shopping centres Kringlan and Smáralind as well as most supermarkets and tourist shops have longer opening hours.

Swimming pools: Weekdays 06:30-22:00 and weekends 09:00-17:00, although each pool varies plus or minus a few hours.

Banks in the centre are open Mon-Fri 09:00-16:00.

Post Offices

Post offices are located around the city. The downtown post office is at Pósthússtræti 3-5, open Mon-Fri 09:00-18:00. Stamps are also sold at bookstores, gas stations, tourist shops and some grocery stores.

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D

New In Town



13 Skúli Craft Bar

Aðalstræti 9

As one can witness every single weekend, Icelandic people have a propensity for binge drinking. This is perhaps unsurprising, given that beer has only been available to the nation for the last quarter century. In recent years, however, we have enjoyed quite the renaissance in our beer culture, with specialist beer bars popping up all over the place, offering a previously unfathomable variety. On it goes, and there's a hip new kid on the block: his name is Skúli Craft Bar. And you should pay him a visit. Named after Skúli "Fógeti" Magnússon, often dubbed "the father of Reykjavík," the bar offers no fewer than twelve different craft beers on tap! In case that makes your head spin, no worries, they have a menu with a detailed description of each and every one, and the bartenders allow patrons to taste their wares before purchase. It may not be the cheapest place in the city, but it's well worth a gander.



www.thelaundrymatcafe.com



Venue Finder Music & Entertainment

- Austur**
Austurstræti 7 | **D3**
- B5**
Bankastræti 5 | **E4**
- Bar 11**
Hverfisgötu 18 | **E5**
- Bió Paradís**
Hverfisgata 54 | **E5**
- Bjarni Fel**
Austurstræti 20 | **E4**
- Boston**
Laugavegur 28b | **E5**
- Brikk**
Hafnarstræti 18 | **D4**
- Bunk**
Laugavegur 28 | **E5**
- Café Rósenberg**
Klapparstígur 25 | **E5**
- Coocoo's Nest**
Grandagarður 23 | **B2**
- Den Danske Kro**
Ingólfsstræti 3 | **E4**
- Dillon**
Laugavegur 30 | **E5**
- Dolly**
Hafnarstræti 4 | **D3**
- Dubliner**
Hafnarstræti 1-3 | **D3**
- English Pub**
Austurstræti 12 | **D3**
- Frederiksen Ale House**
Hafnarstræti 5 | **D3**
- Gaukurinn**
Tryggvagata 22 | **D3**
- Hressó**
Austurstræti 20 | **D3**
- Húrra**
Naustin | **D3**
- Kaffibarinn**
Bergstaðastræti 1 | **E4**
- Kaldi Bar / Café**
Laugavegur 20b | **E5**
- Kigali**
Ingólfsstræti 8 | **E4**
- Kofinn**
Laugavegur 2 | **E5**
- Lavabarinn**
Lækjargata 6 | **E4**
- Loft Hostel**
Bankastræti 7 | **E4**
- Paloma**
Naustin | **D3**
- Prikið**
Bankastræti 12 | **E4**
- Reykjavík Roasters**
Kárástígur 1 | **F5**
- Stofan Café**
Vesturgata 3 | **D3**
- Thorvaldsen**
Austurstræti 8 | **D3**
- Ölsmiðjan**
Lækjargata 10 | **E3**
- Öststofan**
Vegamótastígur 4 | **E5**

Museums & Galleries

- ART67**
Laugavegur 67 | **F7**
Mon-Fri 12-18 / Sat 12-16
- Ásgrímur Jónsson Museum**
Bergstaðastræti 74 | **G4**
Mon-Fri through Sept. 1
- The Einar Jónsson Museum**
Eiríksgata | **G5**
Tue-Sun 14-17
www.skulptur.is
- Hafnarborg**
Strandgata 34, Hafnarfjörður
www.hafnarborg.is
- Hannesarholt**
Grundarstígur 10 | **F4**
www.hannesarholt.is
- Hitt Húsið**
Gallery Tukt
Pósthússtræti 3-5 | **E3**
www.hitthusid.is
- Hverfisgallerí**
Hverfisgata 4 | **D4**
www.hverfisgalleri.is
- i8 Gallery**
Tryggvagata 16 | **D3**
Tue-Fri 11-17 / Sat 13-17 and by appointment. www.i8.is
- The Icelandic Phalological Museum**
Laugavegur 116 | **F8**
www.phallus.is
- Kirsuberjatræð**
Vesturgata 4 | **D3**
www.kirs.is
- Kling & Bang**
Hverfisgata 42 | **E5**
Thurs-Sun from 14-18
www.this.is/klingogbang
- Knitting Iceland**
Laugavegur 25 | **E5**
www.knittingiceland.is
- Kunstschlager**
Rauðarárstígur 1 | **G8**
Mon-Sat from 15-18
www.kunstschlager.com
- Living Art Museum**
Skúlagata 28 | **E7**
Tue-Sun 12-17
www.nylo.is
- Mengi**
Óðinsgata 2 | **F5**
- Mokka Kaffi**
Skólavörðustígur 3A | **E5**
www.mokka.is
- The National Gallery of Iceland**
Frikirkjuvegur 7 | **F3**
Tue-Sun 11-17
www.listasafn.is
- The National Museum**
Suðurgata 41 | **G2**
Open daily 10-17
www.natmus.is
- The Nordic House**
Sturlugata 5
Tue-Sun 12-17
www.nordice.is
- Reykjavík Art Gallery**
Skúlagata 30 | **E7**
Tue-Sun 14-18
- Reykjavík Art Museum - Hafnarhús**
Tryggvagata 17 | **D3**
Open 10-17
Thursday 10-20
Kjarvalsstaðir
Flókagata 24
Open 10-17
Ásmundarsafn
Sigtún
Open 10-17
www listasafnreykjavikur.is
- Reykjavík City Library**
Tryggvagata 15 | **D3**
www.borgarbokasafn.is
- Reykjavík City Museum - Árbæjarsafn**
Kistuhylur 4
Daily tours at 13
The Settlement Exhibition
Aðalstræti 17 | **D3**
Open daily 10-17
Reykjavík Maritime Museum
Grandagarður 8 | **B2**
Open daily 10-17
Reykjavík Museum of Photography
Tryggvagata 15 | **D3**
Mon-Thu 12-19 / Fri 12-18 / Sat-Sun 13-17
Víðey Island
Ferry from Skarfabakki Harbour, Sat-Sun only
www.videy.com
- Saga Museum**
Grandagarður 2 | **B2**
www.sagamuseum.is
- Sigurjón Ólafsson Museum**
Laugarnestangi 70
www.iso.is
- SÍM**
Hafnarstræti 16 | **D3**
Mon-Fri 10-16
www.sim.is
- Spark Design Space**
Klapparstígur 33 | **E5**
M-Fri 12-18, Sat 12-16
www.sparkdesign-space.com
- Tveir Hrafnar**
Baldursgata 12 | **G4**
Thu-Fri 12-17, Sat 13-16
www.tveirhrafnar.is
- Wind & Weather Gallery**
Hverfisgata 37 | **E5**
www.windandweather.is
- ÞOKA**
Laugavegur 25 | **E5**
www.thoka.is

Shopping

10 12 Tónar

Skólavörðustígur 15

Both a record label and a store, 12 Tónar have been bringing sweet sounds to Reykjavík for the past 15 years. They stock all of the best new Icelandic music on CDs and some vinyl. Also, check out their Facebook page for information about in-store gigs.

11 Hrímm

Laugavegur 25

Unlike other design shops in town, this one goes beyond the local borders to bring some of the most innovative and stylish creations from designers around the world. They are also the official sales point of Lomography in Iceland, so get yourself a Diana camera and start snapping.

12 Icewear

Pingholtsstræti 2-4

Whether you are after something functional or aesthetically pleasing, Icewear offers a full collection of both clothing for the outdoor enthusiast such as sophisticated high-tech jackets, and locally made Icelandic wool sweaters and other apparel.

Public Phones

There aren't many public payphones in the city centre. The tourist information centre at Aðalstræti 2, City Hall, Kolaportíð, entrance at Landsbankinn and in Lækjargata. Prepaid international phone cards are recommended for int'l callers.

Internet Access

Most cafés offer free wireless internet access. Computers with internet connections are available to use at: Ráðhúskaffi City Hall, Tjarnargata 11
Ground Zero, Frakkastígur 8, near Laugavegur 45,
The Reykjavík City Library, Tryggvagata 15

The National and University Library, Arngrímsgata 3

Tourist Information Centre, Aðalstræti 2
Icelandic Travel Market, Bankastræti 2
Reykjavík Backpackers, Laugavegur 28

Swimming Pools

There are several swimming pools in Reykjavík. The one in 101 Reykjavík, Sundhöll Reykjavíkur, is an indoor one, located at Barónsstígur. It features a nice sunbathing area and some outdoor hot tubs. Opening hours: Mon-Thu from 06:30-22:00, Fri from 06:30-20:00, Sat from 08:00-16:00 and Sun from 10:00-18:00.

Public Toilets

Public toilets in the centre can be found inside the green-poster covered towers located, for example, at Hlemmur, Ingólfsstortorg, by Hallgrímskirkja, by Reykjavík Art Museum, Lækjargata and by Eymundsson on Skólavörðustígur. Toilets can also be found inside the Reykjavík City Hall and the Reykjavík Library.

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H

Hornið
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Hornið opened in 1979 was the first restaurant of its kind in Iceland, a restaurant with a true Italian atmosphere. Hornið is known for good food made out of fresh raw materials, good pizzas baked in front of the guests, good coffee and comfortable service.

Lunch offers every day.
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G

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F

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E



230 kr.

290 kr.

315 kr.

350 kr.

400 kr.

420 kr.

440 kr.

480 kr.

Osushi is a unique restaurant in Iceland. The method of dining involves snatching small plates from a conveyor belt. Pricing is distinguished by the color and pattern of the plate – most range between 230 - 440 ISK.

Everything off the conveyor belt is tasty and if you don't really fancy sushi, you can instead choose for example teriyaki chicken, noodle salad, tempura and desserts. The vibe in **Osushi** is friendly and relaxed. The restaurant is located almost next door to Althingi (the parliament) which is in the heart of the city.

osushi.is



Best Of Reykjavík

Every year around the beginning of July, we make a BEST OF REYKJAVÍK ISSUE celebrating some of what makes Reykjavík-life worthwhile, posting some good entries into a hopefully never-ending discussion. The primary purpose of BEST OF REYKJAVÍK is celebration! It's about big-upping stuff, giving mad props to it and patting it on the shoulder. The following are some nice tips we pulled from BEST OF REYKJAVÍK 2014 which you can read in full at www.grapevine.is.



BEST PLACE TO GET TEA: CAFE BABALÚ

Skólavörðustíg 22



With its shiny yellow exterior, quirky, cluttered décor and the strong, exotic aromas emanating from its kitchen, Babalú is a beacon of good, relaxing vibes and nurtures that nostalgic, carefree part of your soul. And better yet, Babalú has an endless tea list hip enough for all the Ramona Flowers out there. They've also developed a delicious mutant tea/coffee offspring in their 'chamomile soya latté.' It's easy to spend the better part of a day curled up on the sofa, talking to the friendly staff and visitors, or taking to the comfy balcony to soak up those rays during the summer months.



BEST MUSEUM: THE NATIONAL MUSEUM

Suðurgata 41



This is the best place to go to soak up knowledge of the Icelandic nation. Educate yourself on folk customs, look at old photographs and prints, see artefacts such as the first Icelandic Bible and the chess board used by Bobby Fischer and Boris Spassky in the 1972 World Chess Championship, hang in the library, and explore the dense collection which spans over 1000 years of Icelandic history and culture. We promise it's not a boring place to go.



BEST BOOKSTORE: NEXUS

Nóatúni 17



This award has bounced back and forth between Mál og Menning and Eymundsson, but the moment that Nexus was mentioned, all of our panellists were onboard. Not only is Nexus well-stocked in contemporary fiction, but they have an amazing selection of fantasy and sci-fi novels, as well as teen fiction, comic books, graphic novels and manga. The place also avoids the negative stereotype about comic book stores, putting a lot of effort into making sure it has a very female-positive attitude. If they don't have the book you want, they can hunt it down and order it for no extra charge.

A GUIDE THAT FUCKS YOU UP

A list of every Happy Hour in 101 Reykjavík

- 101 Hótel**
Every day from 16:00 to 18:00. Beer 600 ISK, Wine 840 ISK, Cocktails 1,500 ISK.
- Austur**
Thursday to Saturday from 20:00 to 00:00. Beer 800 ISK, Wine 800 ISK.
- B5**
Every day from 16:00 to 22:00. Beer 550 ISK, Cider 700 ISK, Wine 700 ISK.
- Bar 7**
Every day from 16:00 to 20:00. Beer 350 ISK, Shot 450 ISK
- Bar 11**
Thursday from 21:00 to 1:00. Beer 450 ISK
Friday to Saturday from 21:00 to 00:00. Beer 500 ISK
- Barber Bar**
Monday to Sunday from 17:00 to 20:00. Beer 500 ISK, Wine 500 ISK, selected cocktails 1,000 ISK
- Bíó Paradís**
Monday to Sunday from 17:00 to 19:30. 500 ISK all beers, 500 ISK selected wines.
- Bjarni Fel**
Monday to Friday from 21:00 to 23:00. 2 for 1 Beer 990 ISK, single with mixer 1,300 ISK.
- Boston**
Every day from 16:00 to 20:00. Beer 600 ISK, Wine 650 ISK.
- Bravó**
Every day from 17:00 to 21:00. Beer 500 ISK, Wine 750 ISK.
- Bunk Bar**
Every day from 16:00 to 20:00. Beer 500 ISK, Wine 750 ISK.
- Cafe Haiti**
Every day from 16:00 to 19:00. Beer 650 ISK, Wine 800 ISK.
- Den Danske Kro**
Every day from 16:00 to 19:00. 2 for 1 Beer 1,000 ISK and 2 for 1 Guinness and Wine 1,200 ISK.
- Dillon**
Every day from 16:00 to 20:00. Beer 550 ISK, Wine for 700 ISK, Whiskey 550 ISK.



Download the FREE Grapevine Appy Hour app!

Every happy hour in town in your pocket. Available in the App Store and on the Android Market.

- Dolly**
Wednesday to Thursday from 20:00 to 22:00, Friday to Saturday from 20:00 to 23:00. Beer 600 ISK, Wine 600 ISK.
- Dubliner**
Every day from 16:00 until 22:00. Beer 600 ISK, 2 for 1 Wine 1,000 ISK.
- Einar Ben** Every day from 17:30 to 20:00. Beer 500 ISK, Wine 800 ISK
- Frederiksen Ale House**
Every day from 16:00 to 19:00. 2 for 1 Beer 1,000 ISK and Wine 1,100 ISK
- Gaukurinn**
Every day from 20:00 to 22:00. Beer 500 ISK, Wine 700 ISK.
- Glaubar**
Thursday to Saturday from 20:00 to 00:00. Beer 500 ISK, Shot 390 ISK.
- Hótel 1919**
Every day from 16:00 to 19:00. Beer 600 ISK, Wine 575 ISK, Cocktail 1,050 ISK.

- Húrra**
Every day from 18:00 to 22:00. Beer 500 ISK, Wine 700 ISK.
- Iða Zimsen**
Coffee happy hour weekdays 8:00 to 10:00, weekends 10:00-12:00 All coffee 300 ISK. Every day from 19:00 to 22:00. Beer 445 ISK.
- Kaldi Bar**
Every day from 16:00 to 19:00. Beer for 650 ISK, Wine for 650 ISK.
- Kiki Queer Bar**
Thursday from 21:00 to 01:00. Beer 500 ISK, Shots 500 ISK.
- Kolabrautin**
Monday from 16:00 to 18:00. Beer 450 ISK, Wine 500 ISK, Cocktails 1,000 ISK.
- Jörundur Öl- og Matstofa**
Every day from 14:00 to 19:00. Beer for 650 ISK, Wine for 750 ISK, Beer and snaps for 990 ISK.
- Lebowski Bar**
Every day from 16:00 to 19:00. 2 for 1 Beer and Wine 1,100 ISK.
- Loft Hostel Bar**
Every day from 16:00 to 20:00. Beer 600 ISK, Wine 700 ISK.
- Micro Bar**
Every day from 17:00 to 19:00. Beer 700 ISK.
- Nora Magasin**
Every day from 16:00 to 19:00. Beer 650 ISK, House Wine 600 ISK.
- Park**
Friday to Saturday from 22:00 to 04:30. Beer 500 ISK, Shot 400 ISK.
- Prikið**
Monday to Friday from 16:00 to 20:00. Beer 500 ISK.
- Rio Sport Bar**
Monday to Sunday from 12:00 to 19:00. Beer 500 ISK, Wine 700 ISK.
- Slippbarinn**
Every day from 15:00 to 18:00. Beer 500 ISK, Wine 450 ISK, selected Cocktails 1,000 ISK.
- Solon Bistro**
Weekdays from 15:00 to 18:00. Beer 650 ISK, Wine 700 ISK.
- Stofan**
Every day from 17:00 to 20:00. Beer 750 ISK, Wine 950 ISK
- Thorvaldsen Bar**
Monday to Saturday from 16:00 to 20:00. Beer 500 ISK, Wine 600 ISK.
- Tíu Dropar**
Every day from 18:00 to 21:00. 2 for 1 Wine for 1,000 ISK and Beer 1,000 ISK.
- Vinsmakkarinn**
Monday to Sunday from 17:00 to 20:00. Beer 600 ISK, Wine 700 ISK.

ART

ONGOING

Sigurjón Ólafsson Museum 'An Artist at the Saga Sites' by Jóhanness Larsen

The Sigurjón Ólafsson Museum is presenting 25 drawings by the Danish painter Johannes Larsen from his journeys to Iceland in 1927 and 1930 in the upper hall.

Opens January 31
Runs until March 29

'Selected Works' by Sigurjón Ólafsson

Selected works by the namesake of the museum will be on display.

Opens January 31
Runs until March 29

Spark Design Space 'Cityscape' by Snorri Þór Tryggvason, Pétur Stefánsson and Snorri Eldjárn Snorrason

At a time when there were no job opportunities for architects in Iceland, three graduates from the Iceland Academy of the Arts decided to hand draw and watercolor a detailed map of the city center of Reykjavík. The map took 3,000 hours to draw, paint and assemble and is without a doubt one of the most charming city maps you will find. The project was to become the base for their company, Borgarmynd, which specializes in illustrated maps, event branding, infographics, and more.

Opens January 15
Runs until March 4

Ongoing

Better Weather Window Gallery 'Between Persistence and Cessation' by Claudia Hausfeld

Claudia's work often features the house as a symbol. In this piece, the house that is constructed onto the mountain is unfinished. It is partly rock, partly man made structure, oscillating between a building and its opposite.

Runs until January 29

Arion Bank 'Speglað landslag' by Hrafnkell Sigurðsson

In this exhibition (which translates as "Flipped Landscape"), Hrafnkell Sigurðsson examines the relationship between man and nature, showing man-made structures that resemble nature, and natural phenomena that look human.

Runs until February 20

City Library, Spöng 'Washed Up' by Gunnhildur Þórðardóttir

Gunnhildur's 2D and 3D works consist of numerous items that have been discarded and washed up on the shore, or extra materials that she puts to good use. The works are, in a way, transformed from junk and litter into pieces of art. Sustainability is the name of the game in this exhibit, and its title is a reference to a poem Gunnhildur wrote about sustainability and our consumer-fueled society.

Runs until April 12

The Coooco's Nest 'Reykjavík Los Angeles' by Sigurður Páll Pálsson

This solo photography exhibition features a selection of black and white works by Sigurður Páll Pálsson, which draws on surrealism through photography.

Runs until February 7



The Skin Of A House Crawls Into Its Own Skeleton
'Between Persistence and Cessation' by Claudia Hausfeld

Better Weather Window Gallery

Laugavegur 41 (F6) | Jan 1 - 29 ☺ All Day | Free!

In her work, artist Claudia Hausfeld employs a variety of mediums to raise questions about the representation of images, the value of objects, memory and the loss of it, and our understanding of what we see. A recurring image in her work is the house. The frame of the hut, which serves as a symbol for shelter and home, is made of wood and bears its own outer layer, which serves to absorb elements that belong outside, on its inside. Claudia studied photography at the Zürich University of the Arts, and received her BFA from the Iceland Academy of the Arts in 2012. Since then, she has presented her work at exhibitions in Switzerland, Denmark, and Iceland. **AM**

The Einar Jónsson Museum

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

On permanent view

Gallery Verkstaði

Artist Helgi Þorgils Friðjónsson has an exhibition from his early years (1977-1980) that were described by reviewers at the time as being "the last paintings made in Iceland" because of how bad they were. Undaunted, or perhaps encouraged by such words, Helgi has brought those very same works back and is putting them on display.

Runs until January 11

Hverfisgalleri

'Nonsicles and New Fur-lings' By Shoplifter

The Fur-lings are a continuation of Hrafnhildur Arnardóttir aka Shoplifter's interest in using human and synthetic hair that make up her new furry "paintings" and the so-called Nonsicle sculptures made with a combination of found materials the artist obsessively collects.

The work dwells in the gray area between beauty and ugliness, challenging and questioning our pre-conceived ideas of beauty and art.

Runs until January 31

i8 'Snið / Transects' by Eggert Pétursson & Friederike Von Rauch

The two person show features works by Icelandic painter Eggert Pétursson and German photographer Friederike Von Rauch. Their works share certain similarities such as the reduction in material content, stillness and concentration.

Runs until January 31

The Icelandic Phallogical Museum

The museum contains a collection of more than 215 penises and penile parts belonging to almost all the land and sea mammals that can be found in Iceland. There's also a penis sculpture honoring the Icelandic men's handball team, though, confusingly, it does not feature their actual penises.

On permanent view

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on your way to the Blue Lagoon

-- -- [Route 40] -- --

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Hamraborg 4, Kópavogur
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www.gerdarsafn.is

Hönnunarsafn Íslands / Museum of Design and Applied Art

Garðatorg 1, Garðabær
Open 12-17 / Closed on Mondays
www.honnunarsafn.is

Hafnarborg / The Hafnarfjörður Centre of Culture and Fine Art

Strandgata 34, Hafnarfjörður
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Closed on Tuesdays
www.hafnarborg.is



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-TripAdvisor

Vesturgata 3

fish

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sími: 5711289



steamed fish
fish stew
fish soup

ART

ONGOING



Art School For All
Performing Arts Workshop Tailored For Immigrants

Reykjavík City Theatre | Listabraut 3

Jan 7 - April 15 | ☺ Wed 18:00 - 21:00 | 15,000 ISK for 15 lessons

Art collective "Við og við," in conjunction with the Reykjavík City Theatre, are running a series of performing arts workshops for anyone interested in learning more about performance art. Especially tailored to suit immigrants and expats, the workshops take place in English and are suited folks of all experience levels. Bonus: Participants will enjoy the opportunity to take the stage and perform for an audience.

"Við og við" aims to explore social, political and philosophical questions through theatre, performance and dance. The first session is free, so there is no reason not to give it a go. Do note, however, that there is limited space, so you better sign up already!! **AM**

Knitting Iceland

Whether you are a beginner or pro, you can come knit at Laugavegur 25, 3rd floor, every Thursday, 14:00 - 18:00.

On permanent view

Mokka Kaffi

'Grjótaþorpið' by Gylfi Gíslason

Following the re-release of a book from 1980 about Grjótaþorpið, a small neighbourhood in the heart of 101 Reykjavík, an art exhibit with works from the late Gylfi Gíslason will be on display at Mokka Kaffi. In addition to writing said book about Grjótaþorpið, Gylfi was a multi-talented artist who had numerous exhibits, and taught drawing classes.

Runs until January 9

Museum of Design and Applied Art

Are you ready, Madam President?

The exhibition displays clothing and other accessories from the wardrobe of former Icelandic President Vigdís Finnbogadóttir. The exhibition gives visitors a glimpse into Vigdís's preferences in choosing her wardrobe and style, and also the personal lives and habits of heads of state.

Runs until February 22

Prjói

To celebrate 90 years of the Goldsmith's Association of Iceland, 40 Icelandic goldsmiths will exhibit their works. Expect a diverse variety of jewellery and other pieces, with inspiration spanning from over the century.

Runs until January 25

The National Gallery

'New Works' by Jón Óskar

Jón Óskar is one of Iceland's better known artists who has displayed with numerous exhibitions in museums and galleries around the world. In his photographs, drawings, and prints, he explores the conflict between the surface of the picture plane and the subjects he portrays, whether they are portraits, historical themes, or personal references.

Runs until February 8

The National Museum

The Making Of A Nation

This exhibition is intended to provide insight into the history of the Icelandic nation from the Settlement to the present day.

On permanent view

Nordic House

'Forest Embrace and Home' by Yvonne Larsson

The title consists of two themes that Yvonne Larsson has been working with in the form of fourteen big paintings. According to many, Yvonne's work glides between memory and the present, between the mundane and the existentially ambiguous. With her paintings, Yvonne is trying to see beyond and to make the intangible things visible.

Runs until January 11

The Old Harbour

Iceland Expo Pavillion

Every day from 10:00 to 22:00, Saga Films projects a film of Icelandic scenery inside their Iceland Expo Pavillion which provides a unique 360 degree movie experience.

On permanent view

Reykjavík Art Museum -

Ásmundarsafn

'A posteriori: House, Sculpture'

A posteriori, or "from what comes after," is a selection of artworks with original references to buildings or houses. The artists involved in the exhibition have used existing or fabricated architecture to create new works.

Runs until February 1

Reykjavík Art Museum -

Hafnarhús

'Flatland' by Sirra Sigrún

In her exhibition, Sirra Sigrún juxtaposes structural stasis with movement by integrating video with text, movement and sculpture. The exhibit's title is a reference, among other things, to a book of the same title published in 1884 which is a satirical portrayal of the social hierarchy using the language of mathematics and geometry. There is a special artist talk on January 10 at 15:00.

Runs until January 25

Synthesis

This international exhibition comprises works by seven artists. The artists make three-dimensional installations which share the qualities of reflecting a certain perception, thinking and rhythm, which may be seen as an echo of life itself, of primal forces, the structure of the fabric of the world and the ongoing genesis of the universe.

Runs until January 15

by the sea
and a delicious lobster
at Fjörubordid in Stokkseyri



At the seashore the giant lobster makes appointments with mermaids and landlubbers. He waves his large claws, attracting those desiring to be in the company of starfish and lumpfish.



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ART

ONGOING

'Worlds And Ways' by Gunter Damisch

This exhibition features a selection of works by Gunter Damisch from the 1980s to 2013. On display are both graphic works which Gunter has given Reykjavík Art Museum and a selection of other works by him. The works are highly individual iconography and mythology oscillates between figuration and abstraction.

Runs until January 25

'Erró and Art History'

The exhibition provides an insight into the work of the Icelandic painter Erró. He maintains a style that varies between surrealism and pop art and also integrates elements of comics and science fiction. In this exhibition are presented works in which he has borrowed images and fragments of pictures by some of the leading artists in history, such as Picasso and Léger.

Runs until September 27

The Reykjavík City Library

The collection centres around new Nordic literature, both fiction and nonfiction. The library lends out novels, academic publications, audiobooks and more.

On permanent view

'The Plant In The Hallway' by Elísabet Rún and Elín Edda

Sisters Elísabet Rún and Elín Edda have an exhibition which displays art from their first graphic novel 'The Plant In The Hallway.' They have been working on the graphic novel for two years, and its story is about how the protagonist's life changes when she puts a plant out in her hallway.

Runs until January 15

Reykjavík City Museum

Reykjavík 871 +/- 2: The Settlement Exhibition

Archaeological findings from ruins of one of the first houses in Iceland and other excavations in the city centre, open daily 10:00-17:00

On permanent view

Reykjavík Maritime Museum

From Poverty to Abundance

Photos documenting Icelandic fishermen at the turn of the 20th century.

On permanent view

The History of Sailing

Iceland's maritime history that showcases the growth of the Reykjavík Harbour.

On permanent view

The Coast Guard Vessel Óðinn

This vessel sailed through all three Cod Wars and has also served as a rescue ship to over 200 ships.

On permanent view

Reykjavík Museum Of Photography

'Flat 5' by María Kristín Steinsson
María's exhibit features a series of 15 long exposure photographs that capture the entire duration of a performed activity unfolding in front of the camera. Through repetitive, mundane tasks carried out within the boundaries of her home, she attempts to reveal how traces of our existence appear as time passes by. As a result the photographs contains both time and movement condensed within a still image.

Runs until February 3

'Girl Culture' by Lauren Greenfield

Lauren's exhibit focuses on the central role occupied by popular culture in the construction or deconstruction of female identity. The exhibition consists of portrait images and interviews that cast a light on the experiences and expressions of women today.

Runs until January 11

'Iceland' by Beth Yarnelle Edwards

Fascinated with the relations between people, their living spaces and possessions, the San Francisco based photographer Beth Yarnelle Edwards collaborates with her subjects to recreate scenes from their daily lives. The Iceland series was created when she spent a summer month in Iceland. Her aim is to seek out intersections of the mythic and mundane.

Runs until December 9

SÍM (CIA)

'Exitus (Kleine Welt III)' by Soffía Sæmundsdóttir

This exhibition presents paintings, small objects and drawings by artist Soffía Sæmundsdóttir. They are the third part of the exhibition series 'Kleine Welt,' which means "Small World." The exhibit was borne from a stay at Künstlerhaus Lukas in Ahrenshoop in Germany 2012.

Runs until January 26



#LIKEAGIRL

'Girl Culture' by Lauren Greenfield

Reykjavík Museum of Photography

Tryggvagata 15 (D3) | Jan 9 - Jan 11 | ☎ 13:00-17:00 | Free admission!

Lauren Greenfield is a documentary photographer and filmmaker whose work explores societal issues such as youth, gender and consumerism in America. 'Girl Culture' takes a powerful look at how womanhood is interpreted by girls of various ages. The images and accompanying text purvey a sense of pity for girls who are struggling with the double standards of femininity, whether through eating disorders or dress-up games. But, at the same time, Greenfield creates aesthetically beautiful pictures through use of colour and perspective. **AM**

Tveir Hrafnar 'X-mas'

In a continuation of their special holiday show, the artists and affiliates of Tveir Hrafnar band together to offer a diverse exhibition.

Runs until February 6

Týsgallerí

'Homecourt' by Guðmundur Thoroddsen

Guðmundur is known for his work with wooden sculptures and on paper—using a variety of materials, including ink, collage, marble, excrement, ceramic, and gold leaf. His work emphasises the combination of the sacred with the profane.

Runs until January 31

Volcano House

The exhibition gives a brief overview of Iceland's geological history and volcanic systems with superb photographs of volcanic eruptions and other magnificent aspects of Icelandic nature.

On permanent view

Wind And Weather Gallery

'In Between' by Amy Tavern
The Veður og Vindur- Wind and Weather Window Gallery presents a mixed media installation by Amy Tavern, entitled 'In Between'. It explores decision-making through the five senses as well as observation, logic, instinct, intuition, and collective experience.

Runs until February 27

1011

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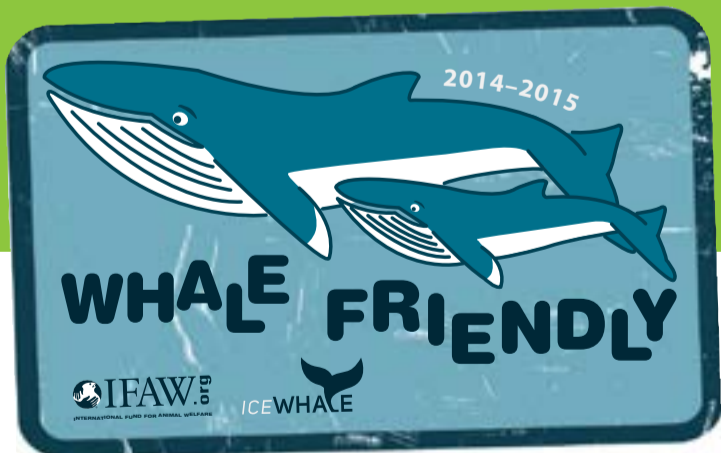
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FOOD

FOR YOUR MIND BODY AND SOUL

STEP INTO THE LIGHT: 2014 Iceland's latest food trends!

A Shit Sandwich Of Gloom

Lorded over by the most bumblingly inefficient government in recent memory, people found it increasingly harder to feed themselves. For instance: at the start of 2015, Icelanders saw rising food prices, along with a tiny drop in the cost of cigarettes and flat-screen TVs. However, the government does win points for eliminating that stupid sugar tax, which was meant to guide the population towards healthier lifestyles. I celebrated by eating a heaping bowl of sugar because it was all I had in the house.

Dairy Behemoth Gets A Boo-Boo

The Icelandic Competition Authority fined dairy monopoly Mjólkursamsalan (MS) 370 million ISK for abusing its dominant market position by selling milk at a 17% higher price to its competitors than to its own associates. Following the verdict, MS and Iceland's ruling party have changed their relationship status to "it's complicated," but we all know they're totally still into each other.

Douchelords

In October, the owners of Thai restaurant Krua Thai purchased the building at Skólavörðustígur 21. They then announced that they would not be renewing the rent agreements with beloved noodle hut Noodle Station, local design store Insula, and tailored shirt store Skyrta. Krua Thai will be taking over the bottom floor to offer their selection of pre-cooked sugar goop, and have voiced plans to turn the upper floor of the property into a hostel. Because we really need some more of that.

Still, entrepreneur Jón Ragnarsón made the most convincing case for Douchelord Of 2014 by kicking out long-standing restaurant Caruso and changing the locks a couple of weeks before Christmas. Prior to this, Jón had instituted the interesting new system of keeping all of the restaurant's profits and subtracting what he thought he had coming to him

before doling out the rest to Caruso's proprietor, José García. José was less than pleased with this arrangement, which led to Jón taking action that was at best primo douchebaggery and likely in breach of several tenants' rights regulations. Employees were locked out of the restaurant and unable to access their properties, and the kitchen staff had to suffer a spoiling inventory before the authorities finally stepped in. Beautiful.

Collectives & Pop-Up Food Markets

2014 saw a rise in self-organizing food collectives and social media based foodie groups. Chef Ólafur Örn launched his pop-up food market series Krás this summer, drafting in many of Reykjavík's most prominent restaurateurs, simplifying their signature dishes into street food. Matargjafir gave Facebookers a way to make food donations to struggling families in exchange for likes and an express lane into heaven.

The SUMAR food collective gave foodies a place to seek out rare ingredients and play a game of endless culinary showboating, as well as staging pop-up food markets of their own.

Facebook group "Ég ann Chili" serviced the chilli geeks a spicy place to get lost in macho one-upmanship and "Úta borða" gave Reykjavík's most elitist food elites a place to discuss which restaurants sucked and which didn't.

Farmer's market Búrið deserves special mention for blazing the trail for their seasonal food markets, as well as staging some wonderful events of their own last year. Nice job!

Goat Saviours

Farmer Jóhanna Þorvaldsdóttir at Háafell has been selflessly breeding and maintaining a heritage strain of Viking goats, which is at risk of extinction—her farm alone constitutes a third of Iceland's total goat population. Háafell has been battling money problems for a couple of years now,

but thankfully a grassroots movement formed on social media with the sole purpose of helping out the farm, staging fundraisers and promoting her goat products. This resulted in the farm being saved. It was super heart-warming. I like my heart warm, let's do more stuff like this.

Iceland's heritage poultry breed has also enjoyed success, thanks to those Viking cluckers and their eggs becoming a symbol of quality, hipness and financial status.

The New Faux-Retro

In New York City, 2014 was apparently a record year for new restaurant openings. I haven't seen the numbers, but I wouldn't be surprised if the same was the case in Reykjavík, where restaurants bred like never before. In line with the times, trends leaned heavily towards artificially-aged interiors and retro nomenclature.

Reykjavík Annexed Into Brooklyn

Speaking of New York, The Brooklynification of Reykjavík bars and restaurants seems to be as unstoppable as a cigarette vendor chilling out on a Staten Island street corner. This Instagram-filtered presentation of the Brooklyn spirit has been imported to most European capitals, and in that spirit Icelandic social media overflowed with snaps of pulled pork, ribs, croissants and artisanal burgers, just like in the rest of the damn world.

The gang now includes Roadhouse, Lebowski Bar, Kex, Chuck Norris Grill, Bunk Bar, Kol, The Cocoo's Nest, Don's Donuts, Kaffihús Vesturbæjar, Dirty Burger & Ribs, American Bar, Brooklyn Bar—with the last three opening on the same 100 metre stretch of Austurstræti. The name of the game is upscale fast food, brunch, or bistro dining. This trend seems to be going nowhere (in every sense of the word). Sigh.

#109



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FOOD

FOR YOUR MIND BODY AND SOUL



Sushi Shake-Up

SuZushi, generally considered to be the best sushi bar in Iceland, was sold to the owners of Hressingarskálinn which caused some foodies to cry out in despair and having to comfort eat themselves with a big bowl of raw fish like a squadron of depressed seals.

The Tacked-On, The Weird, And The Nameless

In 2014 we got a nameless secret pizza place on Hverfisgata, which did no formal marketing. The word still got out and those who found the entrance got to enjoy some of the city's best pizzas.

Chase Steffens and his Taco Fyrir Mig pop-up taco place found a semi-permanent home running Taco Tuesdays at the restaurant CooCoo's Nest, serving up some tasty tacos from the host restaurant's trunk.

Last but not least was Puffin Coffee, the impromptu coffee stand operated out of Sverrir Rolf Sander's kitchen window. Originally, Sverrir's aim was to raise the minimum donation to be able to participate in a charity cycling race, "Ambitious For Autism." He wound up raising nearly \$5,000 for the cause, after Puffin Coffee became a social media sensation.

Taco Rising

Icelanders came late to the party, but 2014 marked an awakening to the glory of well-made tacos. People couldn't stop talking about them. They crept into menus around town, with Bunk Bar a notable example. There are rumours of a new taco place opening early this year, but so far that's it. God willing, the good people of Reykjavik will get their first fish taco restaurant this year.

Great New Bars & Restaurants

Ramen Momo is a great and welcome addition to the food scene, serving authentic Tibetan ramen, dumplings, and steamed

buns—three things Reykjavik has been missing all bundled together in one abominable snowman.

After word got out that a renowned Michelin chef was opening up a drive-thru in Reykjavik, Dirty Burger & Ribs proved a massive let-down. As uninspired as the concept is, the ribs are still damn excellent.

BarAnanas opened around Airwaves time, and gave a welcome break from the usual trends. A entertainingly tacky Tiki bar, which is just going to get better with age and party-wear. Since it's located in a perennially doomed location, let's all cross our fingers that it survives winter and keeps going stronger.

Húrra is where the wild things are these days. Taking Harlem's place (which in turn took Bakkus's place), Húrra hosts the same art-school kid crowd, but with a much better use of space, and with a nice facelift.

Kaffihús Vesturbæjar was a necessary addition to the west side of Reykjavik, which had been experiencing a massive rise in the number of cool young professionals, in contradiction to its total lack of decent coffee houses.

The Big Cs

The key health food words in Iceland last year were chilli, chia seeds, lo-carb, and cauliflower cous-cous. Kale and kimchi made a minor appearance in foodie circles, but not much beyond that. Pomegranate seeds were a popular salad topping after some health columnist praised their life-saving qualities, and gluten continued to be the worst thing since Hitler. Meanwhile, the anti-health brigade enjoyed the other Cs—cronuts and cognac cocktails.

Getting Turnt With Sous-Vide

Sous-vide hit the mainstream after a couple of years of slow simmer. Suddenly, every ambitious amateur gourmet in Iceland

started investing in lukewarm water and plastic bags. Some people rolled their eyes at this, but there are worse things in life than amateur chefs making better steaks.

This Time Only!

Limited edition marketing rose dramatically, with beer companies expanding their selection of seasonal beers (and the selection of seasons), with even old and unchanged brands like Brennivín jumping on the bandwagon with their own Christmas Brennivín. We also saw a lot of new seasonal and limited edition candies, such as caramel-infused Nóa Kropp and gingerbread Nizza chocolate bars.

In that spirit Icelandic social media overflowed with snaps of pulled pork, ribs, cronuts and artisanal burgers, just like in the rest of the damn world.

THE LIZARD

Finally there's the bizarre trend of Eðlan ("The Lizard"), which is the name popular local comedian Steindi Jr. gave to a bog-standard dip that has been popular with housewife sewing circles for ages.

The dip consists of cream cheese spread at the bottom of a baking tray, covered with salsa dip and topped with grated cheese and baked into a dip. This has become ludicrously popular with the young'uns, and has apparently led to a noticeable spike in cream cheese sales.

It's been an interesting year, I'll give you that. Many of the trends we saw in Iceland in 2014 were things that other cultures picked clean in 2013 or earlier. That said, Reykjavik is definitely catching up with the rest of the world at a faster pace—all that's missing now is some fresh ideas and local textures. I've said it before and I'll say it again: we need more crazy up in here. Our heritage is rams' testicles and rotten fish, we have nothing to lose.

So, to the dreamers and schemers out there harbouring big ideas: it's time for you to step into the light!

RAGNAR EGILSSON
ALÍSA KALYANOVA



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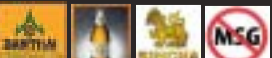
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CHÍRRING

Jan -

9. DJ KGB

10. The Reykjavík Grapevine Music Awards
DJ Óli Dóri

11. Lowercase Nights free entry 20:00

12. Monday Night Jazz free entry 20:00

13. DJ Ísar Logi

14. Kría Brekkan, Just Another Snake Cult & Katrín Helga 1500isk 20:00 DJ Ernir

15. Sindri Eldon & Jón Þór 1000isk 20:00

16. Hürra Grapevine! – DJ Ívar Pétur

17. Vio album release show 21:00 DJ KGB

18. Lowercase Nights free entry 20:00

19. Monday Night Jazz free entry 20:00

20. DJ Andropov

21. DJ Myth & Lazybones

22. Friyrkjan poetry night – Nolo DJ set

23. DJ Styrmir Dansson

24. Boogie Trouble's new years ball free entry 22:00 DJ Óli Dóri

25. Lowercase Nights free entry 20:00

26. Monday Night Jazz free entry 20:00

27. DJ Madame Melancolique

29. DJ Pabbi

30. Stand-up comedy free entry 20:00 DJ Simon FKNHNDISM

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