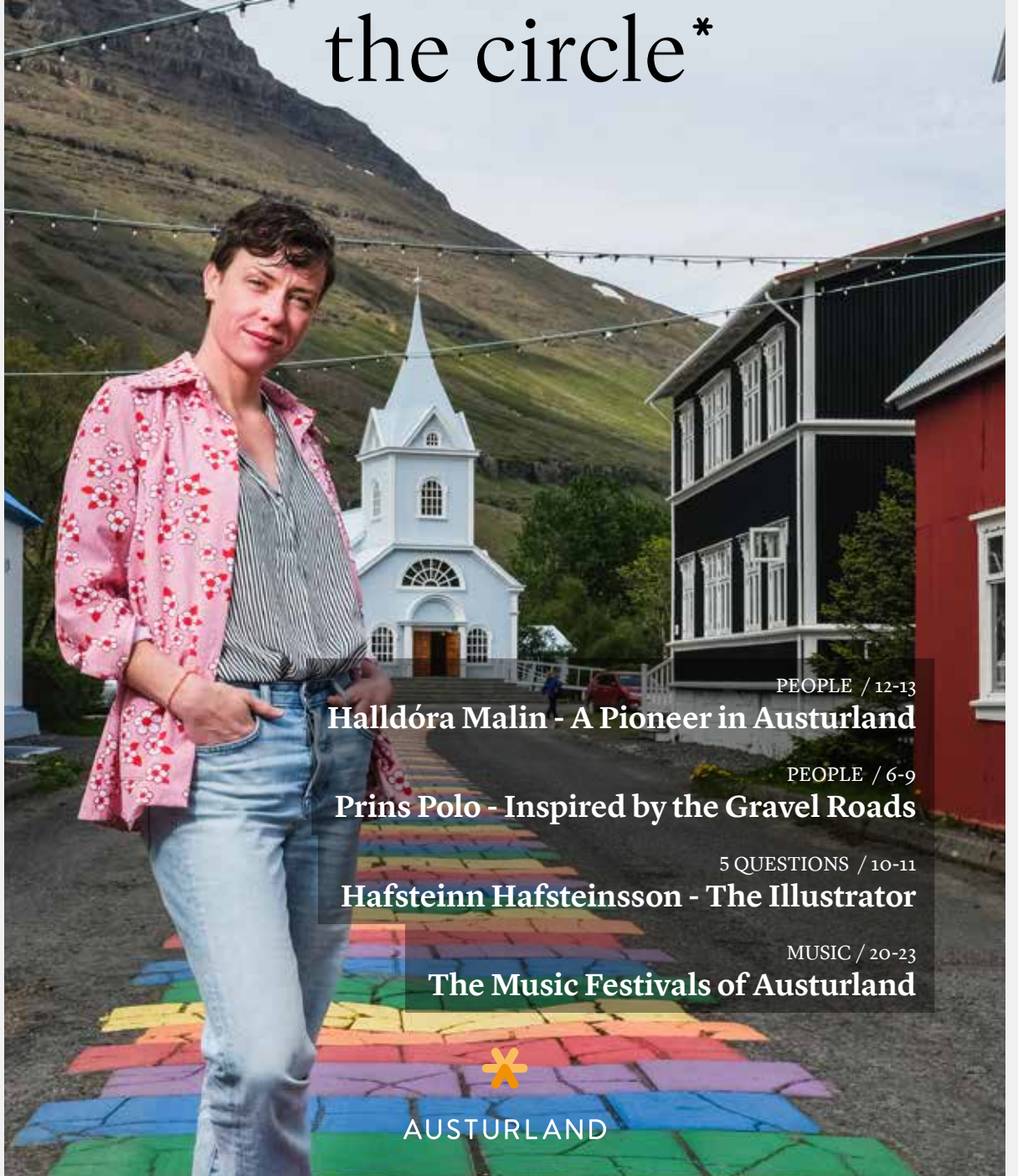


think outside the circle*



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AUSTURLAND



Photo: Rhombic Sandoval

ABOUT

Think outside the circle - The Destination Austurland Magazine is published by Austurbrú ses. – a regional business, cultural and education development organisation – that oversees the project Destination Austurland in cooperation with Samband sveitarfélaga á Austurlandi and Ferðamálasamtök Austurlands.

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ON THE COVER

Halldóra Malin, actress
from Seyðisfjörður.
Photo by Kox.



Cultural Visionaries of Austurland

Hello again!

Here we are with a new issue of *Think Outside the Circle*, a magazine about Austurland: our people, what we think, and most importantly: what we do! And one of the things we do, which we develop - and which we excel at - is our cultural life.

We're not sure anyone moves to Austurland because of the cultural life we can offer. We understand that one can probably enjoy "culture" on a daily basis while living in a bigger community - Reykjavik being the obvious cultural capital of Iceland. But appreciation of a vibrant cultural energy and sparkle is essential in order to acclimate and choose to live in Austurland; then a person can commit to a long-term relationship to our region.

So what is the nature of our cultural life in Austurland?

A Cultural Life, with a capital C and L, is perhaps, essentially, an urban phenomenon. A whole bracket of people working together to create art, to find new ways to experience and reflect reality. It's a group thing, so to speak.

This is not always the case in Austurland (there are of course exceptions). Here the impact of one artist can be that of innovative visionary. People in Austurland who devote their time and effort to creating art, often do so in isolation or in small groups. And it almost goes without saying, it's a grassroots thing.

People initiate and generate art and culture because they need to, not to make a living, but to make life more meaningful.

The impact of a visionary in a small community can be enormous, and effect its future generations.

This edition of the magazine *Think outside the Circle - Destination Austurland* - is dedicated to the cultural visionaries in, and of, Austurland.

CONTRIBUTORS TO THIS ISSUE



SIGGA ÞRÚÐA is a photographer in the town of Neskaupstaður. She was born in 1974, and has been photographing her surroundings and townspeople since she was a teenager. She took the wonderful pictures of Hafsteinn Hafsteinnsson, writer and artist, which you can see on page 10.

What she loves most about Austurland is having the mountains in her backyard!



KORMÁKUR MÁNI HAFSTEINSSON, aka Kox, is one of Austurland's finest photographers and has been shooting pictures since he was in his mid thirties. His enthusiasm for the art form has grown steadily, and today he works as a professional photographer. Check out his work on the websites [facebook.com/koxphotography](https://www.facebook.com/koxphotography) (digital) and [negative.is](https://www.negative.is) (film).

What he loves about Austurland is the calmness of everything:

“You walk out the door and fifteen minutes later you are in the wilderness shooting with your camera.”



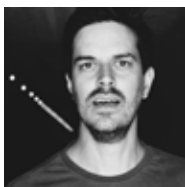
SIGRÍÐUR LÁRA SIGURJÓNSDÓTTIR is a project manager at Austurbrú. She has been writing for a long time (mostly for and about theatre) and has completed Masters degrees in both Literature and Publication (1999-2000). On her “desk of procrastination” is also a half finished PhD on *Political Performance in Iceland*. Her favorite thing about Austurland is the peace and quietness (the very same thing noted as: “nothing ever happens here” when one is young) and, of course, the autumn colours.



INGVI ÖRN ÞORSTEINSSON is born and bred in Reykjavík but has lived in Seyðisfjörður for the last five years. He started his career as a hairdresser but changed course ten years ago and became a designer. He's taken part in all kinds of projects both in Austurland and in Reykjavík. He loves living in a small community in Austurland and being able to work with talented people on valuable and interesting work. What he treasures most about our region is that he doesn't have to take the car to run errands in town. He can walk and still have time to hangout with his family, friends or just the dog!



JÓN KNÚTUR ÁSMUNDSSON is a native of Austurland, and still doesn't know what he wants to do with his life. He has made numerous programs for the Icelandic radio, written stories and interviews for papers and magazines. He's had the honour of editing *Think outside the circle - The Destination Austurland Magazine*, now for the second time. What he loves about Austurland is the fact that he doesn't spend any time stuck in traffic.



DANIEL BYSTRÖM is our very own Swedish designer who has been a part of the *Destination Austurland* team more or less since the beginning. His gift, besides being a terrific designer, is his neverending love for almost everything. He is a bona fide resident of Austurland even though his Icelandic skills are questionable. What he loves about our region is that everyone can be themselves and there is a place for every oddball - such as himself.

Creative Austurland

„Austurland is characterized by a vibrant creative power, full of art, design, music and crafts inspired from nature and local heritage. The region offers several music and culture festivals, art schools, museums and centers where creative people meet.

The cultural and creative sector is important for the region, contributing to development and growth, and brings uniqueness to the destination. These are the ingredients that should always be involved in all parts of the destination development.“

– From the Strategy Report of Destination Austurland, available on www.austurland.is

A Cultural Manifesto

Destination Austurland believes that a vibrant culture life enriches people's life quality and makes it a more exciting destination for our guests.

The cultural and creative sector brings uniqueness to our destination. It is closely linked to the people and soul of Austurland, and provides ingredients that should always be involved in all parts of our destination development.

Therefore we have made a *Cultural Manifesto* for Destination Austurland:

- **WE WANT OUR GUESTS TO FEEL THE CREATIVE POWER OF AUSTURLAND**
- **WE WANT OUR CULTURE & CREATIVITY TO BE ACCESSABLE TO OUR GUESTS**
- **WE WANT ALL PARTS OF OUR DESTINATION TO BE MORE UNIQUE BY ADDING AN EXTRA LAYER OF HIGH QUALITY CULTURAL & CREATIVE STANDARDS**
- **WE WANT TO ENCOURAGE CULTURE & CREATIVITY CONNECTED TO OUR LANDSCAPES AND OUR HERITAGE THAT WE ARE SURROUNDED BY**
- **WE WANT THE STORY OF AUSTURLAND TO BE CHARACTERIZED BY OUR CULTURE & CREATIVITY**

Havarí - A Place to be Creative

*On life at the farm, writing choruses
on gravel roads and working with the locals*

” *“The centre is not where it used to be. Producing an album is mostly digital work and can be done where ever. I can do it here at the farm just as easily as I can in Reykjavík.”*

– “Prins Polo” aka Svavar Pétur Eysteinnson





Svavar and Berglind: A Creative Couple.

Havari – is a rose in one of Austurland's most rural fjords. It is both a farm which produces organic food plus a cultural hub (the location for jam-packed summer concerts, where Iceland's finest perform). It also happens to be the home of "Prins Polo" – aka Svavar Pétur Eysteinnsson - Iceland's unluckiest pop star.

"Havari is the place for my wife Berglind and I to be creative, to host concerts, to offer coffee and the food we love. Here we can gather people together and just make something happen, all kinds of *húllumhæ*" says Svavar Pétur, aka Prins Polo. He has just released a new record called "Þriðja kryddið" (The third spice) and, as always, people are listening.

HAVARÍ IN KARLSSTAÐIR, Berufirði, is their home and appears to be an extension of the couple, who have become famous for organic food production and their vegan hot dogs, called Bulsur. The couple were born and raised in Reykjavík but moved east some years ago. A move that the national media discussed at great length. Why on earth were these arch hipsters moving to Austurland of all places?

Well, it just seemed like "a good idea at the time", and they are still here, and still making headlines.

The new album, released this summer, was mostly done at the farm. Does it make life difficult having to do all the work out here in the "wilderness"?



The Havari Farm in Karlsstaðir, Berufirður.

"The centre is not where it used to be" says Svavar. "The scene doesn't exist in the same manner it used to. Producing an album is mostly digital work and can be done where ever. I can do it here at the farm just as easily as I can in Reykjavík".

PRINS POLO ACTUALLY STARTED a number of years ago as a project in Seyðisfjörður and has always functioned outside Reykjavík. "Berglind and I moved east a few years ago, and I needed an outlet for my music. Thus, Prins Polo came into being, and I've become pretty self sufficient in most things. Of course, while making my records I sometimes need to work with people outside the region simply because I have to".

Do you make an effort do work with local people if you can?

"Yeah, I do actually. For instance, the art work for the new album was made with Kox, a local photographer in Egilsstaðir. I had a specific idea for the album cover but I needed someone to help execute it. I went online and was most certainly going to work with someone far away, but then I came across Kox and I just thought, why should I go further than Egilsstaðir to do this? It felt kind of liberating to take a drive to Egilsstaðir and not to Reykjavík. So basically, I made the record from scratch here at Havari, excluding a trip to Berlin for the final touches. My producer lives there and we had to work closely together for ten days to finish the album. But everything else was more or less made here".



The art work for Prins Polo's new album. The photo was shot in Egilsstaðir by Kox.

” I find that often the best ideas are born while driving the roads here.

Do you write music at the farm?

"Sure, I have a work space area, a hangout that sometimes looks like a work space and sometimes a dump. When I work on music I tidy the place up, mop the floors and just keep the place clean. But, I find that often the best ideas are born while driving the roads here. Our farm is pretty isolated, which means I have to drive a lot. While driving I often come up with parts of new songs, especially choruses. I record them on my phone, the result being - I have a bunch of choruses - of which, some will end up as songs".

Inspired by the gravel roads then are we?

"Yeah, maybe", says Svavar and laughs.

The barn at Karlsstaðir has been recently renovated and made into Austurland's most popular concert venue, where some of Iceland's most distinguished musical acts play, often to a full house. For the last two years Havari hosted a string of concerts under the banner "Summer in Havari". Many of Iceland's most popular acts came east to perform at the barn, making quite a noise in the peaceful east.

5 questions

for an artist



” You get inspired by the beauty of nature and get rejuvenated by the clean air.

Writing and drawing is part of who I am

Hafsteinn Hafsteinsson is an artist residing in Neskaupstaður. He learned his art at the Willem de Kooning Academy in Rotterdam but moved to Austurland with his partner a few years ago. In 2016, his children's book: "No One Saw the Dog" became a huge success in Iceland, and the sequel, named "But We Are Friends" was published in October 2018.

Who are you?

I am an artist and I work as a writer and an illustrator. Creating art, writing, and drawing are things I have been doing since I was a child. It has always been a dream of mine to turn this into a full time career as it is my passion and what I like to do the most. I think I can never stop making art.

Why write children's books?

It wasn't something I had planned, I am personally more interested in stories that are geared towards older audiences, like graphic novels. But I had this small idea roaming around in my head for a while and my partner suggested I should just work on it and look for a publisher. I thought a children's book would be a good platform for getting my career started and getting a publisher. I also liked making a story for children but aiming it at the person reading (such as the parents). The story takes a jab at the excessive use of smart-phones; a common problem in many parents household.

And to be perfectly frank, I think starting off by doing a smaller story is better than working on a huge novel that you might never publish. So, a children's book was a great training ground for future projects.

"Nobody Saw the Dog" was a huge success. What happened in your humble opinion?

What I would say helped the book to get noticed is the message it had and the visuals. As I said before, the excessive use of smart-phones is a common problem with parents. When you are writing a moral story, you should never be judgmental or holier than thou. So I made the story a bit humorous by having it told from the point of view of a neutral characters: the household pets. They are usually the ones who have no idea what we are doing with a glow box glued to our faces. I also think that the way I illustrated the story got noticed by the judge panel at the Nordic council, since I did a lot of small things people might not even notice, such as having the main characters only ones with outlines, while the humans kind of blend into the backdrop.

Where do you go from here?

Writing and drawing is part of who I am so It is something I can't stop doing. It is my calling in life. So my plan is just to keeping on creating art. I am already working on several projects with other people around the world.

What is Austurland for you?

It is home. But to be honest, its a place where sometimes, time stands still, and so you feel like you have more time in the day to work on your own projects, instead of wasting your time in traffic and filling your ears with city noises. You get inspired by the beauty of nature and get rejuvenated by the clean air.



The things that make culture vibrant

Avoiding boredom, finding release and living in harmony

Halldóra Malin is an actress, singer, house painter and a mother. She lives in Seyðisfjörður (pop ca. 660) with her son, Stígur. She's a pioneer when it comes to developing theatre in Austurland and a proud inhabitant of Seyðisfjörður – the Cultural Capital of the East.

“I grew up in Egilsstaðir, Austurland, and I was an energetic child,” says Halldóra, when asked about her past. To become a professional actress isn't, in any sense, “traditional” in Austurland: “I chose acting when I was very young, maybe four to five years old, but I was around eleven when I decided to become an actress. The main reason for my decision was that I couldn't really find anything else that I enjoyed more. I really don't want to spend my time doing things I find boring”!

On Theatre in Austurland...

“While at Uni my friend and actor, Stebbi Ben, and I had the idea to start a theatre project in Austurland. Stebbi, plus a friend of ours (Guðjón Sigvalda) and I were allowed to use the ‘Slaughterhouse’, the cultural center of Egilsstaðir - which was actually still being used to process meat - and had a pretty distinctive smell inside. However, it was a fantastic theatre and the possibilities were endless. In summer we put on shows for both children and adults, and in winter we went to Reykjavík for acting work.

I remember those years with a smile. We had so much fun doing it and it made me believe that theatre could work everywhere, because in the end you only need people with passion to run it. Soon a grassroots following will develop. This happens with all cultural work, but at later stages it also depends on how the community supports it, whether it can become something else rather than ‘just’ grassroots.

I was probably one of the first here in Austurland who studied acting at university level, but now there several dozen educated actors from Austurland that have studied in Reykjavík or abroad. It wouldn't surprise me if some of these people came back in a few year's time to make something happen anew. But there again, acting is so much more than just doing professional shows. Lately I have been directing and teaching, which I find both meaningful and important.”

On Seyðisfjörður...

“I came here as a teenager with Stebbi Ben and together we helped establish the LungA Festival (along with other like minded people). I just seem to find my way back to Seyðisfjörður again and again!

There is something about this little brave and tight-knit community that I love. Creative people and entrepreneurs seem to like it here, and I think it is because of some offbeat understanding and broad-mindedness of how life should be. This means that all sorts of people live together in harmony in a happy little melting pot!

Why this is so in Seyðisfjörður and not anywhere else has something to do with the town's history. People care about the heritage, for instance, keeping old houses beautiful. Plus, artists have long resided here and made their work here. These things matter and make the cultural life vibrant. The people here are extraordinary when it comes to making art, and enjoying it. They show up in great numbers at art exhibitions as well as at football matches!“

” There is something about
this little brave and tightknit
community that I love.



Karna Sigurðardóttir, filmmaker.

” It was a very intense experience, and in the end I feel that the town is my home despite the fact that I don't live there.

690 Vopnafjörður

A glimpse of reality

“It is essential for all communities to see a picture of oneself from an outside perspective, it can be a way to break down habits and a fixed mind-set,” says Karna Sigurðardóttir, a filmmaker from Austurland. Her film “690 Vopnafjörður” documents everyday life in a small fishing village in Iceland, i.e. Vopnafjörður, Austurland’s northernmost town!

Made with cinematographer Sebastian Ziegler it was premiered in 2017 and got great reviews, urging one viewer to state it was the “best Wes Anderson film Wes Anderson didn’t make”!

“I FOLLOWED LIFE in Vopnafjörður for about four years, but the locals also observed me during the process”, says Karna. “It was a very intense experience, and in the end I feel that the town is my home despite the fact that I don’t live there. I have become friends with people there and developed a connection with the community”.

When asked about the origins of the project, “It started out as a small video project but than it grew into a full feature production”, says Karna. “The only requirement that people in Vopnafjörður had at the start of the project was that we would keep our personal vision, and I am very grateful for that. Yet it is hard to maintain objectivity when your connection with the place and the people slowly becomes tighter”.



A young chessplayer from Vopnafjörður.

Karna says that all small communities think about their image. “We sometimes believe that we can control how others see us. We debate, for instance, on social media about these matters, fight over how people define our community, and that’s why we sometimes become ambassadors for our town and we don’t show our emotions, and what we really worry about. Taking our time shooting the film - the aim was to go beyond the clichés - and find out what shapes the relationship between a local and the surroundings. The local people contemplate how the community will survive in the future, without becoming dramatic about it. I think the film reveals the bonds and emotions people attach to their town”

“IT WOULD HAVE BEEN EASY to edit the film in a manner where only smiling faces on a sunny day were shown - making it look like a bank commercial - but how does the viewer respond to that kind of storytelling? Does he come out of the cinema thinking: Now that was a good film because it showed the town in a positive light! I’d rather believe that a film touches people because it reveals something from underneath the surface, a version of reality. And that was the very thing we tried to capture: A glimpse of a reality”.



A shark hunter from Vopnafjörður, and Karna (to the left)

TO CAPTURE THE MOMENT & JUST LET IT HAPPEN

VINNY VAMOS & STUDIO SILO IN STÖÐVARFJÖRÐUR

Vincent Wood, known as Vinny Wood in Austurland, has been spending the last few years building a recording studio in Stöðvarfjörður with his colleagues and friends. It is the only studio in Iceland that focuses on analog recording techniques and Vinny hopes to capture some genuine magic moments at Studio Silo in the future.

Vinny (full name Vincent Franz Wood) was born in Liverpool in 1986. He's been "obsessively interested in Electronics" since he was a child. "A few years later came the music," he says. "Both merged together beautifully when it came to building my first garage studio in a damp, windy shed at my parent's home."



Vinny the Engineer at work.

Photo: Jón Knútur Ásmundsson

Vinny qualified as an Electronics Engineer in 2008 and worked for a number of companies, while playing and recording music in his spare time. "We did many tours of Ireland, the UK, and mainland Europe in the following years with my Punk band Vamos, and I recorded a lot of bands. It was on one of those tours that I met my partner and soulmate Una [Sigurðardóttir]. I had always dreamed of building up two things in my life; a Recording Studio, and my own Electronics company."

The first of those is now becoming a reality, here in Austurland.

A VERY STEEP LEARNING CURVE

In 2014 Una and Vinny moved to Iceland: "We had a Skype call with Una's friend Rósa, who had started a huge Ex-Fish Factory Arts Project in the East Fjords in 2011. They had 2800 sq. meters of space! We booked ferry tickets that night. The following month we were packing every square inch of our VW van with music equipment, plus a few clothes and cherished possessions of course."

The day after they arrived in Stöðvarfjörður they started working on how to fund a project that became a far bigger and bolder project than they had ever dreamed of. "We had originally intended to spend just one summer building a simple Studio, but that quickly changed when we got an offer from a Studio designer that was too good to turn down. John Brandt, from Texas, holding forty years of Acoustics Algebra under his belt, started to design our 90 sq.m studio."

Over the course of the following four years Vinny and Una slowly and meticulously built everything exactly to his detailed drawings, all by themselves with help from skilled friends and volunteers.



Vinny and Una in the control room.



Studio Silo in the making.

Photos on this page: Studio Silo

” Studio Silo will be a very special place for musical creativity, not only because it is in such a beautiful and unspoiled location far from the reaches of super-pubs, shopping malls and freeways.

“It was a very steep learning curve, but luckily both of us are good with our hands and materials. Walls over 30cm thick, 80kg doors filled with sand, three ceilings in every room, detailed shapes in the corners of every space, and a rather complex air conditioning system. We also pushed ourselves to manufacture and lay hard-wood parquetry floors, to lay a natural stone facade in the main room, and to design specific furniture and equipment to make this a unique experience for the artists who enter its doors. This is where my Electronics came in vital, by not only being able to repair and revive mountains of ancient and wonderful sound equipment, but also being able to design and build unique devices that no other Studio will have.”

SPECIAL PLACE FOR MUSICAL CREATIVITY

They hope to be open in the first half of 2019: “Studio Silo will be a very special place for musical creativity, not only because it is in such a beautiful and unspoiled location far from the reaches of super-pubs, shopping malls and freeways. But also because of our mission; to provide an environment which can be as “analog” as you want it to be. We will of course be able to record to computer like any other studio, but you can also take advantage of our extensive collection of weird and wonderful vintage equipment, and even go all the way and produce an entire record 100% analog, on big tape machines from the 80s, plate reverbs from the 70s, and microphones from the 1940s.”

BUT WHY IS ANALOG SO IMPORTANT?

“For me, recording doesn’t have to involve tape recorders, but that is the way I enjoy it the most and I believe that it sounds nicer. For me “analog” is my alias for a mind-set and a method by which I believe is the most organic and magical way to capture music. To capture the moment and just let it happen, and let the magic of the performance appear. This is how the most remarkable albums of the 20th century were made, so let’s make more of them!”

Shopping for local treasures anyone?

Personal information at the Crossroads

” We want to share our lifestyle with our guests, the slow-paced, fun and inclusive lifestyle of Egilsstaðir and Austurland



Hús Handanna Icelandic Art & Design shop is an ambitious business venture: a shop originally set up to promote local arts, crafts and design. It was opened in June 2010 by an organisation called MAKE by Þorpið. The shop was meant to be a platform for the local group of MAKE designers to sell their products.

The name of the shop is a play on words. The title of the novel, House of spirits by Isabel Allende, can be translated as: Hús andanna. So, Hús handanna, (same name, + one h) literally translates to “House of hands”.

Today, designs from Austurland are still prominent in the store. The gallery displays a selection of paintings and

ceramics by local artists, handcrafted clothing, and items made from local resources such as reindeer leather, antlers, and wood from the forests of Austurland. The shop also includes work of designers from all over Iceland. Local food products are likewise an important and tasty part of the store’s selection.

Since 2016 the Tourist Info for Austurland in East Iceland has also been located in Hús Handanna. Not surprisingly, the shop’s stock increased in maps and souvenirs relating to Austurland.

“We are located on the busiest crossroads in the eastern part of Iceland. Everyone travelling around the area passes by here. We want to welcome our guests and provide a personal service - fitting to each individual’s wishes, and giving information on hidden secrets and local treasures - in the spirit of the image we are creating for Austurland as a destination for travellers.”

At the Information centre a “story-telling” map covers a whole wall. There, one can find extra tidbits about stories from the area. Guests can look at the map on site while enjoying light refreshments.

“We want to share our lifestyle with our guests” Lára says, “the slow-paced, fun and inclusive lifestyle of Egilsstaðir and Austurland.”



Lára Vilbergsdóttir - a part of Hús Handanna from the beginning. Behind her a "storytelling" map of Austurland covering a whole wall at the Information Center.



The Music Festivals of Austurland

The Rhythm is in Our Blood

In Austurland we like to party! In the summer time villages in Austurland host some spectacular festivals. Each of them stems from a different initiative and are produced mostly by volunteers. They have all been around for years or even decades and a growing number of participants show no signs of letting up. People from all over the country flock to Austurland to attend each and every one.



Photo: Ólafur Björnsson

Spring in Austurland kicks off with the Hammond Festival in Djúpivogur

Hammond Festival: A Celebration of an instrument

Spring in Austurland kicks off with the Hammond Festival in Djúpivogur. Designed, as the name suggests, to celebrate the Hammond organ. A diverse music festival it has been hosted over a weekend towards the end of April since 2006. It's timed around the Icelandic celebration of the first day of summer, which is always on a Thursday, late April. And, no, it is not yet summer enough to go camping. The line-up of the first concert, Thursday night, usually consists of local bands but on Friday and Saturday well known bands from all over the country join the locals on stage. The last concert on the menu is a concert at Djúpivogur church, where the Hammond plays the key role, along with a solo singer performance. The village also hosts other events over the weekend, like exhibitions from local craftspeople and designers.

[read more on hammond.djupivogur.is](http://hammond.djupivogur.is)

Bræðslan: Camp out, meet and have fun!

In an old fish factory, this miniscule village's population multiplies many times over the last weekend in July every year with the biggest music festival in Austurland. Warm up concerts start in the community centre, Fjarðaborg, from the Wednesday, but the main event is a big concert at a former fish factory (Bræðslan). There are always many performers on the bill. Mostly Icelandic, old and new, and some world-famous bands have also performed at Bræðslan through the years, such as Emiliana Torrini and Belle & Sebastian.

Over 2500 Icelanders flock to Borgarfjörður for Bræðslan every year. Even if not everyone gets tickets to the main event, people camp out, meet and have fun. The festival is a popular scene for reunions and the surroundings are ideal for hiking.

[read more on braedslan.is](http://braedslan.is)



Bræðslan is an Authentic Icelandic summer party

Photo: Bræðslan



The festival motto of Eistnaflug is “Don’t be an idiot”

Eistnaflug: “Don’t be an idiot!”

It’s the middle of July, so let’s rock! This one is all about the metal. New and old Icelandic and international rock bands and their fans gather together, listen to music and party. Now, some of you might think this is a recipe for disaster? All of them long haired, leather wearing people in one place? Not so! The festival’s motto is “Don’t be an idiot” and a tireless attitude of the hosts and guests like to have fun and not make trouble, has resulted in a very tame and fun rock festival that has long since become a steady feature in the small town of Neskaupstaður on

the coast of Norðfjörður. The number of participants and guests of the festival each year is around 2500, people camp out, listen to music and have fun.

The name of the festival is an anagram of Neskaupstaður’s town festival, Neistaflug, held in the beginning of August. Neistaflug means, literally translated, sparks flying, but by moving the letter N we get Eistnaflug, testicles flying. Yes, we like our wordplay...

[> read more on eistnaflug.is](http://eistnaflug.is)



The Youth takes over Seyðisfjörður during LungA Festival

LungA: A plethora of exhibitions and concerts

Not strictly a music festival but a youth festival of arts in Seyðisfjörður, first hosted in 2000. The festival is centred around youth participation and includes workshops and lectures and finishes with a plethora of exhibitions and concerts. The festival takes over the town for a week in July. The festival has gained a reputation, nationally and internationally, for its intimate atmosphere and innovated and ambitious workshops. The festival has also spawned the LungA School, a folk high school that operates in the winter with an ambitious program for multi-disciple art students.

This festival is one of a kind and it is fantastic to see young people gather around artistic practices. LungA has had a lot of impact on the village and has added greatly to the already blossoming art life of Seyðisfjörður. The name of the festival is short for Listahátið ungs fólks á Austurlandi, but lunga literally means a lung. Yes, again with the wordplay!

[> read more on lunga.is](http://lunga.is)



Pólar Festival in Stöðvarfjörður



Bræðslan, Borgarfjörður eystri



Summer in Havarí, Berufjörður



The Great Forest Day in Hallormsstaður



List í ljósi Light Festival in Seyðisfjörður



Eistnaflug metal & hard rock festival, Neskaupstaður

THE MAIN CULTURAL EVENTS OF AUSTURLAND

If you happen to be in Austurland over the summertime you really can't miss a cultural event of some sort. It is a testament to Austurland's sparkling culture life where locals enjoy themselves and at the same time entertain the guests. These are just the main events. A closer look and you could probably keep yourself busy throughout the year!

VOPNAFJÖRDUR	VOPNASKAK - Vopnafjörður's main cultural event in late June/early July, mixing theatre, music and some genuine family fun!
BORGARFJÖRDUR EYSTRÍ	BRÆDSLAN - If you are a fan of music you can't miss this festival, taking place in an old fishing factory on the last weekend in July.
BORGARFJÖRDUR EYSTRÍ	FJARÐABORG MUSIC SERIES – Every summer a series of concerts are held in the community house Fjarðaborg.
FLJÓTSDALUR	ANNUAL EXHIBITIONS IN SKRÍDUKLAUSTUR / CENTER OF CULTURE AND HISTORY – Exhibitions and events housed in the home of one of Iceland's best known novelists, Gunnar Gunnarsson (1889-1975).
EGILSSTADIR	FLJÓTSDALSHÉRAÐ CULTURE CENTER (THE SLAUGHTERHOUSE) - Hosts a variety of exhibitions and events each year. Make sure you check out their summer exhibitions.
EGILSSTADIR	ORMSTEITI - A family festival in August with a variety of events each day. The festival blends together culture, art, traditional cooking, sports and other activities.
HALLORMSSTAÐUR	THE GREAT FOREST DAY - A family festival in Iceland's biggest woodland. Held in July.
SEYDISFJÖRDUR	SKAFTFELL / CENTER FOR VISUAL ART - Contemporary art, local and international. An annual summer exhibition is an undeniable highlight of the region's cultural life.
SEYDISFJÖRDUR	LUNGA FESTIVAL - A week long workshop based international art festival in July for young people, ending with a grand concert!
SEYDISFJÖRDUR	LIST Í LJÓSI - Each year in February this festival lights up the town in celebration of the arrival of the sun after four months of shadow.
SEYDISFJÖRDUR	THE BLUE CHURCH SUMMER CONCERT SERIES - A program consisting of different music styles, where classical music, jazz and blues, folk music and lighter music get to shine.
NESKAUPSTAÐUR	EISTNAFLUG - Iceland's best heavy metal and hard rock festival. Taking place on the second weekend of July.
NESKAUPSTAÐUR	NEISTAFLUG - An annual family festival in Neskaupstaður on the first week of August. Concerts, exhibitions and good, wholesome family fun.
REYÐARFJÖRDUR	OCCUPATION DAY - A day – usually in late June or early July - that commemorates the day when the first British troops arrived in 1940.
ESKIFJÖRDUR	ÚTSÆÐIÐ - Eskifjörður's very own town and family festival in August with music, food and fun!
FÁSKRÚDSFJÖRDUR	FRENCH DAYS - A festival in end of July with the purpose of maintaining the memory of French fishermen who practised their craft off the shores of Iceland in the 19th and early 20th centuries.
STÖÐVARFJÖRDUR	STÖÐ Í STÖÐ - Live music, art exhibitions, food and friendly locals. Held every other year in late June or early July. When not having Stöð í Stöð the people of Stöðvarfjörður host another festival called PÓLAR , a celebration of sustainable living!
DJÚPIVOGUR	HAMMOND FESTIVAL - A four day music festival in April where the main purpose is to honor and introduce the Hammond organ.
DJÚPIVOGUR	ROLLING SNOWBALL - An international visual art exhibition in July and August which presents works by contemporary artists.
BERUFJÖRDUR	SUMMER IN HAVARÍ - A concert series at the Havarí farm in Berufjörður where Iceland's best bands and artists perform and people dance the night away!

UNTIL NEXT TIME

