The National Theatre of Iceland – Thjóðleikhúsid

**Tímathjófurinn**  
The Thief of Time  
by Steinunn Sigurdardóttir  
adapted for the stage by Melkorka Tekla Ólafsdóttir  
Directed by Una Thorleifsdóttir

**Nominated for five Gríman – The Icelandic Theatre Award:**
- Best Play
- Best Director
- Best Choreography
- Best Soundscape
- Best Costumes

A highly celebrated production, based on a novel by one of Iceland’s most acclaimed writers. The interplay between text, music and choreography creates a complex world of love, rejection and obsession.

The Thief of Time is a unique work about obsessive love, inextinguishable desire, rejection and loss. Aristocrat Alda Ivarsen is a thirty-seven-year-old teacher of languages. She has had a succession of love affairs that have meant little to her. She easily gets rid of her lovers when she gets tired of them. But when she falls in love with the new history teacher, a married and handsome man, heading for politics, she loses control. When he abandons her after an affair that lasts one hundred days she cannot get him out of her mind.

The play is based on an Icelandic bestseller from 1986, that was also repeatedly reedited in Sweden and France. The novel was made into a French feature film, Voleur de Vie, directed by Yves Angelo, starring Emmanuelle Béart and Sandrine Bonnaire.

The show has been performed to sell out audiences since its premiere at The National Theatre’ Black Box Stage on 23rd of March 2017. Re-premiere 9th of September 2017.
Excerpts from reviews:

"...a magnificent work of art is created on the stage, where every aspect of the show supports its other aspects in an impressive way... The novel’s fans flock now to the theatre but I wish that people that do not know the novel also go there to delve into the delight and agony of Alda Ivarsen’s heartbreak" (SA, tmm.is, culture review)

★★★★

"... an incisive and memorable production ... excellent cast..." (SJ, Fréttabladid newspaper)

★★★★

"One of the very best productions of the theatrical season... The star of the show is Nína Dögg Filippusdóttir, who creates an extraordinarily strong and consistent Alda. It is hard to find one false note in her highly professional and meticulous interpretation" (BL, DV newspaper)

"Extremely well done... they succeed in creating a very interesting and exciting production, that is of very high artistic quality ... this is something that I think that everyone should go and see" (HA, Kastljós, news/culture TV magazine)

"Una Thorleifsdóttir has proved in recent years that she is one of our most talented directors and Tímathjófurinn is a perfect example of how it is possible to adapt a work of art and create a new work that functions as a new, independent work of art ... The battlefield of love is tangible in this dashing production and you can truly say that Steinunn Sigurdardóttir’s novel gets the space that it deserves on The National Theatre’s stage." (GB, Vídsjá, cultural radio show)
Creative team and cast:

Director: Una Thorleifsdóttir
Adaptation: Melkorka Tekla Ólafsdóttir
Choreography: Sveinbjörg Thórhallsdóttir
Set and costume design: Eva Signý Berger
Lighting design: Ólafur Ágúst Stefánsson
Music and soundscape: Kristinn Gauti Einarsson

Actors:
Nína Dögg Filippusdóttir (Alda)
Björn Hlynur Haraldsson (Anton, Alda’s lover)
Edda Arnljótsdóttir (Alma, Alda’s sister)
Snaefrídur Ingvarsdóttir (Sigga, Alma’s daughter)
Oddur Júlíusson (various roles)
Steinunn Sigurardóttir (author) is one of Iceland’s most highly acclaimed novelists and poets. Her output to date includes twelve novels, eight volumes of poetry, a book about Vigdís Finnbogadóttir, former president of Iceland, and another bestseller about the farmer Heida, as well as a children’s book, a stage play, TV-plays, radio plays. She is also a translator of poetry and prose. She has contributed greatly to the international recognition of contemporary Icelandic literature, being one of the most frequently translated living Icelandic writers. Her novels vary greatly in form and content, but the central theme is almost always love in its various aspects. She now lives in France.

Una Thorleifsdottir (director) graduated from Royal Holloway, University of London in 2004 with a M.A. in theater (directing); prior she studied drama and theatre arts at Goldsmiths College, University of London. She is an assistant professor in the Department of Performing Arts at the Iceland Academy of the Arts, as well as a program leader for theater and performance making. At The National Theatre of Iceland she has directed Good People, ≈[Almost Equal To], The Woman at 1000° and Tragedy, that was performed at World Stages, Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, Washington DC. She was nominated for The Icelandic Theatre Award for her direction of The Thief of Time, Good People and ≈[Almost Equal To], and was a co-writer of The Woman at 100° that won the award for Best Play. She is now directing Enemy of the People for NTI.

Melkorka Tekla Ólafsdóttir (adaptation) completed a B.A. degree in literature from The University of Iceland in 1992 and completed her licence and maîtrise degrees in theatre studies in 1994 and 1995 from the Université de la Sorbonne nouvelle in Paris. She is resident dramaturg at The National Theatre of Iceland, and has worked on several productions at the NTI. She has also directed plays at the NTI and with independent theatre groups, among them God of Carnage, In Front of Others, Novecento, Enigma Variations and The Maids. She co-wrote the adaptation of The Devil’s Island for NTI. She was nominated for the Icelandic Theatre Award for Best Play: The Thief of Time.

Eva Signý Berger (set and costume design) studied design for performance at Central Saint Martin’s College of Art and Design in London and completed her B.A. degree in 2007. She has designed sets, costumes, and lighting for various theatre productions and exhibitions, for The National Theatre of Iceland, The Reykjavík City theatre, The Icelandic Opera, dance performances, puppet theatre (Bernd Ogrodnik) and the independent theatre scene. She was nominated for The Icelandic Theatre Award for her set for Eugene Onegin and The Woman at 1000°, and her costumes for Commercial of the Year and The Thief of Time.
"Extremely well done... a very interesting and exciting production, of very high artistic quality..."
Sveinbjörg Thórhallsdóttir (choreographer) graduated in 1995 as a dancer from Alvin Ailey American Dance Center, NY and took her master’s degree in choreography from Fontys University, Holland in 2008. She has worked as a professional dancer and choreographer for dance and theatre productions in all major theatres in Reykjavík. Sveinbjörg holds a position as an assistant professor and a program director of contemporary dance at the Department of Performing Arts, Iceland Academy of the Arts. She was one of the founders of the Reykjavík Dance Festival. She has three times been nominated as best choreographer for the Icelandic Theatre Award.

Kristinn Gauti Einarsson (music and soundscape) is head of sound at the National Theatre of Iceland, and has worked on various stage productions as sound designer, sound system designer, recorder, mixer, musical arranger, composer, and sound editor. He is also a musician and has a diploma from Flóh, music school in Reykjavík, in drums and percussion. Among plays he has worked on at the NTI are The Devil’s Island, The Woman at 1000°, Macbeth, Jerusalem, Long Day’s Journey into Night, The Little Prince, The Birthday Party and In the Heart of Robin Hood. He has also composed music for theatre. Kristinn won the Icelandic Theatre Award for The Little Prince and Macbeth (with Oren Ambarchi), and was nominated for ≈[Almost Equal To], In the Heart of Robin Hood, The Animals in Hakkebakke Wood and The Thief of Time.

Ólafur Ágúst Stefánsson (lighting design) has become one of The National Theatre’s main lighting designers in recent years, having designed the lighting for over 20 productions at the NTI, among them A View from the Bridge, Let the Right One In, Independent People, The Assembly Women, The Crucible, Jerusalem, Les Miserables, The Birthday Party and Oliver. He has also worked for puppet theatre and The Akureyri City Theatre. He was nominated for The Icelandic Theatre Award for A View from the Bridge, Let the Right One In, Jerusalem and Les Miserables.

Nína Dögga Filippusdóttir (actress) graduated from the Drama Department of the Icelandic Arts Academy in 2001. The same year, she co-founded the innovative theatre company Vesturport, where she has worked as an actor, producer and writer. With Vesturport she has acted in Reykjavik and internationally, and played for example in Romeo & Juliet, Woyzeck, Metamorphosis and Faust. She has acted in many shows at the Reykjavik City Theatre (August in Osage County, The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-time). At the National Theatre she held leading roles in A Streetcar Named Desire, Eyvind of the Hills and Othello, where she played Iago. She acted with Kneehigh in Don Jon. She has acted in many Icelandic films (The Sea, Children, Parents, Country Wedding, Undercurrent) and TV series (Trapped, The Girls). She produced, co-wrote and acted in the TV series Prisoners. She was named as one of European films’ Shooting Stars by European Film Promotion in 2003. She has been
nominated for the Icelandic Theatre Award and granted the Icelandic Film Award.

**Björn Hlynur Haraldsson** (actor) graduated from the Drama Department of the Icelandic Arts Academy in 2001. The same year, he co-founded the innovative theatre company Vesturport, where he has worked as an actor, director and writer. He has performed in Reykjavík, London (Barbican, Young Vic and The Playhouse Theatre) and internationally, in for example Romeo & Juliet, Faust and Woyzeck. He played in Blood Wedding at the Almeida Theatre in London. He has played in many shows at The National Theatre, most recently in Othello, for which he received a nomination for the Icelandic Theatre Award. He has played in several Icelandic films (Jar City, Country Wedding, Eleven Men Out) and TV series (Trapped, The Cliff, The Lava Field). He also acted in the UK TV series Fortitude.

**Edda Arnljótsdóttir** (actress) graduated from the Icelandic Theatre School in 1990 and has since then been a member of the National Theatre’s ensemble. She has acted in numerous productions at the NTI, among them Peer Gynt, The Seagull, Blood Wedding, The Song of the Nibelungs, The Idiot, Don Juan, ‘Tis Pity She’s a Whore, Antigone, The Cherry Orchard and Three Sisters. She was nominated for the Icelandic Theatre Award for Things Are Going Great, By the Bog of Cats and Peer Gynt.

**Snaefridur Ingvarsdottir** (actress) graduated from the Drama Department of the Icelandic Arts Academy in 2016, after having graduated from the Iceland National Ballet School. She was instantly engaged by The National Theatre of Iceland and has acted in the musical The Devil’s Island, Faraway Land and Thief of Time. She was nominated for The Icelandic Theatre Award for The Devil’s Island. As a child, she held a leading role in the Icelandic film Cold Light. She is currently acting the leading role in the Icelandic film Alma.

**Oddur Júlíusson** (actor) graduated from the Drama Department of the Icelandic Arts Academy in 2013. He also studied with the Iceland National Ballet School. Among the productions he has acted in at The National Theatre of Iceland are Regal the Golden Eagle, Faraway Land, ≈[Almost Equal To], In the Heart of Robin Hood, Let the Right One In, The Animals in Hakkebakke Wood, Infants, The Assembly Women, Spamalot and The Crucible. He has also acted in productions with independent theatre and dance companies.
"One of the very best productions of the theatrical season... The star of the show is Nína Dögg Filippusdóttir..."
The National Theatre of Iceland

Thjóðleikhúsid / Þjóðleikhúsið

The National Theatre of Iceland has been a leading institution on the Icelandic theatre scene ever since it opened formally on 20 April 1950. One of the theatre's main obligations is to arouse the general public's interest in the theatre and other arts of the stage, and promote their development. The theatre's main purpose is the staging of Icelandic and foreign plays, with emphasis on the development of Icelandic writing for the theatre.

Today the theatre has five separate venues: The Main Stage (Stóra svidid, 500 seats), the Black Box (Kassinn, 140 seats), the Small Stage for Children (Kúlan, 80 seats), The Puppet Theatre Attic (Brúduloftid, 70 seats) and The Theatre Cellar (Leikhúskjallarinn, 100-120 seats).

The NTI performs over twenty productions each season (new productions, re-premieres, co-productions and guest performances), comprising a varied repertoire of new Icelandic works, new foreign works, Icelandic and foreign classics, musicals, dance pieces, puppet theatre and children's productions. The theatre produces around ten new productions each year, and also collaborates with independent theatre and dance groups.

The theatre serves an important role in the development of new Icelandic plays, and aims to develop youngsters' appreciation of the theatre through productions especially intended for children and youth, and special visits to the theatre.

The National Theatre of Iceland has won several theatre awards, including numerous Gríman awards since the establishment of The Icelandic Theatre Award Gríman in 2003. The NTI often tours its productions around Iceland and many productions have also toured abroad. The artistic director of The National Theatre is Mr. Ari Matthíasson.

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