

ICELANDIC TIMES



HVERFISGALLERÍ cordially invites you to the opening of Guðmundur Thoroddsen's exhibition *Houndshills, Houndshollows*, Saturday 6 June at 16.00

Thoroddsen's works are humorous and done in diverse but traditional mediums such as clay, watercolor, drawing and painting. In *Houndshills, Houndshollows* Thoroddsen solely focuses on painting.

"It is possible to buy a beer called Hundur, the English translation being: Dog. It is in a can, with a yellow label, it is organic. If you look closer at the label you'll see that what you thought was a pattern or some green-colored smudges are really small dogs biking around. The brewery says the reason for the name is that they think this beer shares some qualities we consider dogs to possess: it's friendly, loyal, a little silly, maybe stupid, but dependable, sociable – they say that this beer "is a dog!" But how do we approach this thing? The reason for this beer being a dog, or that this "Dog" is a beer, is not entirely clear. Did they stretch the idea of a dog towards the idea of a beer, or did they stretch the idea of a beer towards the idea of a dog?

Because the further away you go from physical, tangible reality and the closer you come to the undefined, intangible, abstract, to where the outlines of things disappear, the closer we come to meaninglessness, disorder – or do we? Is this beer that is called Dog more a beer or more a dog? Or are we closer to another thing, a third thing, which is not a beer and not a dog but something else? This is not a road the brewery wants to go down. In which case we can say that they want us to use certain words – simple, understandable, everyday words – to talk about this thing. That you should approach this thing in the same way you approach any other thing in your day-to-day experience of the world. That you should understand that this thing is simple, that it is thin like a layer of paint on a canvas, just a layer of paint on a canvas. Even though you see, clearly, that this thing is not only what it seems to be."

Excerpt from Starkaður Sigurðarson's exhibition text.

Guðmundur Thoroddsen (b. 1980) graduated with a BA-degree from Iceland Academy of the Arts in 2003 and an MFA-degree from School of Visual Arts in New York in 2011. He has taken part in many group and solo exhibitions in Iceland, New York and Europe. Solos include *Chicken Shit* in Hverfisgallerí in 2017, *SNIP SNAP SNUBBUR* in 2018/19 in Hafnarborg and *Earth to Earth* in 2019. His work has been reviewed in publications such as Artforum, The New York Times, Time Out New York, Twin Magazine and Dazed Digital. Thoroddsen is the recipient of numerous grants and was nominated for the Icelandic Art Prize 2019 for the solo exhibition *SNIP SNAP SNUBBUR* in Hafnarborg.

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