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كالحلوة شى شح  
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Анжелика  
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ต้นไม้ชนิดหนึ่ง  
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cây bach chi







## Proposal for Outdoor Public Art in Vogabyggd Reykjavík, 2018

### Heimili Garður / Heimat Garden

Vogabyggð, a future residential area of Reykjavík is situated on a plateau. The new development borders a natural escarpment that acts as a public greened connection, leading down to the waters of the fjord below where a yacht harbour lies. As both a natural and a local recreational area, the expansive escarpment should be designed to provide space for sports activities such as jogging, walking and cycling, but equally to provide the free space and scope from which to observe nature. At the plateau level is a pedestrian bridge that spans the distance to the landscape island opposite, which is fluctuatingly washed by the tides of the sea.

The planning of the new project encompasses not only high-quality housing development, but by the same token is intended to cater for amenity values, and in so doing creating a communal and public location for a wide range of uses. The aim is that the new site takes on a positive resonance of quiet encouragement for the inhabitants whilst also fully incorporating the natural surroundings, in particular the water and the plant and bird environments. In this sense an artistic elaboration of the green areas is desired, with the intention of refining and increasing the attractiveness of the overall picture of the new urban district.



## Concept of the work

My artistic concept proposes – once the terrain has been developed – creating a Heimili Garður / Heimat Garden along the entire waterfront, stretching from upper plateau with the housing down to the fjord. The idea is to arrange this garden as a kind of open-air botanical and geological museum, populating it with original and native plants and rocks collected from all around Iceland. Mirroring the same features that deeply characterise Icelandic landscape, the intention is to plant mosses, shrubs, bushes, flowers and ferns in neighbouring plots, which of course can exist close to sea water, yes also denominated for studies. The names of the flora would be written on signboards; in Icelandic, furthermore in numerous other languages – such as English, German, Spanish, Arabic, Hindi, and so forth. On one hand the proposed design supports the new residents, previously having lived in other areas of Reykjavík, with a certain connectedness to the area; on the other hand, for guests and tourists, it constitutes an internationally renowned natural landmark for Iceland, a must see venue.

The creation of the Heimili Garður / Heimat Garden would be in collaboration with the Reykjavík Botanical Garden, with the aim of showing the diversity and peculiarity of the Icelandic plant world. As a garden, it highlights the specificity of the place, the knowledge about the natural and cultural world, and invites the visitors as well as the inhabitants to come and study. Not only can the Heimili Garður /Heimat Garden be used scientifically, and not only would it be more wide-ranging than the Botanical Gardens in the city centre, but it distils the cultural landscape, condensing it and making it visible. My work picks up on the desire for vegetation; just as Iceland's natural landscape is void of

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trees, so here too. Instead is an assembled aggregation of plants and stones from across entire Iceland – the North, East, West and South – that stands as a counterpart to the protected natural landscape of the island vis-à-vis. The unique intervention of the urban development becomes enriched by an ecological, cultural and social project, focusing on the inhabitants of the new district and their interactions.

Visitors from around the globe are welcomed and invited, in their own languages, to share in the knowledge of this special and extraordinary botanical world. And even if not everyone is able to visit it in person, the place itself will undoubtedly make a stir far beyond its own boundaries. The Heimat Garden reflects the themes of traveling, of studies and of expanding ones horizons, in the process anchoring what Alexander von Humboldt founded as the “new standards of knowledge and reflection on the understanding of the world” in the realities of today’s globalisation.

Humboldt himself undertook wide-ranging scientific field-studies during his expeditions to the various continents, combining empirical findings with ethnological and demographic observations in his reports, but also taking into account the insights of disparate scientific disciplines. He recognised that all things correlate to each other; that nature and culture, like the human body, are intimately intertwined; and that everything is interconnected. Humboldt wrote in German, French, Spanish and Latin in the opinion that the world can not be described in one single language. True to Humboldt’s idea, this quasi slipped-scaled segment of Icelandic landscape constitutes these aspects of

both education and local and international encountering. The plates contain information about the various plant types, but also form an invitation to the residents and tourists alike to observe, to contemplate, and to communicate with one another.

Living side-by-side with this view from their balconies of this implanted Icelandic nature, some of the residents may recollect or dream of their own place within it. In respect of its visual and utility value, the site becomes invigorated by the Icelandic landscape. Simultaneously it evokes practical engagement and international communication. Moreover, the Heimat Garden also links the developed plateau – with its urban central squares (theme grounds and breathing spaces) – to the shoreline areas between the boardwalk and the beach path that have been left “wild”. It infuses nature into the urban environs, and in keeping with the positive character of the whole, the garden draws the inhabitants to nature.

The maintenance and preservation of this unique landscape formation, would be best assumed by the Reykjavík park authorities and/or a future residents’ initiative that could care for its continuing sustainment – which would in turn benefit community dialogue and heighten its identification with their own residential area. The site remains and is tended to in its original state, with both residents and the park authorities caring for and cultivating it as an imported portion of nature, preserving and shaping it as home-grown. The proposed concept toys with this dialectic of nativeness (heimat) and the outside other, artifice and nature, dream-landscape and reality.

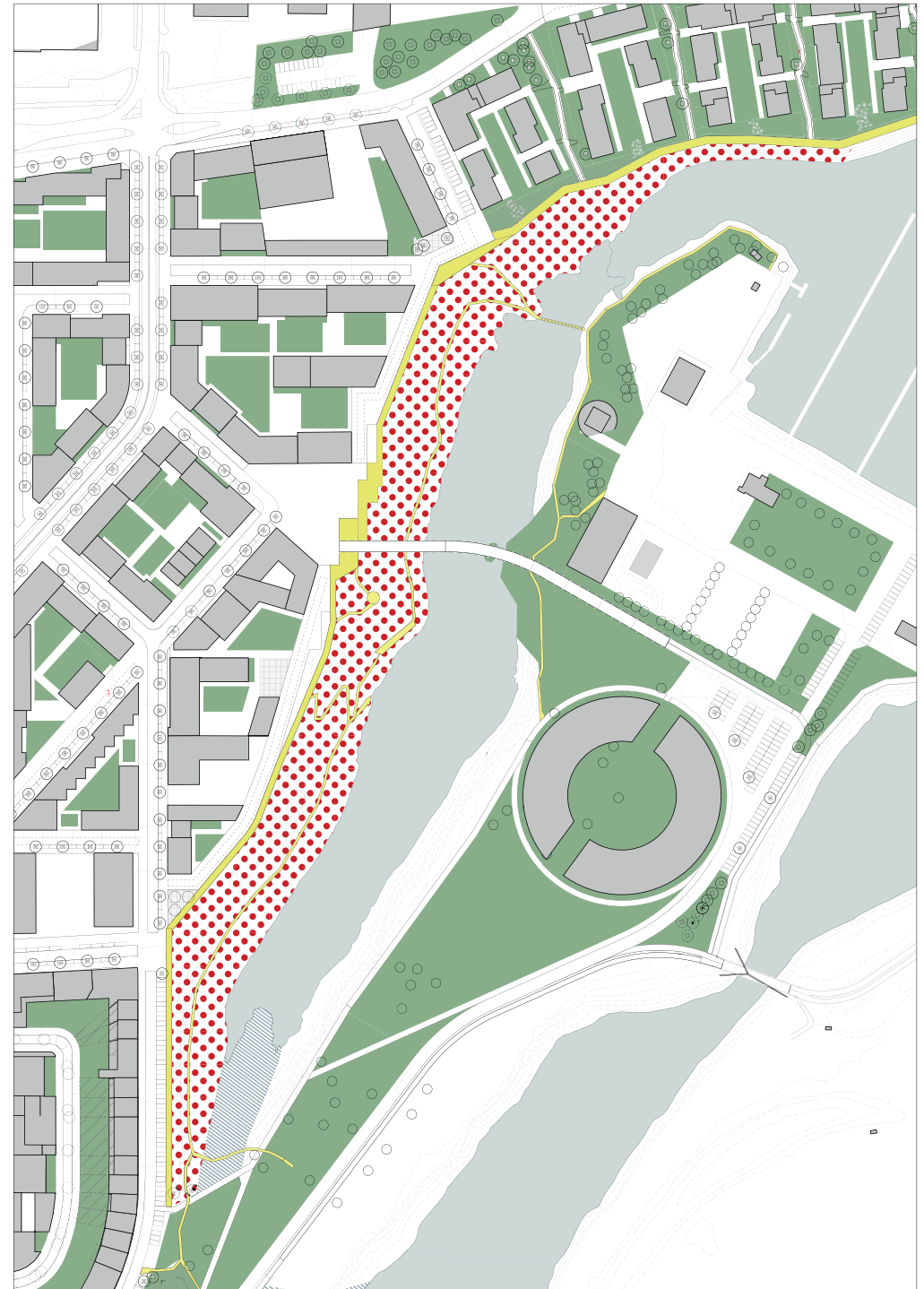


## Art

The idea of Heimili Garður / Heimat Garden, that gathers together the plants from the wild Icelandic landscape and that serves to edify the residents, is internationalised through the information panels, democratised and integrated in everyday life. The artistic concept operates in this sense primarily as an intervention in the given urban and social structure, which today is characterised not only by high values, but also by international and global alignments. With the Heimat Garden, which shapes its key residence value, the area draws a large attention to itself. At the same time the garden also forms a communicational venue in terms of urban space and landscape, nature and culture, locals and visitors, urban dwellers and villagers – a discussion that is currently shaping Iceland. The Heimat Garden becomes a trans-cultural gesture.

## Realisation

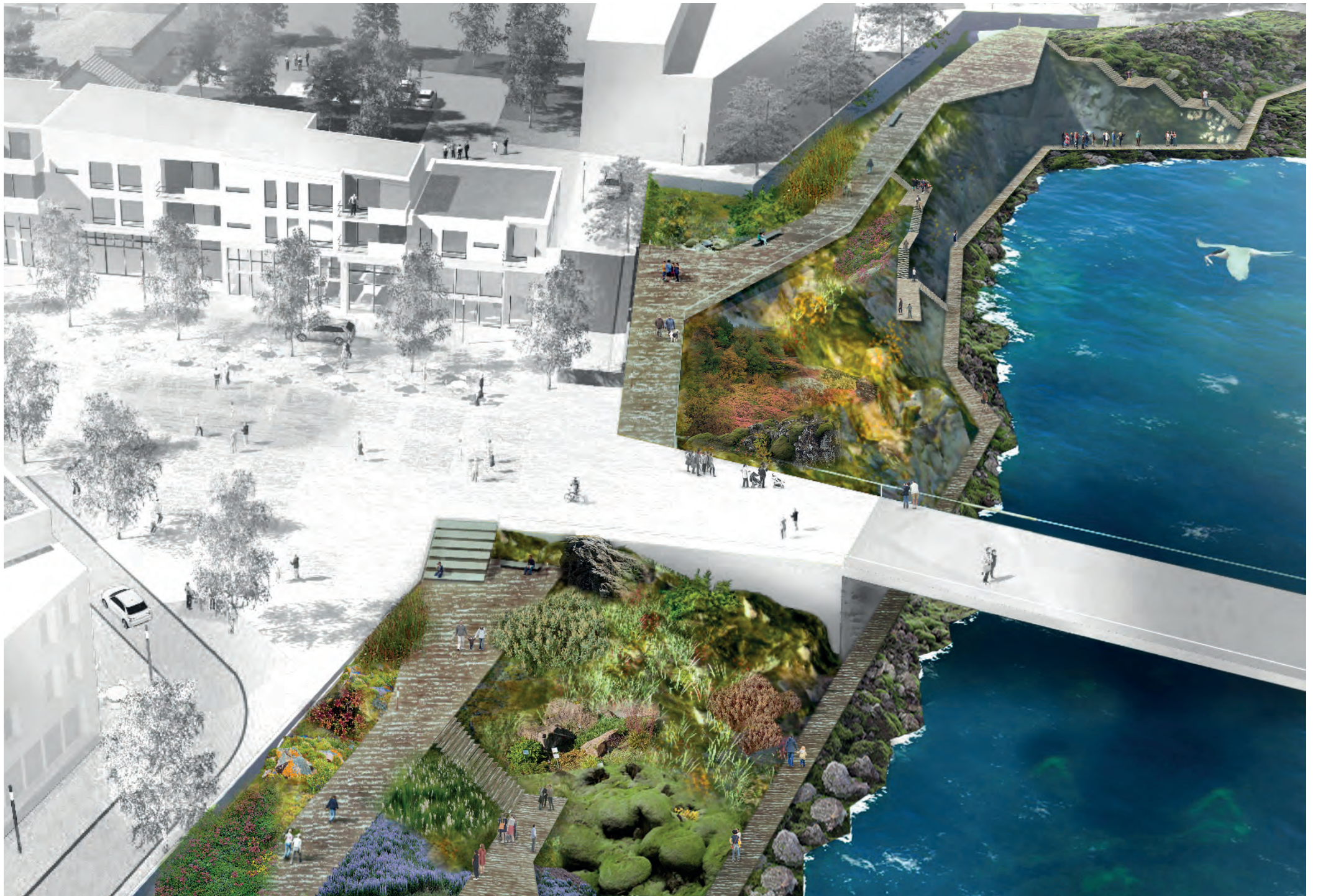
Ferns, grasses and flowering plants such as the broad-leaved arctic willowherb (that only exist in Iceland) are planted in cooperation with Icelandic landscape specialists. In addition mosses, lichens and mushrooms, but also stones from the various parts of Iceland are placed in ready-prepared beds and hollows in the slope. Rainwater irrigation occurs via drainages, which prevents the slope from drying out, but also dovetails with the planned sustainable water concept for the new housing area. A network of pathways in gravel or wood is put in place that allows visitors to circulate through the garden, but equally to undertake the necessary gardening. The Heimat Garden would be formed in cooperation with the Reykjavík Botanical Museum, together with an Icelandic landscape architect.















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