



**Title:** *Scaling Iceland (Skalar Íslands)*

**Creator:** Adam Hersko-RonaTas

**Student Project:** Yes, made possible by the Brown University Royce Fellowship Program

**Date of Completion:** January 2019

**Runtime:** 00:32:16

**Format:** Color; Full HD; 16:9; stereo

**Screener Link:** <https://vimeo.com/291443587/5533a11d6b> (pass: micro&macro)

**Synopsis:** *Scaling Iceland* is a half-hour documentary that succinctly explores the country's geological, biological, and cultural histories. Driven by voices ranging from geophysicists to musicians, folklorists to fishermen, and geneticists to children on a playground, the film weaves together a collage of faceless images taken primarily from above and from various heights. The effects of proximity and isolation on a culture are best understood when we are able to take a good step back or lean in just a little bit closer, revealing the macro-and-microstructures that unite its geological, biological, and cultural landscapes. For about a millennium, the people who settled Iceland grappled with its inhospitable conditions, ultimately finding a way to coexist with its natural forces and even taming some of them for heating and power. The unique identity that emerged from this struggle is reflected in their rich literary tradition. Iceland – a selectively membranous cell removed from, yet still connected within a rapidly globalizing world – has undergone a rapid shift in the last century. The active movement between the island and continental Europe has meant that the effects of isolation and homogeneity are not as pervasive as one would expect. With increased tourism and global connectivity, new challenges have emerged, including how to integrate foreign influences while preserving Iceland's language, long-standing traditions, the rights of immigrant workers, and a fragile ecosystem.