

The Six Questions

Who: Arngunnur Ýr, 46, of Oakland.

What: She's a guide in her native Iceland, leading hiking tours in French, English and German, then returning to Oakland to capture the raw nature as a professional painter.

When: The tours take place in summer, when the sun never sets. Winters are spent in her Oakland studio working on dramatic landscape paintings. "They usually have around 100 to 200 layers of [oil] paint when finished, and the sheen of my work has an internal glow which radiates alluring, intense, luminous energy."

Where: Tours leave out of the capital, Reykjavik, and highlight Iceland's rare geological formations like glaciers, geysers and volcanoes. "I love explaining Iceland's geological history. I know the dates of all the major eruptions, lengths of rivers, depths of lakes and ice sheets, heights of mountains, etc."

Why: Even after 25 years of living in the United States, Iceland's raw landscape and intense weather are part of her character. "There is something about the elements in the nature ... so powerful ... they have such an impact on me."

How: Her husband and two teenagers often spend summers in Iceland to facilitate her job and her passion. Her paintings are sold to collectors and featured in major museums. She will be exhibiting at Hosfelt Gallery in San Francisco for three weeks starting Dec. 12.

—Ginny Prior

