



INTERNATIONAL FORUM

OSLO, NORWAY

**March
NEWSLETTER
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COMING EVENTS

APRIL MONTHLY MEETING

Due to Easter Holiday there will be no Monthly Meeting in April. The next Monthly Meeting will be on Monday, May 2.

SPECIAL EVENTS

The Norwegian Nobel Institute

The Special Events Committee is organising a visit to the Norwegian Nobel Institute on Tuesday, April 5, at 10:45. Please see the February *Newsletter* for details.

ART COMMITTEE

Yayoi Kusama – In Infinity

The Art Committee is very happy to invite you to the Henie Onstad Art Centre on April 19. The solo exhibition tells the full story of the Japanese artist Yayoi Kusama's productions, from her dot paintings to the installation spaces that open into the vast world of her imagination. This is a world where colour, patterns, and movement bear witness to her fascination with the infinite.



Yayoi Kusama arrived on the New York art scene in the 1960s as a female counterpart to Andy Warhol, expressing herself in a mixture of art, fashion, and happenings. Since then, her striking visual language and constant artistic innovation have rightfully earned Kusama a position as one of today's most prominent artists.

The exhibition unfurls her life's work: from early water colours and pastels to her ground-breaking paintings and sculptures from the 1960s, psychedelic films, performances, installations, and political happenings in the 1960s and the early 1970s. The exhibition also sheds new light on her works from the 1980s, after she returned to Tokyo. Several of Kusama's more recent installations are on show together with a new series of paintings that the artist, now in her 86th year, has created especially for this exhibition.

This retrospective is the first to reflect Kusama's interest in fashion and design. However, it also includes several important works from her early period which have never been put on show before.

R E P O R T S

FEBRUARY MONTHLY MEETING

Natteravnene – The Ravens

The President, Berit Lindstrøm, who was taken ill sent her apologies to the speaker and to the members for not being present. She is a staunch supporter of Natteravnene (the 'Ravens'), to which the International Forum donates the proceeds from the annual Christmas raffle.



Despite the dismal weather and heavy snow fall, more than thirty ladies participated in this Monthly Meeting. Ms. Gry-Jannike Nordby from the Ravens - a voluntary non-profit organisation which aims to make weekend nights safer for young people – spoke about the work and goals of the group.

Inspired by a similar Swedish initiative, the group was founded in 1990 when people started to realise that certain parts of central Oslo had become very unsafe during weekend nights. The organisation has since established groups all over the country. The Ravens are politically and religiously neutral, and a growing number of people from our minority groups decide to join in the patrolling. The presence of the group on the streets is always one of solicitous support. The Ravens count both young and old, all volunteers who really care about teenagers. Many foreign students join the Ravens.

In Oslo, the Ravens not only patrol the down-town areas; there are also groups in the various city neighbourhoods. Saturday night is the more busy night downtown, whereas Friday night tends to be the livelier in the various suburbs. In the city centre, the 'action' is concentrated around restaurants and bars; in the more peripheral city districts, house parties are the main trouble spots.

The main mission of the Ravens is to be visible and available for the public in general and for young people in particular, and to prevent violence and anti-social behaviour. The Ravens patrol in close cooperation with the Red Cross, the Church City Mission, the city's various outreach services, as well as with the police. The Ravens who perambulate the downtown area always have a direct mobile number to the police officers on duty in case something untoward should happen. But, the Ravens never intervene directly in any conflictual situation; they alert the police, using the direct number when necessary.

The Ravens coordinate their activities with SALTO, a municipal agency present in every neighbourhood, which works in cooperation with schools and youth clubs to make Oslo a safer city. The Ravens have established daytime patrols that focus primarily on schools and their surrounding area and the problem of bullying.

The Ravens walk in small groups of three to five people: never less, never more. Some members patrol the streets a couple of times a year, others more frequently. All volunteers receive training in first aid and learn how to interact with the people they meet. They have the use of two small yellow vans with the Raven logo, usually parked near Spikersuppa (the area between the National Theatre and the Parliament), from which they coordinate the night's vigil and in which they serve coffee and in general help (intoxicated) distressed people. Usually, excessive consumption of alcohol is what leads people into trouble: conflict with other partying people or problems taking care of themselves.

The organisation depend on sponsors such as the public transport company (Ruter), which offers free rides for the Ravens patrollers outfitted with the organisation's easily visible yellow vests; and Shell Norge, which donates petrol for the organisation's two vans. The group also receives donations from various companies and private persons.

Despite everything that happens during the weekends, Ms. Nordby emphatically stated that Oslo is a relatively safe city, especially when compared with other European cities of the same size. The Ravens largely contribute to this notion of safety, and we thank them for their dedication and commitment!

Elizabeth Rasmussen

SPECIAL EVENTS COMMITTEE

Visit to the Mini Bottle Gallery

The Mini Bottle Gallery holds the world's largest collection of miniature bottles. Of the nearly 53 000 bottles, 12 500 are exhibited in 50 different installations. The museum covers 1 200 square feet of exhibition space, containing a wide range of banquet halls and conference facilities.

Twenty-two International Forum members and guests were welcomed in the bar at the entrance of the gallery by our guide John, who gave us some general facts about the gallery while we enjoyed a glass of prosecco. In the bar, an unusual work by Per Ung is hanging on the wall: a glass bottle with an impression of Christian Ringnes' face as the label, made at Magnor glasswork and containing pear liqueur.

Then we walked from room to room looking at the installations, all with different themes. In one room, in a large aquarium, real fish were swimming among miniature bottles shaped like fish. In another room, a red British telephone box held over 700 different gin bottles. A life-sized bronze statue of Mr. Ringnes was on display in yet another room.



A large mannequin of a piper in traditional Scottish kilts and sporrans stands on a wooden platform. Three women are walking past it, looking at the display. The room has wooden floors and glass display cases filled with items.



Downstairs, the beer room can seat 28 people for dinner. To get to this room, you have a choice of a slide ride down, something that some of us tried out with mixed results!

The museum has been designed to excite and amuse, which it clearly does, and I believe that all the ladies had great fun during the visit!

Åsny Wedege Walters

ART COMMITTEE

Exhibition – “Take it personally”



On a cold day in February, the Art Committee had organized a visit to the exhibition *Take it personally* at the Museum of Cultural History. The show took us on an incredible journey into various time periods and cultures across the globe, trying to explain what lies behind the beauty secrets, jewellery and

adornments of human beings.

We were lucky to have one of the curators as our guide: Katherine Elliott told us about all the little secrets of the making of the exhibition, which she shared with passion!

To give us a glimpse of the exhibition's content, the curator welcomed us next to a huge showcase full of objects of adornment from the Stone Age until today and from all five continents; adornments made with a variety of materials and colours – amazingly beautiful (and very intriguing)! Beyond the beauty of the artefacts, all from the museum's own collection, it became clear that the idea of using jewellery and decorating oneself is a universal one. But why?



Surprisingly, the answers are also universal, no matter the period or the continent! Adornments are used to show one's identity and social status in life. The objects are often linked to religious or magical beliefs, sometimes believed to ensure longevity for a family or a dynasty. The exhibition conveys a series of messages through a variety of articles, shedding new light on some of the masterpieces of the collection: the beauty secrets of Egyptian women, the special bond between Viking warriors and their swords, the extended use of rings with antique gems during Middle Ages, the Royal family's collection of jewellery, tattoos or the power of the hair. The objects of interest are varied!



Till death do us part? The ultimate *coquetterie* closes the exhibition: a small showcase containing a diamond ring. Nothing special until you realise that the synthetic diamond is made from the cremation ashes of a deceased person! A modern relic of sorts one may say, but certainly an interesting new aspect of our modern society... And after all: Why not?

Chloe Turlotte

Mapplethorpe + Munch

At first glance, it may seem that Edvard Munch and Robert Mapplethorpe have very different expressions. However, as we look closer, we see many fascinating parallels and points of contact. It is this complex view that the exhibition *Mapplethorpe + Munch* wishes to explore.

On a very snowy morning, the art-interested ladies of the International Forum braved the white snowflakes and gathered for yet another fascinating guided tour with Eirik Arff Gulseth Bøhn. 'We have much to see,' he told us. And so we had! We learned a lot about two artists of great virtuosity and about the art of printing and reproduction. Reproduction in many a sense of the word.



Edvard Munch, the master of colour, was also a photographer. But Mapplethorpe was of another age, he was a man of the modern era in which we now live, creating photography at its incredibly advanced black and white best.

The subject of life and death is expressed with great emotion. Nature is in the front row: Human nature and the natural world. Flowers, trees, the human body – all expressed in, at times, violent ways; nonetheless, with great beauty.

Patti Smith, Mapplethorpe's long-time friend has written a book called *Just As Kids*. Good reading! Art+Religion+Love=Life. It makes me think of Georgia O'Keefe.

And there is more to come from the Art Committee. Make sure you sign up for Yayoi Kusama at the Henie Onstad Museum!

Thank you Kerstin Petersen and Katarina Plavnik!

Elizabeth Bøhn

EDINBURGH INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S CLUB

3rd International Get2Gether : September 9 – 11, 2016

The President, Board, and Members of the International Women's Club of Edinburgh warmly welcome our sister clubs to the 3rd International Get2Gether in Edinburgh in September 2016. We look forward to showing you our lovely historic city and having the opportunity of getting to know you better. Interested members of sister organisations can register both for the IWC weekend and book accommodations at www.iwce.co.uk; registration has already started.



The cost of the weekend – covering two evening events, one farewell breakfast, and a city tour – is £110. This is payable with the cost of your optional tour when you complete your Registration Form. Information about the optional tours is also found online, together with the schedule of activities, and links to an interactive map, discounts for bus fares from the airport and discount shopping and entry to sights.

There is also a closed (private) Get2Gether Facebook Page functioning as a forum, so that participants can get to know each other before meeting in person.

The organising team is looking forward to hosting this friendship event in lovely Edinburgh and meeting members of our sister organisations.

Grace Stewart
President

Issued by the Board of the International Forum

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