



# **INTERNATIONAL FORUM**

**OSLO, NORWAY**

**October  
NEWSLETTER  
10/2019**

<b>2</b>	<b>Forum Diary</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>President's Page</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>Coming Events</b>
<b>6</b>	<b>Activities</b>
<b>8</b>	<b>Reports</b>
<b>14</b>	<b>Around Oslo</b>
<b>14</b>	<b>Daylight Saving Time Ends</b>

**Number 447**



## INTERNATIONAL FORUM

P.O. Box 1505 Vika, 0117 Oslo, Norway

Telephone: 22 83 62 90 Office email: [int.forum@online.no](mailto:int.forum@online.no)

**Visiting address**                      **Arbins gt. 2, Victoria Passasjen, 5<sup>th</sup> floor**  
**Office Coordinator**                Dorota Steensland  
**Office Team**                           Patricia Blackwell, Karin Skoglund  
**Office hours**                           **Monday, Tuesday and Thursday 10 – 12**

**Board 2019 – 2020**                      Anita Pratap (President), Anne-Grethe Skagestad, Yan Donko, Heidi von Weltzien Høivik, Wenche Mohr, Elizabeth Rasmussen, Sissel Lindeman (Deputy), Signe Howell (deputy), Patricia Blackwell (advisor)

**Editor**                                        Elizabeth S. Rasmussen  
**Secretary**                                  Elspeth Walseth  
**Treasurer**                                  Anne-Lise Fasteland  
**Auditor**                                      Verena Krienke

**Art Committee**                           Bee Ellingsen  
**Monthly Meetings**                      Laila Hægh  
   Ruth Klungsøyr  
**Special Events**                           Sigrid Riddervold  
**Activities**                                  Anita Solheim

### Forum Diary

<i>Date</i>		<i>Event</i>	<i>Time</i>	<i>Page</i>
October	31	The Great Dada Show at Henie-Onstad	12:00	6
November	04	The Royal Family in War and Peace	18:45	4
November	05	Pre-Christmas Lunch at Engebret Café	13:00	5
November	27	Forum Singers' Christmas Concert	TBA	Nov. NL

## From the President



Dear Members,

This has been an action-packed month. The day of the Oslo Marathon dawned, the finest ever. Sunny and 16°C, perfect for running 10 km. This year, our Ambassadors for Peace Team grew to 50 members, including the ambassadors of 12 countries: Belgium, Bulgaria, Hungary, Korea, Latvia, Myanmar, North Macedonia, Poland, Serbia, Slovakia, South Africa and Turkey. In addition, a few spouses, embassy officials, and members of international organisations took part. It was impossible to get all our team members into one frame! As we got ready to start, the atmosphere was festive, filled with expectation and excitement.

The top performer of our team was Gatis Sneiders from the Latvian Embassy. Among the ambassadors, Fazli Corman of Turkey was the fastest man, and the newcomer Vera Shatilova-Micarova of Bulgaria was the topper among the women.

Our team was truly international. In addition to all the nationalities mentioned above, we also had members from several African countries, Argentina, Denmark, India, Italy, Japan, Malaysia, Norway, Sweden and Thailand taking part.

The marathon is increasingly popular among the Oslo-based ambassadors. It is perhaps a sign of the times – ambassadors are younger and fitter than ever before! The event is a celebration of fun, fitness and friendship. And when the day is bright and beautiful, we cannot ask for more.

Now the days are getting shorter and the nights longer. Autumn is the time for candle light, cosy evenings and conversation. There are many people to meet, many events to attend, reminding us that we are blessed to be part of a community.

Best Regards,

*Anita Pratap*

President

## COMING EVENTS

### NOVEMBER MONTHLY MEETING

#### The Norwegian Royal Family in War and Peacetime



Tor Bomann-Larsen is a Norwegian illustrator, children's writer, non-fiction writer, and novelist. He was born in Jevnaker in 1951 and started his career as a satirical illustrator for various newspapers, including *Friheten*, *Ny tid*, *Dagbladet* and *Arbeiderbladet*. He has written biographies of both Fridtjof Nansen and Roald Amundsen. Tor Bomann-Larsen has also written several books about the Norwegian Royal Family and will speak about the Royal Family during the Second World War and in peacetime.

DATE/TIME: **Monday, November 4** at 18:45 for (19:00)

*For more information, please contact the IF Office.*

## SPECIAL EVENTS

### Pre-Christmas Lunch at Engebret Café



Engebret Café is the oldest restaurant in Oslo. It celebrated its 161<sup>st</sup> anniversary in 2017. The restaurant has always been one of Oslo's most important meeting places for the nation's public figures, the press, business leaders and private individuals since the opening in 1857. The restaurant has a long tradition of serving excellent cuisine and specialises in traditional Norwegian food, sometimes with a continental twist.

Engebret Café is loved by its many regular patrons, and the restaurant shows its gratitude by constantly developing their menu for guests who wish to make important decisions or to discuss business. This is a place of local heritage, a place where people come to enjoy good food and experience an authentic atmosphere for special occasions.

Our lunch will consist of a lunch platter including salmon, shrimp, herring, roast beef, cured meats and ham. For dessert, we shall have coffee and "Napoleon" cake. Drinks are not included.

DAY/TIME: Tuesday, **November 5** at 13:00

*For more information, please contact the IF Office.*

## ART COMMITTEE

### *The Great Monster Dada Show*

**Thursday, October 31**



Dada was an art movement of the European avant-garde in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. It was born out of a negative reaction to the horrors of WWI. Dadaism was anti-bourgeois, anarchist, and with political affinities towards the radical left.

The movement signalled a sea change in the history of art. Dadaists challenged the world to a new way of seeing, a rejection of academia, and an introduction to performance art and readymades.

Sign up by email to [int.forum@online.no](mailto:int.forum@online.no),

For more information, see the September *Newsletter*.

## A C T I V I T I E S

### **SAVE THE DATE!**

#### **Forum Singers Concert in Holmenkollen Chapel**

**Wednesday, November 27**

Holmenkollen Kapells Venneforening and the Forum Singers choir welcome you to our traditional Advent/Christmas Concert in Holmenkollen Chapel. More details to come in the November *Newsletter*.





## Monday Duplicate Bridge

### Erratum

Every Monday morning at 10:00, a group of ladies gather at the Ris Church 'Peisestuen' to play duplicate bridge. We started on Monday, August 26, and will continue until Monday, December 9.

The cost for the season remains **NOK 600** and the cost of a **single session** is **NOK 100**. So far, we have played 8 Mondays and have 8 Mondays to go.

We serve coffee, tea and cookies.

We still take on new players, if anyone would like to join us. Everyone is welcome!!

*For more information, please contact the IF Office.*

## The Walking Group

We walk every Friday morning.



The ladies have been walking again! Friday is the day for those who wish to join us and discover parts of Oslo that you have never seen before.

*For more information, please contact the IF Office.*

# *R E P O R T S*

## **THE OSLO MARATHON**

### **Ambassadors for Peace Team**

The ambassadors performed extremely well. Top runners were Fazli Corman, Ambassador of Turkey among the men and among the women, Vera Shatilova-Micarova, Ambassador of Bulgaria. Ten-kilometre veteran, Suzana Boskovic Prodanovic, Ambassador of Serbia, our team's dependable star, was shining right up there. Iwona Woicka-Zulawska, Ambassador of Poland, participated for the second time, while departing Ambassador Nancy Rossignol of Belgium literally 'marathoned' her way out of Oslo, taking with her the treasure trove of medals which she has accumulated over the years. Ambassador Maw Maw of Myanmar, who is also the Dean of the Diplomatic Corps, Ambassadors Serdjim Muhamed of North Macedonia, Anna Siko of Hungary, Denisa Frelichova of Slovakia, Judite Dobeles of Latvia, Young-sook Nam of South Korea and Selly Ramokgopa of South Africa all made their outstanding debut.

The best performer among our Forum members was Sissel Lindeman. Kerstin Petersen, Kumiko Larssen and Wenche Christophersen also did very well. Special kudos to Soo Lan Henrichsen, who came first in her age category. Way to go Soo Lan!

It was a marvellous day in every way and a good time was had by all.



Some of the 50 happy Ambassadors for Peace Team runners.





The Ambassadors of Slovakia, Latvia, Korea, Serbia, Bulgaria and Belgium enjoyed their 'Noble Peace Prize Medal' after completing the run.



Marathon is a fun occasion not only for the Ambassadors, but for their families, too. The Ambassador of Slovakia, H. E. Denisa Frelichova with her five-year-old son, Benjamin, who came to see his mother off.



The fastest runner among the female ambassadors was the Ambassador of Bulgaria, H. E. Vera Shatilova-Micarova, and the fastest among the male ambassadors, the Ambassador of Turkey, H.E. Fazli Corman.

Congratulations!

Anita Pratap, Team Leader



## Many thanks to the Philippine Embassy and Coro Cantabile Serenade



International Forum would like to thank the Philippine Embassy for inviting us to a performance of the Coro Cantabile choir. This wonderful musical event was held at the Embassy offices on September 6.



The Coro Cantabile is a group of Philippine singers, who take time to leave their normal jobs to travel the world, presenting their culture through a varied repertoire of choral music sung *a capella*. The choir's voices blended in a beautiful and intricate tapestry of inspiring music, ranging from a delicate 'Lord's Prayer' to a resounding and powerful 'Circle of Life' from the *Lion King*. The programme also included: Philippine folk songs, the flower song from Lachmé, popular standards, gospel music and even a couple of rock and roll melodies.

The entire audience truly enjoyed this dynamic and diverse musical performance. Many thanks again to the Embassy of the Philippines for giving us the opportunity to listen to the remarkable Coro Cantabile choir.

Sally Bergan

## MONTHLY MEETING

### **Mona Levin: My Family's Story**

Mona Dorit Levin, a well-known Norwegian journalist, author, actress and theatre critic - the daughter of the famous Jewish pianist and composer Robert Levin – talked to us about the history of Jewish immigration to this country after the Jewish clause of the Norwegian Constitution was repealed in 1851. The ban also included Jesuits and other Catholic monastic communities.

At first, only a handful of Jews came to Norway. In 1866, 25 resident Jews were registered and by 1900 the number had increased to 214. Most Jews were headhunted by the Norwegian tobacco manufacturer Conrad Langaard, the majority of them settling in Oslo and Trondheim.

Ms. Levin's grandparents came from the Baltic area to live and work in Norway, eventually settling in Oslo. Her paternal grandfather supported his family as a travelling salesman, walking with his wares on his back from Lindesnes in the south to Narvik in the north.

A fair number of Jews immigrated in the late 1930s, when those who could, fled the National Socialist Germany for Norway. At the beginning of the Second World War, the Jewish community in Norway comprised around 2,100 people. During the German occupation, the situation for the Jews rapidly became precarious. The ban on Jewish immigration was reinstated and all Jews property was confiscated and their civil rights were denied.



Mona Levin and our President Anita Pratap



Most of those who did not manage to flee the country were deported to Auschwitz on the *M/S Danube* in November 1942. Most Jews were arrested by Norwegian police, who never seemed to question the command of the occupation authorities. The ship sailed for Stettin in Poland, where the Jews were put on trains to Auschwitz. Those who were deemed able to work were separated from the others; the others – many women and children – were sent directly to the gas chambers. Of the 770 Norwegian Jews who were deported only 25 came back.



Mona Levin's parents sought refuge in Sweden, but at different times and by different means. Her father, Robert Levin, crossed the border hidden in a hay wagon, while his wife walked much of the road to safety carrying her three-and-a-half year old Mona in her arms through the woods. It was winter and very cold. The overnight march through the snow was both exhausting and scary, especially when they glimpsed the search lights from German patrols who were out looking for deserters. The young Mona was crying. They tried to quieten her with sleeping pills, which did not have the desired effect. She was given several doses before she finally conked out, and when the group arrived at their destination, she was unconscious. The family were eventually reunited with the father. The story was heart-rending. We could all feel Ms Levin's deep sorrow at the plight of the Jewish people.

We learned about her family's history and that of the Jewish immigrants to Norway. Sadly, the hardship for the Norwegian Jews did not end when the war was over. The return of the survivors was not easy. The Jewish community struggled for years to rebuild their lives in Norway, and decades went by before they got any kind of excuse or symbolic compensation for the confiscated properties and belongings.

The audience was shocked and surprised to hear of the obstacles and injustices the Norwegian Jews were exposed to after the war.

The meeting was fully booked, and the audience had many questions to Ms. Levin after her speech.

Gunnel Anita Solheim



## A R O U N D   O S L O

### **Zotora - *Breath in the Mausoleum***

#### **Emmanuel Vigeland's Museum**

**Zotora** is one of Europe and Scandinavia's first *didjeridoo* players. He has been continually perfecting his sound over the years. His concert offers contemplative music from what might be the mother of all wind instruments. His unique playing style and the depth of the sounds he creates has won the respect of both non-aboriginal Australian *contemporaries* and aboriginal elders – the traditional owners of this ancient instrument.



The concerts are held in 'Oslo's best-kept secret': the amazing Emanuel Vigeland Museum - Grimelundsveien 8, Oslo 0775

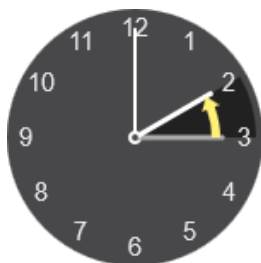
Remaining dates:

Tuesday, November 12 at 19:00

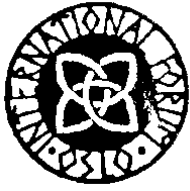
Thursday, December 12 at 19:00

[www.emmanuelvigeland.museum.no](http://www.emmanuelvigeland.museum.no)

## **Daylight Saving Time Ends October 27**



On Sunday, **October 27**, at **03:00**, the clocks are turned **backwards** one (1) hour to **02:00**. Sunrise and sunset will be about one hour earlier on Sunday 27 October than the day before.



## INTERNATIONAL FORUM

**President**

Anita Pratap

**Editor and Layout:**

Elizabeth Rasmussen and Editorial Team

**Editorial Team:**

Elspeth Walseth and Patricia Blackwell

**Dispatch Team:**

Elisabeth Bennett, Susan Hahla, Krstin Petersen,  
Mona Reinboth, Mette Svadberg, Wenche Undrum,  
Elspeth Walseth and Patricia Blackwell

The Editor and the Editorial Team reserve the right to edit *all* material.

Printed by Utenriksdepartementets Hustrykkeri.

Date: October 17, 2019