



# **INTERNATIONAL FORUM**

**OSLO, NORWAY**

**November  
NEWSLETTER  
11/2018**

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**Number 437**



# INTERNATIONAL FORUM

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## Forum Diary

DATE	EVENT	TIME	PAGE
November 28	Forum Singers: Christmas Concert	18:00	6
December 3	Christmas Meeting: <i>A Christmas Carol</i>	18:45	5
<b>2019</b>			
February 12	40 <sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration	18:00	4

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## From the President



Dear Members,

It's November, and *no*, I am not going to regale you with another childhood memory of roasted turkey and pumpkin pie. My thoughts this time turn to the month of November itself, the most underrated month of the year. What do you mean by that, you say? Well, many people have told me time and again that they want to travel somewhere; to get away from the dreary, encroaching darkness of November; to get just a little more sun before winter sets in – which, I guess, is understandable.

Nevertheless, November has a lot to offer if you just stay put. It is a time for cuddling up with a good book, baking an assortment of cakes, enjoying a nice, friendly fire in the fireplace, or perhaps making plans and a shopping list for the holidays in December. At the same time, you can take nice brisk walks, inhale the cold, crisp air and enjoy the magical palette of autumnal colours, possibly – by now – laced in frost. In addition, November often displays dramatic roiling scarlet skies both at sunrise and at sunset. Yes, November does have its charm and a unique beauty, unveiling the onset of winter.

I hope you all are looking forward to our 'winter' celebration in February of IF's 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary. All the information is in the October *Newsletter*. I assume that you all have already signed up and are ready to have a great time!

Don't forget that we have a very special Christmas program at the December monthly meeting. The Charles Dicken's classic, *A Christmas Carol* will be narrated by story-teller Angela Halvorsen Bogo, accompanied by guitarist Jan-Egil Egnes.

We hope that you will bring a sample of your country's traditional food (bite size portions) to share with everyone. This promises to be a truly enchanting, enjoyable experience for all of us.

Best regards,

Sally Bergan,  
President

# FROM THE BOARD

## REMINDER

We look forward to seeing

**YOU**

at our

40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration

**February 12, 2019**



Please sign up **right away** and be part of this wonderful evening!

Please place a deposit of NOK 250.-

in International Forum account

1600.40.36631

**We are celebrating 40 great years of  
friendship and international understanding.**

All information can be found in the October *Newsletter*.

***The Anniversary Committee needs to know how many members will be  
participating, so please let us know **now** if you will be joining us!***

***Thank you!***

*Sally Bergan*

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

## COMING EVENTS

### DECEMBER MONTHLY MEETING



This year, at the Christmas Monthly Meeting, we shall be treated to a special performance of Charles Dickens' *A Christmas Carol* from 1843 by storyteller Angela Halvorsen Bogo, accompanied on the guitar by Jan-Egil Egenes. The story is about Ebenezer Scrooge, the rich and mean, cold-hearted miser who despises Christmas. 'He carries his own low temperature always about with him; he iced his office in the dog-days, and didn't thaw it one degree at Christmas,' Dickens wrote.

Last year, Angela and Jan-Egil successfully staged *A Christmas Carol* at different venues and in private homes. This is what some of their spectators had to say:

'It was an evening full of atmosphere. It was a different pre-Christmas experience.'

'Amazing to see how the story comes alive with such simple means. Angela's voice and the guitar were all it took to draw me deeply sensually into Scrooge's cold, lonely and bitter world.'

After the performance, we will sing both English and Norwegian carols and drink hot, spicy mulled wine (or mineral water) and taste different types of Christmas cakes or treats.

To reflect that we are an international organisation, we kindly ask members to bring along a *small sample* of a national cake or dish that is typical for this time of year. If you do not celebrate Christmas, then another traditional dish or sweet from your country would be very welcome!

We hope that together we shall be able to make this evening an international event that will put us all in the charitable spirit of the season.

DATE/TIME: Monday, **December 3** at 18:45 for (19:00)

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

# FORUM SINGERS

## Advent Concert

Holmenkollen kapell

Wednesday, November 28 at 18:00



You are cordially invited to a pre-Christmas concert featuring the Forum Singers. The concert is hosted by Holmenkollen Kapells Venneforening and will be conducted in the beautiful Holmenkollen Chapel.

The programme is varied and includes solos by Eva Landro, the choir's conductor, and the baritone Eirik Krokfjord. There will also be organ and piano solos, and the choir will perform a variety of songs and Christmas carols, with sing-alongs for the audience.

Light refreshments will be served after the concert.

Fee: NOK 100.- (Pay at door). Children under 16 yrs. free of charge. **Welcome!**



## ACTIVITIES

### Cooking Group I

First a big *Thank you* to **Eva** for an inspiring morning in September and for serving us three aubergine (eggplant) dishes: even the cake had aubergine in it!



The October cooking morning was held at **Chand's**. She very graciously invited us to the Rice Bowl Restaurant, all expenses covered. Thank you!



We really enjoyed ourselves at the Rice Bowl.

The next cooking session is going to take place at Ellen's place.

Liss R. Laan

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

## Photo Group



The next photo shop is on Monday, November 19, from 12:00 to 15:00.

At this workshop, we will continue exploring the possibilities for taking photos with the mobile phone and learn more about editing and organising images. Please bring your telephone, camera and laptop. New members or 'drop-ins' are welcome!

Contact us if you are interested in photography, editing or organising digital images.

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

## Book Club II

Next meeting is on Friday, December 14 at 13.00.

We shall read *Siddhartha* by Herman Hesse.

Contact: Signe Lise Howell,

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

## Monthly Wednesday Bridge



Welcome to the Wednesday Bridge on **November 21** at 10:30. The hostess is Hilde Løchsteer

We play duplicate bridge and have a great time!

The **Christmas bridge** will take place on Wednesday, **December 12** at 10:30.

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



# **SPECIAL EVENTS & ART COMMITTEES**

## **IMPORTANT NOTICE**

### **Cancellation rules**

We want to remind all IF members of the rules for cancellations and no-shows. If you have signed up for an event and need to cancel, you must do so five (5) days before the event. If not, you will be charged the admission fee.

No-shows must also pay for the event.

Please send the cancellation notice to the office and the person in charge of the event. This is important because we would like to include members on our waiting list and be able to plan our budget.

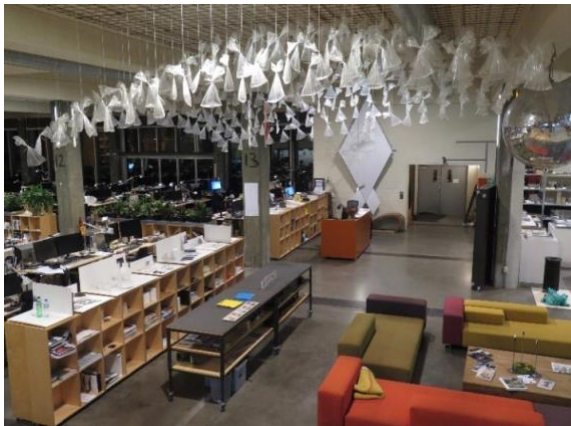
Best regards

Wenche Mohr and Bee Ellingsen

## ***R E P O R T S***

### **Visit to Snøhetta on October 25**

A group of thirty members of the International Forum participated in the visit to the architecture firm Snøhetta on a dark October night. We were greeted by Elin Helgeland Nilsen, Head of Communication - Brand Management. People were still working, so we gathered in a small cubicle with a view to the hall, and Elin took us through the history of the company, its philosophy and mission: especially its ambition to be a force of change through architecture.



The main hall



Forum members (Photos: Sidsel Semb)

The name was chosen when the firm was new and upcoming, located upstairs from a bar called Dovrehallen in Storgata in the late 1980's. The firm expanded internationally and is now an internationally renowned practice of architecture, landscape architecture, interior architecture, and graphic design, with more than 240 employees from 32 different nations. About 30 different nationalities work for the company in Oslo. English is therefore the working language.

The expansion has been organic, i.e, processes and projects come first, and if the projects are big enough a new office will be created. The company is now represented on all major continents.

Snøhetta is proud to be a ‘young’ company, with an average age of 40. The company believes in the power of generosity, curiosity and transparency. It employs as many women as men, all of whom share a common goal and mission, and for whom people come first. Everyone eats lunch together at noon – at two very long tables, to avoid cliques from forming – and the chef is apparently very good. Everything is open: the office landscape, the eating area, and the work sessions. Everyone may chip in with ideas and suggestions.

People, processes, sustainability, and projects are the guiding principles together with a fairly flat management structure based on mobility and shared ideas. Every second year, the employees change their seating. Role switching has become a way of brainstorming about new solutions to well-known problems.

The belief that architecture and culture can drive societal change has always been a driving force. This means creating spaces that allow people to live, work and worship in traditionally non-gender inclusive environments. One example is the amazing King Abdullaziz Center for World Culture in Dhahran which has only one main entrance, used by both men and women.

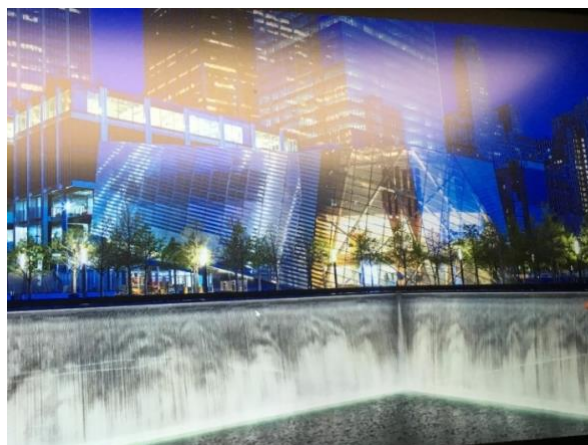


King Abdullaziz Center for World Culture in Dhahran

However, the most important project of them all is the company itself. Snøhetta is the main project for everyone involved: how to improve, how to include, how to preserve a working environment in which there is room for everyone, disregarding gender, skin colour or religion in a highly interactive workplace.



Looking towards Snøhetta



Ground zero – The waterfall and the entrance

Snøhetta is the result of the dedication of the employees. Every second year, the staff embark upon a ‘pilgrimage’ to the real thing, the tallest mountain in the Dovre range. Quite an experience for some of the non-Norwegian staff members. Team building on both a large and a small scale is always on the agenda.



Elin Helgeland Nilsen



Sally Bergan, IF President (Photos: Sidsel Semb)

IF President Sally Bergan thanked Elin on behalf of us all for a truly fun and informative presentation.

Elizabeth Rasmussen



I would very much like to extend a personal *Thank you* to everyone who participated and everyone who supported this visit. But most of all, I would like to express my gratitude towards Elin Helgeland Nilsen for her great generosity and willingness to let us stay for quite some time longer than had been agreed upon! We all appreciated her amiable personality after a long day of hard work!

Soo Lan Høegh-Henrichsen

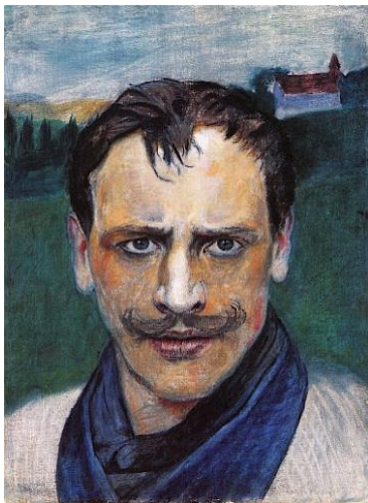


**ART COMMITTEE**  
**HARALD OSKAR SOHLBERG (1869-1935)**  
***INFINITE LANDSCAPES***

For the first time in history, Norwegian neo-Romantic painter Harald Oskar Sohlberg's sketches and paintings are displayed at the National Gallery in Oslo. His works have previously been exhibited together with other artists but never as a unified collection on its own.

On Thursday, October 4, 2018, twenty-eight members of the International Forum visited this unique and magnificent exhibition. The National Gallery's Curator Mai Britt Guleng led the group, giving us background information on this artist and interpreting selected works of art.

On show are some 60 paintings, together with drawings, sketches, prints and photographs. Sohlberg's paintings are mysterious and thought provoking, either of tranquil, beautiful summer nights or majestic mountains, illuminated skies, arousing a sense of unease and disquiet. He chose to use glazing techniques and the Nordic light to draw the viewer into his paintings of glowing and mysterious nature.



*Self Portrait (1895)*

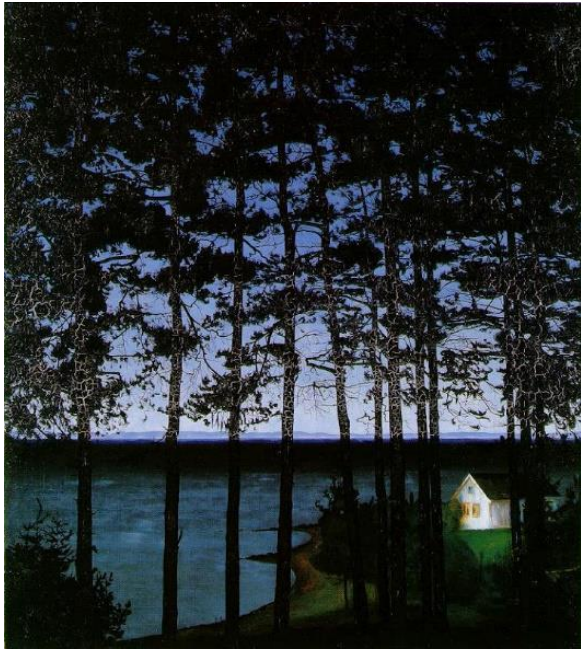


*Self Portrait (1892)*



*Self Portrait (1895)*

The artist was born in Vaterland, Christiania (now Oslo), his father was a furrier who wanted Sohlberg to continue in the trade, the family was considered financially well off. He attended the Royal School of Art and Design of Christiania and trained later under the graphic artist and painter Johan Nordhagen. He was also a student of some of Norway's famous painters such as Erik Werenskiold, Eilif Peterssen and Harriet Backer. In addition, he received scholarships to study in Copenhagen, France and Germany.

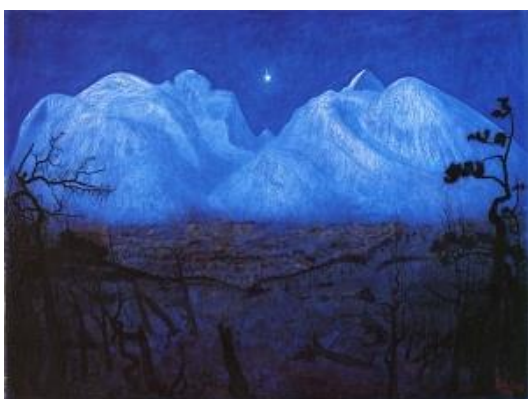


Certain features, as shown in *Fisherman's Cottage* (1907) distinguished the painter Harald Oskar Sohlberg. He focused primarily on Norwegian landscapes, several dominated by the sky, which were from specific places in Norway which had attracted little interest from other artists. Each painting and landscape had one specific and distinctive basic colour. Hues of other colours were blended and coordinated into the landscape, enriching the dominant colour and reproducing nature the way he perceived it, not just visually, but also physically and mentally. Human beings

were absent in these landscapes, even though structures built by humans have been included, such as houses, churches, telegraph poles and roads.

Curator Mai Britt Guleng explained that Sohlberg's paintings really represented landscapes of the mind, of thought and eternity. appealing to the viewer's imagination, highlighting the connections between the perceived outer world and the inner questions pertaining to the human existence.

Sohlberg's most famous masterpiece *Winter's Night in the Mountains*, one of Norway's iconic paintings was painted in three different versions between 1911-14. All three were on display in the same room at the National Gallery. In this spell-binding landscape, Sohlberg has painted bold, snow-capped mountains against a dark wintry sky. Beside the curves of the mountains and the bare landscape, there is one dominant feature that is either a star or cross. No people are present, in the foreground only naked trees which lead the eye to the mountain peaks and the lonely star. The white mountains against the deep blue sky are majestic and magical.



*Winter's Night in the Mountains (1901 and 1914)*





*Flower Meadow of the North* (1906). Beyond the Gullikstad farm near Røros, the river Glomma flows beneath a pale moon. In the near foreground is a meadow full of ox-eye daisies. The flowers in the foreground are rendered in meticulous detail, making each unique, while collectively they form a single thriving community and continue far into the distance.

Harald Sohlberg lived part of his life at Røros. The two paintings *After Snowstorm* (1902) and *A Street in Røros* (1902) show different angles of the same street during different seasons. Sohlberg's colourful and vivid details of the street, the almost three-dimensional red, yellow and brown houses seem to be leaning against one. Each building has a character of its own. The church dominates in the background. According to Curator Guleng, his paintings from Røros brought attention to this particular town and saved it from demolition.



*After Snowstorm* (1902)



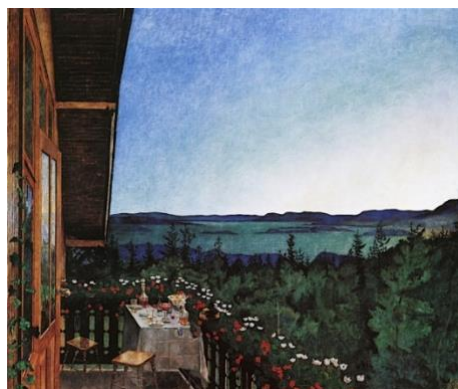
*A Street in Røros* (1902)

Mermaids were also central in Sohlberg's thoughts on life. One series of drawings from 1893 shows a captivating mermaid luring a man to his destruction. Sohlberg draws some of his mermaids with legs and feet, others with fish tails.

In a couple of pictures from the years 1896-97, *The Mermaid* is a beautiful woman emerging from the sea, her head set against the moon, which forms a halo. Such images were typical of the period, both in art and literature.



*The Mermaid (1896)*



*Summer Night (1899)*

The group was also introduced to *Summer Night* (1899), a view of the veranda of Sohlberg's house at Nordstrand in Oslo. On the table are two half-empty glasses of wine and various objects indicating that a couple have broken off their meal and stepped inside via the door that is slightly ajar. While the table is in the foreground, the carefully composed painting leads us towards the clear evening and magnificent sky that is painted in thin layers, showing Sohlberg's eye for detail and colour.

Curator Guleng ended this very informative tour by sharing the following words by Sohlberg with the group '*(...) one night I was skiing in a wild, depressing tract. The sky scintillated with the thousands of twinkling, burning stars. I have rarely seen the heavens so brilliantly bejewelled, so vivid. I stood there captivated. All the questions poured into me, about the planetary system, if there were worlds up there, if there actually could be a higher meaning in all this and if death would yield an answer (...). I felt so small (...) so feeble, it seemed I was just a bug crawling about here in everyday squalor and trivialities and stupidities and nothingness, I grew anxious (...) about what I might be and all I don't know. (...) I have to paint this, I thought, this is true, for me this is death. A long journey through something ugly, something unattractive, something frightening, a terrible void.*' (Ms. Fol. 4517 A to Ravensberg, Gullikstad, 25 Feb 1905).

Infinite Landscapes is a magnificent exhibition of unique masterpieces that will be on display until January 13, 2019. Don't miss it! Our sincere thanks to Rosalie Løvdaal for organising this visit for the International Forum!

*Sonia Noronha Mykletun*



## ACTIVITIES

### The Walking Group

A wonderful picture from one of this autumn's walking sessions!



Happy walkers taking a break!  
The new alternative to after-ski!

# AROUND OSLO

## **Felix Peikli and Vando Jam at Grand Hotel Oslo**

November 22 and December 18

At 19:00

Eight Rooftop Bar

Grand Jam

JAZZ



**Entrance is free for members of the International Forum.**



Born in Oslo, Norway, Felix was introduced to music through the local marching band at the age of eight. After discovering his love and passion for music, Felix received a Benny Goodman recording from his grandfather, sparking a burst of what would become a life-long dedication and devotion to the American art form, jazz.

His first official appearance was in front of the King and Queen of Norway at the age of twelve. Despite his young age, Felix was granted numerous awards and distinctions for his dedication and

contribution to the clarinet in particular and music in general.

After moving to New York, Felix has collaborated and performed with notable artists worldwide; such as Wayne Shorter, Chucho Valdez, Alexander Rybak, Mike Massy, Stefon Harris, Ralph Peterson jr., and Marcus Miller. The latter also featured on Felix' critically acclaimed debut album *Royal Flush* (2014). Later releases include *It's Showtime!* (2016).

Felix has contributed to IF events in the past, and is well-known to a number of us.





## Christmas Market in Spikersuppa



The traditional Christmas fair between the National Theatre and the Parliament **building** opens on November 17. Enjoy the atmosphere in the city centre. Lots of fun for the whole family!

Opening hours during Advent:

**Monday –Thursday, Sunday:** 17 November – 22 December, 10:00 - 20:00

**Friday – Saturday:** 17 November – 22 December, 10:00 - 21:00

**Sunday 23 December:** 10:00 - 18:00





**Issued by the Board of the International Forum**

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

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