



# **INTERNATIONAL FORUM**

**OSLO, NORWAY**

**April**  
**NEWSLETTER**  
**04/2016**

<b>2</b>	<b>Forum Diary</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>President's Page</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>Sign up Procedures</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>Coming Events</b>
<b>10</b>	<b>Activities</b>
<b>11</b>	<b>Reports</b>
<b>14</b>	<b>Around Oslo</b>

**Number 409**



# INTERNATIONAL FORUM

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## Forum Diary

DATE	EVENT	TIME	PAGE
April 19	Kusama at Høvik Kunstsenter	12:00	4 Mars NL
May 2	Monthly Meeting	18:45	4
May 10	Vestfossen Art Laboratory	12:15	8
June 1	IF Singers' Spring Concert	TBA	11
June 13	Fritzøe House & Colin Archer Larvik	08:15	5

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MONTHLY MEETINGS	Elizabeth S. Rasmussen	mob. 406 02 686
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## From the President



Dear members,

I simply love April!

Oh yes, I know it can play games with you – warm and sunny one day and snowing the next. But the air definitely spells spring.

We are now getting very close to the AGM, and the Annual Report has gone to the printers. Please read it carefully when you receive it.

There are still lots of interesting events to be enjoyed before we close for the summer, so stay posted.

And, if you would like to volunteer and help running the Forum, it is not yet too late to come forward. You may still contact the Board or the Nomination Committee. We are in constant need of more people. So do not be shy, without volunteers to run the International Forum, no Forum!

But please, take some time off and go for a walk in the forest the closest to you and be on the outlook for blue anemones, truly a sight for Gods!

Enjoy April!

Warm regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Berit Lindstrøm". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Berit Lindstrøm  
President

## NOTICE TO OUR MEMBERS

### SIGN UP PROCEDURES

Time and time again, we have tried to remind you all that when you sign up for events, please remember to **sign up *both* to the Forum Office and to the person in charge of the event.** This should be done in **the same email.** Just click on ‘copy’ and put in the email address of the second recipient.

We strongly advise that you follow this procedure, as signing up to the contact person only may cause confusing lists, overbooking and disappointment.

If, for some reason, you need to cancel an event, please inform **both** the contact person **and** the Office in **one email.** For last minute cancellations call the contact person.

With regards,



Berit Lindstrøm  
President

## COMING EVENTS

### MAY MONTHLY MEETING

#### The Commanding Officer: Reflections and Lessons Learned



Major General Tryggve Tellefsen has led four international peace operations over a period of 12 years. For many years, he was in charge of the selection of soldiers and their training before international peacekeeping missions (1989 – 1994).

Major General Tellefsen was head of UNPROFOR’s preventive monitoring in Macedonia in the former Yugoslavia (1994 – 1995). He later became in charge of the multinational force monitoring the peace accord between Egypt and Israel in 1997 (MFO). In 2003, Major General Tellefsen worked as a negotiator in Sri Lanka, attached to

the Norwegian Embassy, which position he was forced to leave after being accused of siding with the Tamil Tigers. Finally, he served as Head of the International Peace Force at Hebron on the West Bank (TIPH). TIPH (Temporary International Presence in Hebron) is a *civilian* observer mission

stationed in the city of Hebron. It was called for by both the Israeli and the Palestinian authorities in 1997, to support them in their efforts to improve the situation in Hebron. Both MFO and TIPH are still operative.

Mr Tellefsen will talk about his experiences as a military commander and in particular about some of the main challenges of peacekeeping missions.

**DATE/TIME:** Monday, **May 2** at **18:45** (for 19:00)

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

## **SPECIAL EVENTS**

### **Spring Trip – In Baroque Style to Larvik**

**Monday, June 13, 2016**

The Special Events Committee invites you to join us on a very special outing to Larvik. First, we shall visit Mille-Marie Treschow at Fritzøehus. Afterwards, we shall drive to Tollerodden – the home and museum of Colin Archer, the famous boat builder – where we shall have lunch and a guided tour.

Fritzøehus was built in 1860 – 1863 by Michael Treschow, the owner of an ironworks, and his wife Frederikke. They had six children and needed a residence suitable for entertaining. The architect, Jacob Wilhelm Nordan, designed the main house in the Italian neo-renaissance style. The interior is mainly French-inspired. In 1897, the East Wing was built for the chamberlain F. W. Treschow and his wife Fanny by architect Henrik Bull. In F. W. Treschow's time, the outer hall was built and the new stable was erected in yellow brick after the former wooden building had been destroyed by fire.



In the period 1996-2000, Fritzøehus was completely renovated by the current owner, Mille-Marie Treschow, who lives in the house with her family. Fritzøehus is a protected cultural heritage site.

Surrounding the house is the so-called Inner Garden, landscaped in the 1870s. The garden covers approximately 130 acres and is in the English style. Fritzøehus Park covers 1700 acres, of which 300 acres are pasture, 600 acres are beech forest, and 800 acres are forest with coniferous and deciduous trees. The

park has a varied fauna and flora with numerous animal and bird species, exotic trees and flowers. There is a large tribe of fallow deer and a minor strain of *mouflon*, which are natural to Corsica. Fritzøehus Park is a conservation area and Fritzøehus is *not* normally open to the public. Mille-Marie Treschow has most kindly agreed to receive the ladies of International Forum and will show us round herself.

Tollerodden is the home of Colin Archer - and this is where we shall enjoy our lunch. Both the area and the building got the name *Tollerodden* (Customs House) when the house functioned as accommodation and the workplace for customs officers between 1684 and 1789. The officers were under direct command of the King of Denmark-Norway.

Originally, the house was a two-storey aisle building with two wings from the 16<sup>th</sup> century. Between 1794 and 1798, it was reconstructed to its present appearance by Falkenberg, a trader, ship-owner and captain. The original main structure of the ground floor of the house survived the changes. In 1826, William Archer, bought the property and gardens. His descendants kept the property for the next hundred years. Colin Archer (1832 –1921) was born and grew up at Tollerodden. His Scottish parents had immigrated to Norway from Scotland in 1825.

Colin Archer became a world famous naval architect and shipbuilder. He and his shipyard were known for building durable and safe ships. The most notable ship built by Colin Archer was *Fram*, which participated in Fridtjof Nansen's expeditions to the North Pole and, later, in Roald Amundsen's historic first expedition to the South Pole. *Fram* is preserved at the Fram Museum at Bygdøy in Oslo. Colin Archer also designed a sturdy sailing vessel class for the Redningsselskapet (the Norwegian Society for Sea Rescue), which was used for many years and now is referred to as a Colin Archer: the prototype rescue lifeboat. Many of these boats are now in private ownership, restored and used for pleasure sailing.

Colin Archer spent much time calculating how an efficient hull should be designed. To this day, people consult his work when designing new ships. He is credited with the design of more than two hundred vessels, including *Fram*.

DATE/TIME:      Monday, **June 13**, 08:15 to approx. 17:00

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

## **ART COMMITTEE**

### **Yayoi Kusama - In Infinity**



Tuesday, **April 19** at **12:00** (for 12:15)

See the *March Newsletter* for details.

## **Vestfossen Kunstlaboratorium**

(Vestfossen Art Laboratory)

### **Variety of Korean Art - Identity, Memory, Fantasy, Urbanism**



This exciting art exhibition shows a collection of works by South Korean artists who reside in not only South Korea, but also in Europe and the USA. Like many 'ex-pats', these artists have created a network to exchange, share and develop their individual and collective experiences. They are part of a generation that grew up in a dynamic and rapidly changing country where modern technology had a direct effect on cultural expression. As the sons and daughters of post-war Korea, they witnessed the depression that surfaced after the Korean War and the subsequent socio-political environment. However, they also saw a society whose

citizens looked towards the future with an optimism that verged almost on euphoria. All the artists in this exhibition have participated actively in the South Korean art scene, both at home and internationally.

In addition to the above, there is an exhibition entitled, 'Beauty and the Beast' (1964 – 1975), by the Polish/Norwegian artist, Ryszard Warsinski, who moved to Norway in 1964. Warsinski's work has had an important impact on the Norwegian art scene since the 1970s.

There is also an exhibition presenting the modern Italian sculptor, painter and graphic artist, Mimmo Paladino (born in 1948). His work is representative of the Italian 'trans avant-garde' movement. Paladino's work, even in its simplest form, presents the human condition with all its inherent complexities.

DATE/TIME: Tuesday, **May 10**, at 12:15 (for 12:30)

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



# ACTIVITIES

## Indoor Golf Group

The Indoor Golf Group now plays every Thursday at 10:30, usually starting with a coffee. We have a special price for balls, and private lessons can be arranged. All levels of golfers are welcome – also those who would like to start playing – so do come along!

TIME: Thursdays at 10:30

PLACE: Fornebu Indoor Golf Centre, Snarøyveien 69, 1367 Snarøya  
(the old aircraft hangar)

CONTACT: Hilary Sem: *For more information, please contact the IF Office.*

## The Forum Singers' Spring Concert 2016



The “Forum Singers” are pleased to inform our members that from January 2016 the choir has a new conductor. Her name is Eva Landro and she is a very talented young lady. Besides being a choir conductor, Eva herself has a beautiful soprano voice and sings in the prestigious Det Norske Solistkor.

**Please note the date!** At the moment, the choir of about 30 ladies is busy practising the repertoire for our spring concert.

DATE: Wednesday, June 1 (Time to be announced later)

PLACE: Vestre Aker Menighetshus.

There will be songs in several languages, including Japanese (!), and a sing-along for the audience to join in, followed by our traditional finger-food buffet and wine and more! More information to come in the May *Newsletter*.

Rosemary Hauge

# *R E P O R T S*

## **MONTHLY MEETING**

### **Hans Wilhelm Steinfeld**



The hall at Vinderen Seniorsenter was fully packed to listen to the March speaker, Mr. Hans Wilhelm Steinfeld, historian, journalist, writer and foreign policy commentator, with Russian politics as speciality.

Mr. Steinfeld was an internationally acclaimed foreign correspondent in Moscow for the Norwegian Broadcasting Corporation (NRK) for three periods. He speaks fluent Russian and has won a series of prizes for his work and written a series of books on politics in Eastern Europe.

Mr. Steinfeld talked about women in Russia and explained the relationship between the sexes in Russian society, from the 19<sup>th</sup> century post-Napoleonic Russia and the literary theme of the strong woman and the ‘expendable’ man, up to the 21<sup>st</sup> century. He spoke in particular about the subordinate role of the women in tsarist Russia, and the inability of the Russian man to respond to love, at least in literary terms, and pointed to obvious similarities between Tolstoy’s *Anna Karenina* and Nora in Ibsen’s *A Doll’s House*.

He outlined the role and challenges of especially servile women in feudal Czarist Russia and emphasized the great disparity between the rural and urban life styles. Most of the 19<sup>th</sup> century peasants were illiterate. Yet, the peasant women had – to some extent – a little more influence over their lives than women of the upper classes. In general, Russian women of all classes were subservient to men. In rural society, however, the tenant farm was a family business in which women were indispensable. The serfs (any of the various bonded classes of tillers of the soil, especially of 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> century Russia) were even less fortunate. They were not masters of their own lives, as they were objects of trade, and both men and women could be sold away from their families and friends.

The difference between the Russian (mainly bonded) farmers and the Norwegian (mainly free) farmers in the 19<sup>th</sup> century was significant. In Norway, the land-owning farmers were represented in Parliament. In Russia, the landless peasantry became revolutionaries; in Norway, they became workers. In Russia, slavery was only abolished in the 20<sup>th</sup> century through the Revolution.

The Russian Revolution and World War I brought about a gradual emancipation of women, who had participated in non-combative activities. In most countries, women fought for and won the right to vote. Mme Alexandra Kollontai, who

had lived in Norway before the Revolution, became the Soviet Ambassador to both Norway (1923 – 26) and Sweden (1930 – 45). Her secretary, Nina Krymova, befriended and corresponded with Nordahl Grieg and quite a number of other Norwegian authors.

During most of the Soviet period, women were the cornerstones of Russian society. The Orthodox Church was controlled by the Communist Party. Many churches were closed or destroyed, and a number of priests executed by the regime. The collectivisation of agriculture and the ‘loss’ of religion made life difficult, in particular for women. The traditional misogynist attitude towards women never relented.

The collectivisation added to the human tragedy. In the beginning of the 1930s, approximately 5 million men died in Stalin’s brutal repression of the farmers’ revolt and many more succumbed in the labour camps. It is not known how many women died, but the demography changed. Now many archives from the Stalin period have been made public, and even the infamous KGB files are more accessible. They testify to the sometimes impossible situation of women, who could get up to two years of labour camp for not showing up for work after giving birth! And, one man got years in the Gulag for being homeless! Nothing of what happened could be talked about.

During World War II, women again had to step up and many worked in the arms industry or in agriculture. However, even during the war, the labour camps continued and an estimated two million people died in Soviet camps. The partisan movement during the war and the Communist Party became arenas in which women could participate. But these women were not welcomed by Stalin, who was suspicious of everyone. An old woman Steinfeld interviewed could not remember one happy moment in her whole life!

A general lack of housing added to the plight. Too many people sharing too little space became the norm and did nothing to improve relations between the sexes or the generations. The result of the forced collective poverty was the proletarianisation of the whole population. The birth rate dropped drastically and has remained low, partly because of the dreadful sanitation at the birth clinics, but also because of the men’s disastrous intake of alcohol. Today, the average alcohol consumption stands at almost 16 litres of pure alcohol per year!

So, women struggle with a macho society in which they are being kept down. In modern Russia, the uneducated macho oligarchs collect young trophy wives. Their misogynic attitude is centuries behind what is acceptable in the West. Men claim to be cleverer than women, but Russian and Soviet history has proven otherwise, according to Steinfeld. If you want to offend an oligarch, you simply compliment him on his beautiful daughter!

Women systemically have lower salaries than men. Medical doctors for instance are extremely badly paid. At a conference, one female doctor confessed to working as a prostitute at weekends in order to make ends meet!

Russian women who distinguish themselves are seldom well liked. Raisa Gorbacheva, a sociologist, became very unpopular. She was hated because she was 'visible': the first 'first lady' the Soviet Union (or Russia) ever had. She was a very strong woman, and she and her husband seemed to be equal partners in their marriage.

To conclude, many of the problems of the past persist: in modern Russia, housing is scarce and of low quality, something that poses a problem for many young people; corruption is rampant; the bureaucracy slow and crime ubiquitous.

Steinfeld's description of Russia is indeed a bleak one: Very few people support the system, although the official rate is 90%. Fifty per cent of Russians would like to leave the country. Most would like to settle in either Belgium or Denmark. Young Russians travel and have access to the Internet. They know that life is different in the West, which is a worry for the authorities. The economy is in shambles because of mismanagement and sanctions. Putin has frozen all debate. The police are helpless, and Parliament is ineffective.

After the speech, the questions were many. This was obviously a topic that roused a lot of interest.

Elizabeth Rasmussen

## AROUND OSLO

### Coffee Tasting at Tim Wendelboe's

As one might expect of people who endure months of cold and darkness, Norwegians take their coffee seriously, and Oslo is filled with cosy cafés serving stellar coffee and pastries almost too pretty to eat. One must-visit shop is that of Tim Wendelboe – the city's premier coffee roaster – and a world-renowned *barrista*.



The bare-bones storefront coffee shop puts the focus 100 percent on the beans; they serve only coffee, and only for take-away. On Saturdays at 11:00, however, you can sign up for a one-hour ‘cupping’, akin to a wine tasting, for NOK 50.-. Knowledgeable employees explain the roasting and brewing process and lead visitors through a tasting of six types of coffee.

SIGN UP: <https://timwendelboe.no/cupping>

PLACE: Grüners gate 1, 0552 Oslo

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