



# **INTERNATIONAL FORUM**

**OSLO, NORWAY**

**March**  
**NEWSLETTER**  
**03/2020**

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**Number 452**



# INTERNATIONAL FORUM

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<b>Activities</b>	Anita Solheim

## Forum Diary

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March 24	Picasso at Hennie-Onstad Art Centre	11:45	7
March 26	Former Central Bank Governor of Iceland, Svein H. Øygaard: Preventing the Next Financial Crisis	17:00	4
April 23	Visit to the Queen Sonja Art Stable	TBA	6
April 29	Knut O. Åmås: Understanding Norwegian Society	17:00	5
May 05	The Deichman Library	11:00	6

## From the President



Dear Members,

‘History repeats itself,’ the saying goes. But history is not a natural phenomenon that repeats itself like the seasons. Nor is it inevitable like death and taxes. Nor is history hereditary, transmitting events from generation to generation. The full saying is *those who do not learn from history are doomed to repeat it*. From Karl Marx to Winston Churchill, many have quoted these words of wisdom, but the maxim is attributed to George Santayana, the 19<sup>th</sup> century Spanish-American philosopher-poet.

Experts fear that we are heading into another financial crisis – precisely because authorities have not learnt the lessons from the 2008 meltdown. That catastrophe caused economic pain, social distress and political polarisation, which are still with us. Storm clouds are once again gathering over the world economy with the international corona virus scare, rising debt levels, growing unemployment and income inequality.

Against this backdrop, the Board is happy to present a talk on *Preventing the Next Financial Crisis* by Svein Harald Øygard, former State Secretary in the Norwegian Ministry of Finance.

Bankrupted Iceland was among the hardest hit by the 2008 financial crisis, but its recovery was also the fastest. Mr Øygard was called from Norway to be the interim Governor of the Bank of Iceland to oversee the recovery. He shares with us the lessons learnt from that historic crash and gives us a roadmap for the future. As Swedish Minister Leif Pagrotsky said, “I just regret I didn’t have the opportunity to read [Øygard’s book] before the Swedish financial crises in 1992 and 2008.”

This is our last event before the Easter vacation. I wish you all happy holidays: being with family, skiing and, of course, reading and watching ‘Påskekrim’.

Best Regards,

*Anita Pratap*

President

## *FROM THE OFFICE*

### **New address and telephone number**

On February 21, the Office moved to new premises at **Kronprinsens gate 3**, popularly called the *KG3*. The Office therefore has a new telephone number: **973 252 90**. Please note this down, as the old one is no longer in use. The mailing address remains the same: P.O. Box 1505 Vika, 0117 Oslo.

Sincere thanks to Dorota, Patricia, Elspeth, Elizabeth R, Sissel, Anne-Lise, Kumiko, Mette and Wenche U for their hard work and support in moving office.

The President

## *COMING EVENTS*

### **BOARD EVENTS**

**Svein Harald Øygaard**

**March 26**

Former Central Bank Governor of Iceland

**Preventing the Next Financial Crisis**



Mr. Øygaard is a former Deputy Finance Minister in Norway, and has been a Senior Partner in McKinsey and Sparebank1 Markets. He is now an entrepreneur and adviser. His book *In the Combat Zone of Finance* will be available at the event.

DATE/TIME: Thursday, **March 26**, 2020 at **17:00**

*For more information, please contact IF Office.*

**Knut Olav Åmås**

**Understanding Norwegian Society**

**April 29** from 17:00 to 19:00



Dr. Åmås (52) is one of the most respected and insightful political and social commentators in Norway. He has published 20 books and received several prizes for his journalism. For almost ten years he was the cultural and opinions editor at Aftenposten, and he now has an article in the newspaper every fortnight.

Knut Olav Åmås has served as deputy minister for culture in the Erna Solberg government (for the Conservatives ‘Høyre’), and since 2014 he has been executive director of Fritt Ord, the Norwegian foundation for freedom of expression, with a comprehensive international cooperation.

The mission of the Fritt Ord Foundation Oslo is to protect and promote freedom of expression and a safe environment for freedom of expression in Norway, particularly by encouraging lively debate and the dauntless use of the free word.

His book *This is Norway* (in Norwegian) will be available at the event.

*For more information, please contact IF Office.*

## SPECIAL EVENTS COMMITTEE

### New Deichman Library

Save the Date!



**Tuesday, May 5 at 11:00**

The Special Events Committee is pleased to invite you to a guided tour of the new Deichman Library. This is the end of your trilogy: first the Old Deichman Library, then the architect company Lund Hagem, which has designed the new library, and now the new premises. Architect Einar Hagem will be our guide. Further information and sign up details in the *April Newsletter*.

## ART COMMITTEE

### The Royal Castle + MUNCH

**April 23**



The Arts Committee invites you to the next exhibition at KunstStallen in Oslo.

The Gallery has not released all the information yet, but the exhibition opens on March 27. We will give you more details in the next Newsletter. We think this will be an important event. So please make a note of the date!

DATE/TIME **Thursday 23 April**, time to be confirmed.

*For more information, please contact IF Office.*

## Henie Onstad Art Centre

### PICASSO 347

**Tuesday, March 24**



This exhibition presents the remarkable series of etchings and engravings, the Picasso's *Suite 347*, which consists of 347 remarkable works by Pablo Picasso (1881–1973). The works are among the last hand-signed etchings and engravings Picasso ever created, and the series has only been presented in its entirety once before, also then at the Henie Onstad Kunstsenter, in 1981. In addition to *Suite 347*, the exhibition will also present Picasso's work in the Government Quarter in Oslo, Norway.

TIME: Tuesday, **March 24** at 11:45 for 12:00

*For more information, please contact IF Office.*

## ACTIVITIES

### Forum Singers Spring Concert

The Forum Singers would like to invite you to Vestre Aker Menighetshus for our Spring Concert on Tuesday, **April 28** at 19:00.



The concert will be held at our favourite venue, Vestre Aker Menighetshus, a pleasant and cosy place with good acoustics. There is plenty of free parking on the church grounds, and it is easily accessible by public transport – trams and buses go almost to the door. So please do join us, bring your friends and family, for an enjoyable musical evening with delicious refreshments.

As usual, we have a varied repertoire: a mixture of folk songs, jazz, pop, musicals and ballads in several languages. We also have singalongs so that you, the audience, can join in. Our conductor, Eva Landro, who is a freelance soloist, has been conducting us since 2016, and the excellent Margrete Moen Birkedal will again accompany us on the piano. Both Eva and Margrete will be treating us to solos.

After the concert, a tempting finger-food buffet with wine and beverages will be waiting for you to enjoy.

DATE/ TIME: **Tuesday, April 28** at 19:00

*For more information, please contact IF Office.*



## Cooking group II

We thank Rita Aars-Nicolaysen for housing Cooking Group II in January. On the menu was delicious fried cod loin and warm asparagus salad. It was all very tasty and also fun to prepare!



Our group is still small, so we welcome new members.

**Contact:** Gerd Berit Lavik. *For more information, please contact IF Office.*

## The Walking Group



The ladies have been out exploring the city and its surroundings again! Discover the city! If you want to join us, contact Kerstin Pettersen.

*For more information, please contact IF Office.*

## *R E P O R T S*

### **FEBRUARY MONTHLY MEETING**

#### **Emil André Andersen on the Work of IOM in Norway**

The International Organisation of Migration (IOM) is the world's principal intergovernmental organisation working in the field of migration. IOM's stated mission is to promote humane and orderly migration by providing services and advice to both governments and migrants. It has 390 offices in 173 countries, in addition to a small number of field bureaus. IOM was established in 1951 in Geneva to solve some of the problems linked to the sizable number of persons who were still displaced in the wake of the Second World War. The organisation has operated in Norway since 2002.

There are 70 million displaced persons in the world today. The IOM not only assists migrants who want to return to their countries of origin, but also helps with the resettlement of refugees who have obtained refugee status and who have been assigned a country. Almost half of all refugees qualify for resettlement, especially those who come from war-torn countries where return is not an option. Many come from Iraq and Syria, but also Russia. IOM works closely with UDI and the Norwegian government.

The IOM definition of migrants covers those who have left their place of residence, whether they are displaced within their own country, refugees in another country, or people who seek family reunification. Regular migrants include all those who are holders of regular work permits, who are foreign students, who have refugee status, or who qualify for family reunification. They all need assistance to different degrees.

IOM assists both regular and irregular migrants. Often, migrants will remain in Norway even though they have been refused asylum or a residence permit. The vast majority of migrants are single men, many of them lone minors.

The irregular or illegal migrants are often very vulnerable to abuse, not only in Norway, but also along their migration routes. They may fall prey to human traffickers and thieves. Women, minors and children are automatically classified as 'at risk'. They are typically exposed to both sexual and other types of abuse, even slavery. Libya has become a hotspot for African migrants, but IOM does not have an office here, because the country cannot guarantee the safety of aid workers.

A child will not be returned if IOM cannot establish whether or not the country of origin is safe for them, or if there are no family members in the country of origin that can take care of them. If a minor is returned, he or she will usually be

escorted by someone from IOM. Sometimes the embassy of a country will warn against return because of the situation in the country. Women are especially vulnerable upon return if they do not have any kind of receiving network. Health issues may also make many migrants vulnerable.

Some migrants find adjusting to Norway difficult. In many cases, the culture shock is too big, and therefore some ask for help to return to their home country. However, when return is not an option, migrants need help adapting to the Norwegian culture, learning the language, and understanding the very different social norms. Many discover that they have unique economic possibilities, access to education, freedom of speech and safety.

The challenges lie in leaving their loved ones behind. Usually, the educated leave first. The 'brain drain' affects the economy and chances of recovery of many countries that have been ravaged by internal conflict and war. The 'richer' people come to Europe, whereas the vast majority of refugees seek shelter in neighbouring countries or in other parts of their own country.

Norway is after all rather tolerant of people from other cultures. Like many other European countries, Norway has an ageing population, and a shrinking work force. Around 70,000 jobs are currently unfilled. And 85% of employers have difficulty finding qualified workers. The unemployment rate among migrants is only 5,5%, i.e. not very different from that of ethnic Norwegians, and a sign that resettlement is possible. As many as 43% of Norwegian doctors are foreign citizens. Scores of nurses have diplomas from other countries.



However, some migrants do not find safety in Norway. Especially the 'illegal' migrants face the perils of human trafficking, prostitution or industrial exploitation. The construction industry and the fisheries in particular have made the headlines after the authorities discovered scores of illegal workers with shoddy contracts, filthy accommodation, long working hours, and very little security. Some toil under slave-like conditions in one of the world's 'best' democracies...

There are many more resettlement cases than cases of return. Resettlement in Norway seems quite successful. Among applicants for a residence permit, 85% are granted asylum and only 15% are sent back to their countries of origin.

At the end of his talk, Mr Andersen answered questions from the audience.

Since our President Anita Pratap was away, Berit Lindstrøm, former IF President, thanked him for a very educational, informative and interesting evening.

Elizabeth S. Rasmussen

## **THE ART COMMITTEE**

### **ALPHA CRUCIS**

#### **Contemporary African Art at Astrup-Fearnley**

The visit took place on Thursday, February 6 with the participation of 16 ladies from International Forum. Supported by the 'Cultural Walking Stick', a generous initiative for seniors by the Ministry of Culture, This visit was free of charge and included a guide. It lasted for two hours and was divided into two sessions: first came an excellent presentation of the exhibition introducing the seven African countries represented and their respective artists, seventeen in all.

Afterwards, we had an excellent guided tour of the exhibition itself by Marianne Reve. The exhibition was curated by André Magnin of France, who has thirty-five years of experience with African Art. He has in fact opened up his own gallery in Paris with the same theme.<sup>[1]</sup> His aim is to show the western art world a new direction pointing towards the South. The name of the exhibition is Alpha Crucis, which is the brightest constellation of the southern hemisphere. It is worth noting that the catalogue for the exhibition was created in collaboration with African writers.



The countries represented in the exhibition are Benin, DR Kongo, Mali, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone and South Africa. The seventeen artists exhibited have a wide range of different expressions, each with a unique individual style. The artists come from different backgrounds and represent different generations and art traditions. They now participate on the international contemporary art scene with creative new art set in an original concept.

The exhibition presents a wide selection of artistic expressions and techniques such as installations, photography, textile art, sculptures and paintings - all of which represent deep personal experiences as well as clear social and political messages. The themes touched upon are gasoline smuggling, climate challenges, the aftermath of the slave trade, and the colonial era.

The exhibition is very colourful and generally expresses the joys of life albeit with political undertones. It gives the viewer insight into the dynamic contemporary art produced on the African continent.



Most of the ladies found this exhibition extremely interesting; in fact, several of us thought it was one of the best to date at the Astrup-Fearnley Museum. By holding a lecture related to the Cultural Walking Stick prior to our tour, the Museum gave us a far more meaningful and understandable experience of the art we viewed.

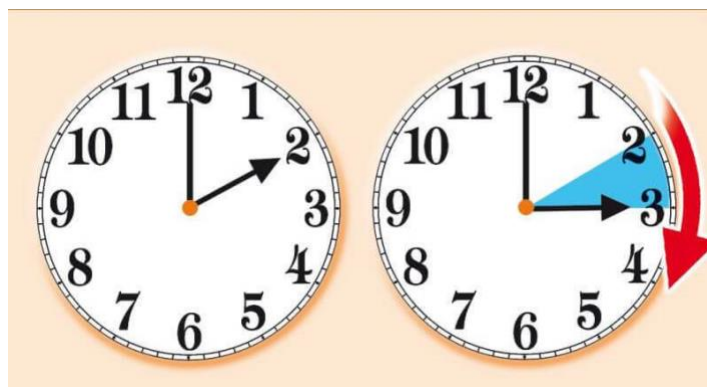
The exhibition will run until May 17. Don't miss it!

Inger M. Melhuus Ræder

## REMEMBER

### Summer Daylight Saving Time

Remember to advance your clock by one hour at 02:00 on Sunday, March 29!





## **INTERNATIONAL FORUM**

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

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