



# **INTERNATIONAL FORUM**

**OSLO, NORWAY**

**April**  
**NEWSLETTER**  
**04/2020**

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**Number 453**



# INTERNATIONAL FORUM

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<b>Activities</b>	Anita Solheim

## Forum Diary

<i>Date</i>	<i>Event</i>	<i>Time</i>	<i>Page</i>
April 23	Visit to Queen Sonja Art Stable	Temporarily cancelled	
May 05	The Deichman Library	Temporarily cancelled	
June 08	Annual General Meeting	Form dependent on restrictions	

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## From the President



Dear Members,

Who could have imagined the world being stopped by a tiny virus, two thousand times smaller than a grain of salt? We don't know yet the legacy of Covid-19, neither the scale of suffering nor the long-term consequences. But, this too shall pass. Humankind has always shown ingenuity and solidarity to overcome adversity. A Covid-19 vaccine will be found. This virus is highly contagious, and so is fear. We must remain optimistic, however hard it is. Optimism is key to raising community spirit, as well as boosting our immune system.

Keeping daily routines also helps. Studies show that queens and nuns live long because they follow routines strictly. Routines reduce anxiety. Stress intensifies in situations we cannot control. Like now. But then again, we *can* control how we choose to respond to the situation. Creativity is a superb stress buster. Any form of art, writing, baking, needlework, or gardening stimulates the brain in a different way – and distracts it from worries. Instead of harbouring anger, fear and frustration, we stay healthier by channelling emotions into days filled with routines: exercising, reading, listening to music, learning and creating.

Gunnel Anita sets a great example. She spent this difficult time diligently learning new skills to revamp our website. It's ready now. Please take a look at [www.iforum.no](http://www.iforum.no)

Another piece of good news in this time of social distancing: for the first time, we have conducted a Board Meeting in cyberspace with a Silicon Valley video conferencing app. It worked well. We were so happy to be together, doing something new, discussing and seeing each other.

I long to see you all. Until we meet, be safe, stay fit and take good care of yourselves!

Best Regards,

Anita Pratap  
President

# FROM THE BOARD

## The COVID-19 Virus

Due to the Corona crisis, all IF activities have been cancelled until further notice. We strongly encourage our members to heed the safety instructions issued by the authorities. For more information in English:

<https://www.fhi.no/en/>

### How much social distance?

Keep your distance to help slow down COVID-19

*You feel well but have been assigned to*

#### HOME QUARANTINE

*after travelling or because you are a close contact of someone with confirmed COVID-19*

- You can be in normal contact with people you live with, but avoid visits.
- Do not go to school or work.
- Do not use public transport.
- You can go for a walk but keep a good distance from others.
- You can carry out strictly essential errands to the grocery shop or pharmacy.
- Your household members are not in quarantine.
- Negative test results do not shorten quarantine.
- If you have a job that is critical to society, you may be partially exempt.
- If you are a close contact and develop symptoms, you must begin home isolation.

#### Advice for the general population [fhi.no](https://www.fhi.no) >>

- You can be in normal contact with people you live with.
- You can have visitors but just a few at a time.
- You can go out, but keep a distance from others.
- Healthy children can be together in small groups.
- Remember good hand hygiene and cough etiquette.
- Avoid shaking hands and hugging people you do not live with.
- Avoid social stigma and exclusion.

*If you belong to a risk group this advice is especially important!*

[fhi.no](https://www.fhi.no) >>

*You have a*

#### RESPIRATORY TRACT INFECTION

*but not confirmed COVID-19*

- Stay at home from when you notice the symptoms of a respiratory tract infection until at least a day after you feel completely well.
- Keep a distance from other household members.
- Your household members are not in quarantine but they should monitor their own health. If they develop symptoms, they should stay at home.

*You have confirmed COVID-19 and are in*

#### HOME ISOLATION

- Do not leave your home.
- Keep away from household members.
- If possible, use your own room and bathroom.
- Clean surfaces frequently.
- Ask someone to help you with food shopping.
- Discuss with your doctor how you should monitor your health.
- Your household members are in quarantine.



NIPH 2020-03-26



## NOTICE OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

**Monday, June 08 at 18:00 at Vinderen Seniorsenter**

*(If the Corona restrictions have been lifted)*

In accordance with the Statutes of the International Forum, formal notification is hereby given of the Annual General Meeting to be held at Vinderen Seniorsenter on Monday, June 08, 2020 at 18:00.

In accordance with the Statutes, the proposals from the Nomination Committee shall be sent to members at least six weeks before the date of the Annual General Meeting.

The Agenda for the Annual General Meeting and a preliminary list of proposals for nominations for the Board, Deputies and Committee Leaders have been included in this Newsletter. The Annual Report will be sent out in May.

Members' proposals regarding matters to be dealt with by the Annual General Meeting should be submitted to the Board, c/o Anita Pratap, International Forum, P.O. Box 1505 Vika, 0117 Oslo, preferably before the next Board meeting on **April 27** and no later than four weeks prior to the AGM. See the Statutes § 3.2.

The final notice, the Agenda, a complete list of proposals for nominations, and information about signing up, will be in the May Newsletter.

## ACTIVITIES

### Cooking Group I

A very big *thank you* to Jennifer for treating us to a super morning with tasty food and interesting recipes. Twelve IF members really enjoyed making wonderful dishes. We made *ponzu* ceviche, (rakfisk) pudding, lovely bread made with different seeds, pappardelle with crab and mushrooms, and homemade panna cotta and strawberry ratatouille.



The next meeting will be on **April 29** at 13:00 if restrictions on gatherings of non-family members have been lifted. Please sign up by Friday, April 24, to Liss Laan, *For more information, please contact the IF Office.*

### Forum Singers Spring Concert

The Forum Singers choir regrets that the Spring Concert scheduled for Tuesday April 28 has had to be cancelled. Due to the Corona virus, the singers have not been able to practise and, therefore, there cannot be a concert, even if the restrictions are lifted.

Rosemary Hauge

## REPORTS

### MARCH MONTHLY MEETING

#### Vidar Helgesen on Sustainable Ocean Economy

At the March Monthly Meeting, Vidar Helgesen talked about the High-Level Panel for a Sustainable Ocean Economy and Norway's role in this initiative. Mr Helgesen is a diplomat and politician for the Norwegian Conservative Party and has, among other things, served as Minister of European Affairs, Minister of the Climate and the Environment, as well as Chief of Staff to Prime Minister Erna Solberg.

The High-Level Panel was established in 2018 at the initiative of Prime Minister Erna Solberg. Its objectives are to create international insight into sustainable use of the sea and to help the global community achieve the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. The panel consists of 14 heads of state, led by Erna Solberg and the President of Palau, Thomas Remengesau. Vidar Helgesen is special envoy to the panel and monitors the following up of Norway's efforts.

The High-Level Panel is seeking a new global contract between the sea and humanity, because humans depend on the oceans for food, medicine, and genetic resources now and in the future. The 'harvesting' of oceanic *and* land-based resources must be conducted in such a way as to result in clean energy, clean transportation, sustainable production, and low footprint agriculture. The Panel is to publish a report and recommendations during the UN Ocean Conference in Portugal in June 2020.

Mr Helgesen reminded us of Norway's special relationship with the ocean both historically, culturally and economically. Today, our main revenues are generated by oil and gas activities, fisheries, aquaculture, shipping, and more. Norway has more jobs related to the ocean than most other countries.



Many countries with long coastlines, however, 'turn their backs' on the ocean. They focus more on land-based activities. The oceans are heavily taxed by pollution, illegal fishing and other unwanted activities. The Panel proposes a 'protection-production plan' which will allow us increased production while preserving the environment. Production and protection should not be dissociated activities, but conceived as parts of an integrated whole.

The High-Level Panel has established a group of 165 experts who gather scientific data about the ocean and work on how to build a sustainable ocean economy. The group will publish 17 separate reports later this year, and a main report with recommendations at Lisbon in June.

'How will the Panel make nations listen to and comply with the recommendations?' To this question, Mr Helgesen replied that he believes in highlighting the potential economic benefits of a sustainable ocean economy.

The ocean is valued at more than \$24 trillion, he said, adding that the ocean itself is immense.

Gunnel Anita Solheim

## SPECIAL EVENTS

### Oslo Philharmonic Orchestra February 10

A large group of members, friends and spouses met at the Oslo Concert Hall on February 10. We gathered in one of the waiting areas, where Sigrid wished us all welcome.

Marketing coordinator Beate Brox and Manager Ellen Bjørnebye gave us a storm of information in Norwegian, which we hope that most of you managed to follow. I will recapitulate some of the more salient points.

The Oslo Philharmonic Orchestra goes back to 1879, when Edvard Grieg and Johan Svendsen founded the *Christiania Musikerforening* (Christiania Association of Musicians), a successor to the *Philharmoniske Selskap*, which had existed since 1847. In 1889, the orchestra was merged with the Christiania Theatre Orchestra with a mission to play at municipal festivities, concerts and theatres.



During the First World War, the taste for symphonic music increased. However, rampant inflation in the wake of the war led to a dispute between the orchestra and the National Theatre which resulted in the temporary collapse of the Society's concerts. In 1919, the orchestra was reopened by wealthy private shareholders. The first season was shared by three conductors: Johan Halvorsen, Georg Schnéevoigt, and Ignaz Neumark. The first concert took place in the Freemasons' Grand Masonic Lodge on September 27, 1919, with 59 musicians on stage and conducted by Georg Schnéevoigt.

The Norwegian Radio Broadcasting Company (NRK) was established in April 1923. From 1925, the orchestra and NRK cooperated to ensure weekly live



broadcasts. The contract with NRK saved the orchestra from bankruptcy in the 1930s.



The German Administration used NRK to communicate with the Norwegian people during World War II. Many musicians did not approve of using ‘Nazi’ premises, but music was important...

After decades of debate and delays, Oslo Konserthus was founded in October 1966; and in March 1977, the building was finally opened. In September the same year, an organ with 7000 pipes built in Gottingen, Germany, was installed. It was the largest organ in Norway until 2014.

In 1979, the orchestra formally changed its name to the Oslo Philharmonic Orchestra. It made significant professional progress under the direction of

Mariss Janson from 1979 to 2002, recording Tchaikovsky’s symphonies, with which it went on international tours and won great critical acclaim. Today, both individual musicians and the Philharmonic Orchestra are highly prized and travel far and wide. The orchestra now counts 108 persons and also has a trainee programme for different music schools.

Although the Orchestra is subsidised by the Norwegian State, it depends heavily on ticket sales and different types of subscriptions. Klaus Mäkelä will be the next chief conductor for three seasons, starting in the 2020–2021 season. We were all invited to sit and listen to this young energetic conductor’s rehearsal with the orchestra for an upcoming concert featuring Debussy. It was an engaging performance, with one hand in his pocket and the other directed at the orchestra. We are truly looking forward to three years with this enthusiastic young conductor.

Wenche Mohr



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