



INTERNATIONAL FORUM

OSLO, NORWAY

**October
NEWSLETTER
10/2020**

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Number 458



INTERNATIONAL FORUM

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

Telephone: 973 25 290 Website: www.iforum.no

Visiting address	Kronprinsens gate 3, Victoria Passasjen
Board 2020 – 2021	Anita Pratap (President), Sissel Lindeman, Yan Donko, Heidi von Weltzien Høivik, Wenche Mohr, Elizabeth Rasmussen, Elizabeth Groth Kolby (Deputy) Patricia Leon de la Barra (Deputy), Signe Howell (Deputy), Patricia Blackwell (Advisor)
Office Coordinator	Dorota Steensland
Office Team	Patricia Blackwell, Karin Skoglund
Office hours	Please email queries
Email	int.forum@online.no
Editor	Elizabeth S. Rasmussen
Secretary	Elsbeth Walseth
Treasurer	Anne-Lise Fasteland
Auditor	Verena Krienke
Art Committee	Jane Steenbuch
Monthly Meetings	Laila Hægh Berit Lindstrøm
Special Events	Mona B. Reinboth
Activities	Anita Solheim

Forum Diary

<i>Date</i>	<i>Event</i>	<i>Time</i>	<i>Page</i>
November 2	Rev Bakkevig on Religion in the Middle East	18:45	4
November 19	Josh Kline – Astrup Fearnley Museum	12:45	6
December 7	Christmas Meeting	18:00	11
January 11	H. E. Young-Sook Nam of South Korea	18:45	11

LAST MINUTE UNAVOIDABLE CANCELLATION

To avoid unnecessary delays at events due to waiting for members who do not turn up, please telephone the contact person directly. No-shows will be charged.

THE DEADLINE FOR SUBMITTING ARTICLES

For the October *Newsletter* is Thursday, **October 29**.

From the President



Dear Members,

Autumn is the season of the soul. If spring is about rebirth and new beginnings, autumn is about reflection and preparation. This year, we leave behind a spring and summer when the pandemic dominated our lives. Now we transit into a new season where we do not know if things will get worse or better. Autumn's message? *Reflect and prepare.*

The word autumn comes from the Latin 'autumnus' meaning 'the passing of the year'. It also represents the passage of life, as poet Rita Dove wrote: 'In autumn we watch the past leave us, leaf by leaf.' Centuries ago, the third season of the year was referred to simply as 'harvest' or *haust*, a word that comes from the old Norse word 'høst' – 'to pluck and prepare', implying farm work. In the 17th century, as more and more people migrated to the towns, less people were involved in harvesting. So the terms 'autumn' and 'fall' – signifying falling leaves - came into usage.

Whether it is coping with harsh winter or hard times, autumn teaches us that preparedness cushions adversity. But autumn is also about stunning beauty. 'Every leaf is a flower.' wrote author Albert Camus. Marilyn Monroe famously said 'Designers want me to dress like spring, in billowing things. I don't feel like spring. I feel like a warm red autumn.'

Jotunheimen's gorgeous red autumn is captured by Ambassador of Ireland, H.E. Keith McBean, as you can see in his pictures in a new section of the *Newsletter*. Heartbreakingly beautiful, autumn is nature's final burst of joy, her grand finale as leaves turn colourful, fruits ripen, apples turn to cider and pumpkins plump up in good cheer. There is much to reflect, prepare ... and enjoy!

Stay warm and cosy, safe and healthy

Best regards,

Anita Prataap

President

NEW MEMBERS



This month the Board is very happy to welcome three new members.

FROM THE OFFICE

Membership Fee 2020-2021

Thank you to all who have paid their membership fee. Your membership card is on the way. The deadline for payment of the membership fee is **October 31**. The fee is the same as last year, i.e. NOK 500.

We thank you and hope to see you at our events!

COMING EVENTS

NOVEMBER MONTHLY MEETING

Reverend Canon Doctor Trond Bakkevig on the impact of religions in the Middle East Peace process



Reverend Canon Dr Trond Bakkevig was a pastor in the Lutheran Church of Norway and Dean of Vestre Aker in Oslo. Dr Bakkevig has served in a number of prominent positions including General Secretary of the Church of Norway Council on Foreign Relations (1984-1993) and personal advisor to the Norwegian Minister of Foreign Affairs. He has also been an associate researcher at the Peace Research Institute of Oslo (Prio). Dr Bakkevig received a doctorate in theology from the University of Oslo in 1979. His thesis dealt with theology and nuclear arms.

From 1997 to 2006 he was a member of the World Council of Churches' Central Committee. Since 1996, Dr Bakkevig has facilitated dialogue between Christian, Muslim, and Jewish religious leaders in Israel and the Palestinian Territories. He was a convener for the Council of Religious Institutions of the

Holy Land, involving the Chief Rabbinate of Israel, bishops and bishoprics of Jerusalem, and Muslims appointed by the president of the Palestinian Authority.

His writing focuses primarily on political ethics, the relationship between church, religion and society, but lately also on the role of religious dialogue and cooperation between religions in relation to peace negotiations and peace processes. He has also written numerous scientific and popular articles in Norwegian and international books and journals. These have mostly dealt with issues of ecclesiology, ethics and pastoral theology.

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

SIGN UP: **All participants** must sign up with **full name and telephone number** (we must leave a list of everyone who participated).

Sign up by email when you have paid, no later than **Wednesday, October 28.**

If you have **cold-like symptoms**, feel a bit under the weather, or if you have **come home from abroad less than 10 days before the event**, please **do not sign up**.

You are welcome to wear a face mask. Everyone must wash their hands upon arrival with the Antibac provided. Please enter one by one, and make sure to keep the recommended distance. The refreshments will be served from behind the counter.

PLACE: Vinderen Seniorsenter, Slemdalsveien 72, 0373 Oslo.

PRICE: NOK 100.- To be paid **beforehand**, preferably by **bank payment** to the IF account . (VIPPS only when bank payment is not possible to Vipps 591747). Please mention the event in the transaction. **No money will be handled.**

For more information, please contact the IF Office.

TRANSPORT: T-Bane 1 to Vinderen. Pay parking until 20:00 in the adjoining area.

Please bring your membership card.

No-shows will be charged.

ART COMMITTEE

Astrup Fearnley
Josh Kline – Antibodies



The Astrup Fearnley Museet is proud to present the first major Scandinavian museum exhibition of the American artist Josh Kline. Kline has attracted attention in recent years with his thought-provoking artistic practice, which focuses on the technological, economic and biological changes affecting human life in the 21st century.

DATE/TIME: Thursday, **November 19** at **12:45** (for 13:00)

SIGN UP: Please sign up to Rosi Løvdal, by email:
as soon as possible and **no later than Thursday, November 5**

For more information, please contact the IF Office.

PLACE: **Astrup Fearnley Museum, Tjuvholmen**

PRICE: For the guiding, NOK 105.- preferably by **bank payment** to the Forum account. **No cash will be handled** during the pandemic. Please mention the event in the transaction.
NOK 130,- entrance fee payable at the museum.

TRANSPORT: Tjuvholmen is located next to Aker Brygge. There is a parking garage at Tjuvholmen. You can use any public transport that takes you to Aker Brygge. Then it is a short walk to Astrup Fearnley Museum at Tjuvholmen.

LUNCH: There is a new café at Astrup Fearnley and many restaurants in the vicinity if we decide to have lunch together.

Maximum number of participants: 20

Guests are welcome if space available. Members will have priority.

Cancellations after the deadline and no-shows will be charged. For last-minute cancellations, please call Rosi Løvdal,

SAVE THE DATES!
Monday December 7, 2020



Corona situation permitting, we will hold our annual Christmas Meeting on December 7 at Vinderen. There will be a raffle, classical piano recital and a sing-along. If you want to reserve your place, please email *.For more information, please contact the IF Office.* More details in the November edition of the *Newsletter*.

Monday January 11, 2021



Ambassador of Korea, H.E. Young-Sook Nam

The international media including the *National Geographic*, the *Wall Street Journal*, *The Atlantic* and the *New York Times* have reported on how Korea successfully managed the Coronavirus. Ambassador of Korea to Norway, H.E. Young-Sook Nam, will talk to us on Korea's experience in combating Covid-19 at the Monthly Meeting on **January 11** at 18:45

ACTIVITIES

Walking Group



Autumn is here, and now it is really a good time for walking!

We had a very enjoyable time at Kalvøya. The air was just perfect and fresh.

We are happy to be able to meet outside and walk on as usual, in spite of the Corona times.

The sporty walking group usually meets up at 10:00 on Fridays.

Elizabeth G. Kolby

Cooking Group I



We were treated to a wonderful three-course lunch at Inge. The table was beautiful with Inge's own plate embroidery. We started with a special, filled grapefruit, continued with pork tenderloin baked in puff pastry, and rounded off with apple dessert.

It was such a long time since we had seen each other and the ladies really did enjoy themselves at this first cooking meeting of the season. A big *Thank you* to Inge!

The next cooking session will take place on Wednesday, **October 21**, at 12:30.

Maximum participants: 10

Please sign up to Liss Laan, email **no later than Monday, October 19**.

Wishing you all a colourful autumn!

REPORTS

ART COMMITTEE

Visit to Roseslottet at Frognerseteren

September 10, 2020

The Roseslottet exhibition, which is nestled behind the last train stop at Frognerseter, is a visual commemoration marking the 80th anniversary of Nazi Germany's invasion of Norway in 1940, and the 75th anniversary of the liberation in May, 1945. There is a certain feeling of incongruence in the juxtaposition of this presentation of inhumanity and loss of freedom set against the backdrop of the serene, almost spiritual, beauty of the Oslo fjord.



From the moment one enters the 250-metre long spiral walkway, the spectator is carried back in time to the gruesome and unavoidable reality of the occupation and the suffering and death that is inherent in war. It is the culmination of many years work by two brothers, Vebjørn and Eimund Sand. Their goal was to create

a visual representation of all aspects of life experienced by the people living through a war - both the victims and the perpetrators. But this is far from a depressing and pessimistic account of that time. In addition to informing and reminding us of the past, it is a tribute and celebration of the bravery and stamina of the men, women and children who, in their will to survive, ultimately overcame the evil that prevailed in this land but for a brief moment in history.



Vebjørn Sand interviewed approximately thirty survivors from WW2 in preparation for the portraits and brief summaries of their lives which are on display upon entering the exhibition. This is a disparate group - from soldiers, seamen, prisoners-of-war, resistance fighters, persecuted Jews, to girls who fell in love with German soldiers, and Norwegians that supported fascist movements. These portraits are especially poignant since many of these witnesses to Norwegian history have now passed away.



In addition to the monumental paintings covering the trajectory of the occupation, which line the entire boardwalk, Eimund Sand has created a number of geometric sculptures that represent relevant “thoughts” from Greek philosophy.



Standing in the centre is *The Star of the Unborn* signifying belief in the power of humanity and the potential and unlimited possibilities of future generations. There are five tall columns - 26-32 metres high - erected on the south side of the exhibition - four of which are dedicated to the memory of those who participated in the war, both in Norway and abroad: at sea, on land, in the air and in the civil resistance movement. The fifth column is in memory of King Håkon VII and his famous 'No' to holding any negotiations with the occupying German forces. In this way, the King defended the Norwegian Constitution, which is based on the principles of democracy and human rights.

Roseslottet reminds us that there is a continual need for the struggle against intolerance, racism and antisemitism.





The sculpture, *The White Rose*, which is located near the entrance, is an artistic representation of the name used by a group of Germans who worked in opposition to Hitler. Unfortunately, this group was eliminated by the secret police but it underscores that we will always find people in this world who have the strength of their convictions and the courage to fight for freedom and liberty in even the most hopeless of situations.



Roseslottet opened in May of this year and will be open until May 2021, which gives us a wonderful opportunity to view it in various seasons and weather conditions.

There is a question as to whether all or a part of this exhibition will ultimately find a permanent location.

Whatever lies in the future, one cannot deny the overwhelming and powerful impact that this unusual and extensive collection elicits in viewers of all ages.

Trudy Brand-Jacobsen

SPECIAL EVENTS COMMITTEE

New Deichman library

On a rather blustery but sunny day, 20 Forum members met outside the new Deichman Library in Bjørvika. We gazed at this impressive building shining in the sun, looking forward to a guided tour by the architects, Einar Hagem from Lund Hagem Arkitekter and Marius Mowe from Atelier Oslo. They won the Library Design Competition in 2009 and the building construction began in 2014.



Our tour started outside, with the architects explaining the reasons behind the special shape and design of this building. It is placed diagonally to the Opera House so as not to block the view of the Opera and the fjord. The most striking feature – from the outside – is the cantilevered structure, jutting 18 metres outwards from the top and 20 metres over ground. We were later to hear how this was possible...

The space between the library and the Opera is very attractive with sculptures and a small lake. On benches, people were relaxing in the sun. The architects emphasised that the whole area, both inside and outside the library, should be a place for people to enjoy free of charge. What a wonderful gift to the public!

We were set up in two groups of 10, imposed by the Corona restrictions, and went inside. We were struck by the view all the way up to the ceiling, where three shafts stream light from pentagonal openings in the roof.

The building is open from the ground floor to the top, with galleries all around containing books, activities and people. The total impression as one comes

inside is one of height, light, glass, steel, concrete, and angular shapes. The ground floor is like a plaza with a café, restaurant, automated points for borrowing and returning books, and information desks.

We then descended to the basement. The interior is of dark raw steel. Light comes from the three staircases and the colours of books on the shelves brighten the room. These books, previously stored in archives, are now available to the public. There is also a cinema and an auditorium – the Deichman room – that can seat up to 200 people. This room has several uses and can be booked for events.



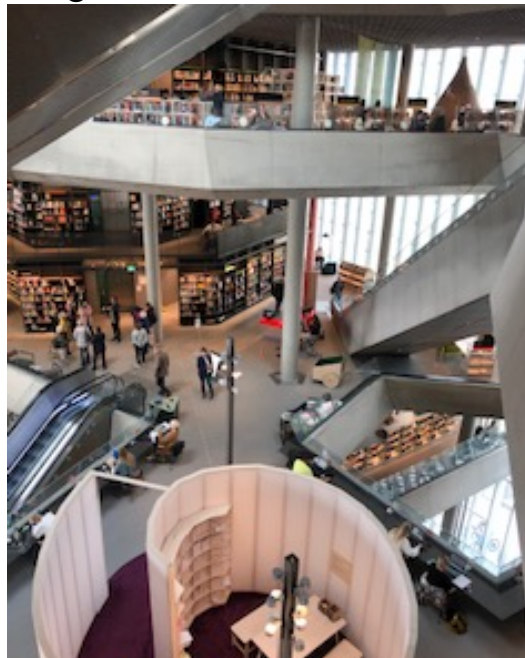
Einar Hagem talked about the materials used in the building which is ‘green’ and energy efficient. All the plastic is environment friendly. The ‘technical’ floors with vents provide ventilation and let out heat that has accumulated in the concrete as part of the heating system. Special attention has been paid to acoustics: the honeycomb plastic foam ceiling and the perforated interior walls efficiently reduce noise. The outer walls have a double layer of translucent glass panels, but some panels are of clear glass to reveal lovely views.

We then took the escalators, especially narrow to ensure single file and no pushing, to the upper floors. The 1st floor (2nd floor in Norway, always confusing!) contains fiction and the children’s department with books, play areas and workshops.

The 2nd floor is called the technical floor. As well as music and films, there are workshops for creative people. Here one can borrow technical equipment, 3D-printers, tools, sewing machines etc., and also attend courses.

The 3rd (4th) floor is mainly for quieter activities, like studying. Small rooms, individual desks, and textbooks on various subjects are available.

On all floors, delightful small niches, where one can sit with a book or just relax, have been integrated into the interior. One such niche, glassed in, contains artefacts from the old Deichman Library. On each floor there is a book-sorting room. The books are transported on a conveyer belt system which connects with all the floors in the library, much facilitating the work of the librarians.



We ended up on the top floor – named Kringsjå because of the view – which juts out from the main building. Mr Hagem explained about the construction of this special feature. It is made of ‘folded concrete’ which is very strong. The weight of the jutting-out cantilevered structure is balanced by weights in the main building behind, like a crane, which is why it does not fall down!

The top floor also holds rooms for quiet pursuits. Here we find the ‘Future library’, an art project by Scottish Katie Peterson, which will contain unpublished manuscripts by famous authors, deposited here once a year, and not to be opened until 2114, a hundred years after the building of this library began. Margaret Atwood was the first author to place a manuscript here. Norwegian Karl Ove Knausgård is the sixth and will deposit his text this year. You can read more about this special project in the link at the end of this report.

Our President, Anita Pratap, thanked Einar Hagem and Marius Moye, for the very interesting tour of this amazing building.

Below is a link which contains photos and text about the library and the video of a guided tour by Merete Lie, Director of the new Deichman Library. When looking at the video, click on YouTube for a good sized picture. Enjoy!

https://deichman.no/aktuelt/_8270c70a-fb73-41b0-8d81-fe20fed69623

A big thank you to the Special Events Committee for arranging this visit.

Rosemary Hauge

Norwegian Conversation Group



At Yan Donko's exhibition, the members of the Norwegian Conversation Group bid fond farewell to member Yukari, wife of the Japanese Ambassador, who returns to Tokyo after their three-year tenure in Norway. Group leaders Eva Tryggve and Mona Reinboth told Yukari: 'We will miss your beautiful smile and your good nature.'

Yan guided the group around the exhibition, explaining how she combined Norwegian mythology, history and nature with her Chinese heritage. The exhibition was beautiful and colourful and members were treated to delicious Austrian wine and freshly baked cakes.

IMPRESSIONS OF NORWAY

We introduce a new section in our Newsletter where we present photographs, paintings, artworks, book insights, comments, encounters or anecdotes about Norway from members of the Diplomatic Community.

An Ambassador's Norwegian Mountain Experience

We begin this series with Ambassador of Ireland, H.E. Keith McBean's stunning photographs of autumn in Jotunheimen. Ambassador McBean ventured into the mountains, travelling on foot and by boat in September, and came back with the following beautiful seasonal impressions!



‘Believe that a further shore is reachable from here.’

Irish poet Seamus Haney from *The Cure at Troy: A Version of Sophocles' Philoctetes*





The beauty is in the small detail, the colour combinations and the stillness. Just fabulous! Thank you for sharing with us!

Daylight Saving Time Ends

Winter Time Starts

Sunday, October 25



On Sunday, **October 25**, at **03:00**, the clocks are turned **backwards** one (1) hour to **02:00**. Sunrise and sunset will therefore be one hour earlier on Sunday 26 October than the day before.



INTERNATIONAL FORUM

Org.no: 994 566 806

President

Anita Pratap

Editor and Layout:

Elizabeth Rasmussen and Editorial Team

Editorial Team:

Elspeth Walseth and Josephine Kamsvåg

Dispatch Team:

Elisabeth Bennett, Susan Hahla, Kerstin 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.

Date: October 12, 2020