



INTERNATIONAL FORUM

OSLO, NORWAY

December NEWSLETTER 12/2020

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Number 460



INTERNATIONAL FORUM

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Forum Diary

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January 11	H. E. Young-Sook Nam of South Korea	18:45	4

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.

From the President



Dear Members,

We entered 2020 with high expectations. It had a lovely ring to it, grandly implying that we were entering a new decade with new ideas and new goals. Little did we know! The year turned out to be disastrous in ways we could never have imagined.

One upside is that the difficulties of this year unveiled what matters most. It revealed strong relationships and resilience. Real is the bond that connects Forum members. We faced a stress test, but with the support of all, the Forum remains strong.

We are a resilient organization. We all look much younger than our years – that's a secret formula of the Forum – although we are not exactly in our 20s! Yet, we were among the earliest adopters of digital methods. To give one small example: on March 12 when we went into lockdown, most of us had never even heard of Zoom. But on March 30, we conducted our first digital Board meeting. Our decision-making process faced no disruption. Never too late to learn new things. Never too late to do new things. For spring 2021, our creative committee leaders and their resourceful teams present a fascinating list of planned activities for you to enjoy, pandemic situation permitting.

We leave 2020 blessed with hindsight, thinking about our highpoints and low-points, memorable moments and moments we'd rather forget. We step into 2021, not with high expectations, but with cautious optimism that the vaccine will protect and the virus retreat.

May you experience joy and love, comfort and peace this holiday season.

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

Anita Pratap

President

COMING EVENTS

All events and activities will be organized in compliance with the applicable Corona restrictions.

Monday January 11, 2021



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

Ambassador Dr. Young-Sook Nam is a diplomat, economist, and university professor from the Republic of Korea. Prior to her posting in Norway, Ambassador Nam served as the Secretary General of WeGO (World Smart Sustainable Cities Organization) and is a full professor at the Graduate School of International Studies at Ewha University in Seoul. She is currently on leave to serve her term as Ambassador.

Dr Young-Sook has extensive experience in international and national policy-making institutions, serving as an Economist at the OECD in Paris, Research Economist at the International Labor Office (ILO) in Geneva, and as a Research Fellow at the Korea Institute for International Economic Policy (KIEP).

Ambassador Nam received her M.A. in Economics and a PhD in International Development from Stanford University in the United States. She has published widely on international trade, development cooperation, corporate social responsibility (CSR), smart and sustainable cities, and the Chinese economy.

Corona restrictions permitting, Ambassador of Korea to Norway, H.E. Young-Sook Nam, will talk to us on Korea's experience in combating Covid-19.

Each participant will receive a gift package of medical-grade face masks from Korea.

DATE/TIME: **Monday, January 11** at 18:45 (for 19:00)

PLACE: Vinderen Seniorsenter, Slemdalsveien 72, 0373 Oslo

SIGN UP: For more information, please contact the IF office by email, int.forum@online.no

COMING EVENTS

Spring Program 2021

Each event will be advertised, with invitation, in the appropriate Monthly Newsletter.

Monday, February 1

Sidsel Jakheln Semb

A life in Photography

Forum member and photographer Sidsel Jakheln Semb was born in Bodø, where her fascination for looking at the world through a camera lens was born.



She moved to Oslo after her A-levels, and to Paris in 1961, where she spent one year, attending the Académie Julian. Afterwards, she studied two years in Munich at the Bayerische Staatslehranstalt für Photographie.

Sidsel has travelled the world with her camera, photographing the High and Mighty, as well as everyday life.

Monday, March 1

Skin Health and Disease

Dr. Teresa Løvold Berents



Dr Berents is a Specialist in dermatology and allergology and Senior Consultant at Oslo University Hospital. She has a PhD on *Atopic Dermatitis and Skin Barrier Function in Infancy and Early Childhood*. She is a member of the University's Dermatology Research Group and has published extensively both in Norway and internationally.

Monday, May 2

Morten Stamnes, Art and Antique Collector

Mr Morten Stamnes is a well-known interior decorator, art and antiques collector, and antique restorer who has worked with the Royal Palace in Oslo and many international clients, including the Norwegian Embassy in London. He has also collaborated with the Museum of Decorative Arts and Design in Oslo and the Hallwylska Museum in Stockholm.

SPECIAL EVENTS COMMITTEE

Spring Program 2021

Because of the current Corona situation and the strict restrictions in the Oslo area, the Special Events Committee has not been able to arrange any events since our visit to the Deichman Library on September 22. We are not yet able to give specific dates for the activities listed below, but we are hopeful that they will take place.

But better safe than sorry!

Each event will be advertised, with invitation, in the appropriate Monthly *Newsletter*, whenever that may be.



The shop at Askim Berry Press



The Climate House at the Botanical Gardens

Nevertheless, we *are* planning events for the spring season, if the health authorities authorise group visits to the places that we are now looking into.

The following activities are being considered:

- Another visit to the Deichman Library.
- Visit to the newly restored Frogner Cinema, maybe with a film screening at the end of our visit.
- Guided tour of Askim Fukt and Bær Presseri (Askim Fruit and Berry Press), including the production line and the wonderful shop selling lovely products from the factory.
- Guided tour of the Climate House at the Botanical Gardens.
- Visit to the newspaper *Klassekampen*, Norway's famous left-wing newspaper.

ART COMMITTEE

Programme 2021

The Art Committee has decided on some events for 2021, and hope that we will be able to enjoy them together when the time comes. Each event will be advertised, with invitation, in the appropriate Monthly *Newsletter*.

Thursday 18 February

Nicole Eisenman's *Giant Without A Body*

The Astrup Fearnley Museum



We have chosen to wait until February and to start at the Astrup Fearnley Museum, which is an airy venue with its high ceilings, assuming it has reopened. Too cold to be outside at this time of the year!

Nicole Eisenman (born 1965) is at the centre of American contemporary modern art. This is the largest solo exhibition she has had in Europe, and spans works from 2006 to 2020. Her pieces move between abstraction and figurative with post-modernist eclecticism creating a sharp contemporary expression.

Thursday 18 March

Nitja Senter For Samtidskunst – Lillestrøm



Following up on our visit to see American contemporary art, we can now take a closer look at Norwegian contemporary art.

Thursday 15 April

Rommensletta Skulpturpark



This sculpture park was opened in 2013 in Groruddalen in Oslo (Smedstua). At the time of the opening there were nine sculptures, and more are constantly being added. Most of us have probably never heard of it! This promises to be an exciting new discovery.

Thursday 27 May

The Kistefoss Museum

The sculpture park, the museum, and the Twist all open on May 23. Hopefully, this will be a lovely trip for us all before the summer holidays begin.



In the meantime, we wish you all a very happy Christmas, albeit a rather strange one, and a much healthier New Year!

ACTIVITIES

Cooking Group I

Despite these difficult Corona times, Cooking Group I met for a lovely treat in the Old Doctor's Surgery at Værtshuset, Bærums Verk. Eight ladies from the group indulged in a three-course lunch prepared by Chef Bob Laycock.



They started with lobster-cognac soup (*bisque de homard*), followed by a tender reindeer filet and almond potato purée, mushrooms and vegetables. The meal was rounded off with a traditional caramel pudding.

After Christmas, the group will meet again on Wednesday, **February 10** at 13:00.



A big *Thank you!* to our wonderful members for a year of great companionship and fantastic tastes! I wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a prosperous and healthy year in 2021.



The ladies and the Chef

For more information, please contact the IF Office.

BOOK CLUB 2

We now meet on Zoom!

After having cancelled our book club twice this autumn, we finally decided to try out Zoom. We are indeed a very active and friendly group, and we really missed talking about life and the books that we had chosen to read. Heidi Høivik is our Zoom organizer, and after some initial fiddling, we all managed to link up. Our last meeting was held on November 19. The books on the 'menu' were Haruki Murakami's *Norwegian Wood* and Delia Owens' *Where the Crawdads Sing*. It was a great success and we shall have yet another session before Christmas.

Last year, Soen Eng Yap invited the whole group for a weekend at her home in Nesbyen. This coincided with the annual Women's Handicraft Market, and we all enjoyed ourselves immensely. This photo is from the trip.



For more information, please contact the IF Office.

IMPRESSIONS OF NORWAY

To London With Love

By

H.E. Mr. Richard Wood

British Ambassador to Norway

A curious feature of UK-Norway relations is the Christmas tree diplomacy.

This has its roots in the Second World War, when the Norwegian Royal Family and government escaped to the UK when Norway was invaded and occupied. King Haakon (whose wife Queen Maud was British) lived in the Norwegian Ambassador's Residence in London during the war and led the Norwegian Cabinet from there. British forces fought together with Norwegians in Resistance operations and led the force which liberated most of Norway in 1945. There is some wonderful newsreel footage of King Haakon's return to Oslo aboard the Royal Navy ship HMS Norfolk.



H.E. Richard Wood and Ms Marianne Borgen, Mayor of Oslo, in action somewhere in Nordmarka.

In 1947, the City of Oslo presented a Christmas tree to the British people in thanks, and to brighten up the difficult post-war years. This tradition has continued to brighten up our Christmas every year since. In fact, the tree in Trafalgar Square has become a symbol of Christmas in the UK. Thousands of Londoners see the tree as they pass by the busy square. And hundreds of thousands more visit the tree as part of pre-Christmas shopping trips to London or New Year's Eve celebrations.

The tradition has spread to many other cities, regions and institutions that have particularly close UK-Norway links. For example, the oil city of Stavanger gives a tree to our oil city of Aberdeen. The city of Bergen gives a tree to the city of Newcastle, with which it shared a ferry link. And the Norwegian Foreign Ministry gives a tree to our Foreign Ministry. So, this tradition was born out of shared history, but now celebrates particularly close links between our two countries; links which are constantly reinventing themselves.

Christmas is always a busy time. But I'm glad it is particularly busy for British and Norwegian diplomats, cutting trees, turning on lights and celebrating enduring friendship.



© Getty Images (*The Sun*, Monday 30 November)

The four-tonne Christmas Tree arrives in London on Monday, November 30

You can see the whole process from the felling of the tree in Nordmarka to the lighting in Trafalgar Square by clicking on the link below:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jLTVSJoV87k>

Angel of Hope



© Sidsel Jakhelln Semb

Music is the language of the angels, wrote Goethe. And angels are usually shown playing the harp, an instrument that resonates on a special frequency, said to be calming and healing.

The angel heralds a time of peace and acceptance, happiness and hope.
We wish you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!





INTERNATIONAL FORUM

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

Date: December 7, 2020