

NEWSLETTER

March 2022 Issue No. 473

In this Issue:



March Monthly Meeting: Ambassador Jon Westborg on his Sri Lankan Experience



Art Committee *Information (Today)* at Astrup Fearnley



Special EventsThe Climate House



INTERNATIONAL FORUM

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

Website: www.iforum.no Email: int.forum@online.no

Visiting address: Kronprinsens gate 3, Victoria Passasjen

Bank account number: 1600 40 36631

VIPPS to: 591747

Board 2020 – 2021: Anita Pratap (President), Sissel Lindeman, Yan

Donko, Gulhan Çorman, Wenche Mohr, Elizabeth Rasmussen, Elizabeth Groth Kolby (Deputy) Lien Nguyen (Deputy), Jessie Sandosham (Deputy)

Office Coordinator: Dorota Steensland

Office Team: Patricia Blackwell, Karin Skoglund

Office hours: Please send enquiries by email

Editor: Elizabeth S. Rasmussen

Editorial Team: Elspeth Walseth, Josephine Kamsvaag

Secretary: Elspeth Walseth

Treasurer: Anne-Lise Fasteland

Auditor: Verena Krienke

Committee Leaders:

Monthly Meetings Laila Hægh

Berit Lindstrøm

Special Events Mona B. Reinboth

Art Jane Steenbuch

Activities Anita Solheim

If you wish to become a member of IF, please contact the Office!



IN THIS NEWSLETTER

FEATURES/EVENTS	DATE	TIME	PAGE
President's Page			4
NEW MEMBER			5
COMING EVENTS			
March Monthly Meetings Ambassador Jon Westborg on his Sri Lankan Experience	March 7	18:45	5
Special Events Botanical Gardens	M 1 17	10.45	
Visit to the Climate House	March 15	10:45	6
Art Committee Astrup Fearnley Museum Information (Today)	March 24	11:45	7
April Monthly Meeting Former Prime Minister Kjell Magne Bondevik	April 25	18:45	10
REPORTS			
Special Events			
Timescape 1600-1914			11
Ambassadors' Briefing			13
IMPRESSIONS OF NORWAY			16
AROUND OSLO			18
THE NOMINATION COMMITTEE			19
MEMBER OF THE YEAR AWARD			23
DEADLINE FOR SURMITTING ARTIC	CI FC		

DEADLINE FOR SUBMITTING ARTICLES

For the **April** *Newsletter* is **Wednesday, March 16**. Please send your contribution to Elizabeth S. Rasmussen and to int.forum@online.no. The Editor and the Editorial Team reserve the right to edit all material.



From the President

Dear Members,

The beauty of spring is that it is not just a season. It is a state of mind. "Spring," an eternal favourite among Vivaldi's "Four Seasons" concerto, beautifully captures the fresh, frisky, festive mood of the season. It expresses joy as we emerge from a long winter - and a pandemic - to rejoin the buzz of social activities.

Thanks to our dedicated and creative committees and group activity members, we have kept many programmes going over the past two years. Now we can get into the spring swing of things. We invite our members and especially our new members to come forward and join our various committees – Art, Special Events, Monthly Meeting. Being a committee member is a good way to make friends, discuss ideas and pursue your interests. Please contact any of the Board members, Committee leaders/members, Office or me. We greatly value your participation!

The famous anthropologist Margaret Mead – who was photographed by our own gifted photographer Sidsel Jakhelln Semb - once said: 'Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful committed individuals can change the world. In fact, it's the only thing that ever has.'

International Forum brings together thoughtful, committed individuals. But we do not aim to change the world. As we get older, we realize the wisdom of the saying: How can we change the world when we cannot even get our partners to change the tv channel! Changing the world is best left to the younger generation. For us, forming groups and committees is all about sharing, learning and doing things together in a spirit of friendship and fun. So please do join us.

Best Regards

Best Regards,

Anita Pratap

President

NEWMEMBER



This month the Board is very happy to welcome one new member:



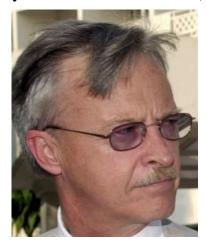
COMING EVENTS

MARCH MONTHLY MEETING

'Some thoughts about life in Sri Lanka.'

Former Norwegian Ambassador Jon Westborg

Monday, March 7 at 18:45 for (19:00)



For more information, please see the February Newsletter

SPECIAL EVENTS

The Climate House

March 15



The Special Events committee has the pleasure of inviting Forum members to a guided tour of the Climate House. The house is part of the Natural History Museum at the Botanical Gardens.

In the Climate house, you will be introduced to the earth's climate system, the consequences of global warming, and some of the proposed solutions to the problem and how you as an individual may contribute.

The Climate House provides updated research-based facts on the earth's current climate. It explains the different natural and man-made impacts on climate change, what we stand to lose and what the consequences of various initiatives for the future may have.

At the same time, visitors will gain insight into how they can help stop global warming and what role they may have in the fight against climate change.

The guided tour will last for about one hour.

DATE/TIME: Tuesday, **March 15**, at 10:45 (for 11:00).

SIGN UP: By email to the Office, int.forum@online.no as soon as

possible and no later than Monday, March 7.

PLACE: Klimahuset, Sars gate 1, 0562 Oslo.

PRICE: NOK 105.- Please sign up before you pay. Payment

preferably by **bank transfer** to the Forum account: 1600 40 36631 or by VIPPS 591747. No cash will be handled at the

venue. Please state the event and your name in the

transaction (in the KID-number box for bank payments and

in the dialogue box for VIPPS).

Wait with the payment until you have a confirmed place. In addition, you pay an entrance fee to The Climate House on arrival, adult NOK 120,-, senior NOK 60.

TRANSPORT: T-bane to Tøyen station, Tram no 17, Bus 20, 31 or 60. By car but limited parking facilities.

Maximum number of participants: 15. Guests are welcome if space available.

Members will have priority.

Cancellations after the deadline and no-shows will be charged.

For questions or last-minute cancellations please contact Mona Reinboth by email: mona.reinboth@googlemail.com, or mob.: 948 82 895

ART COMMITTEE

INFORMATION (Today)

March 24 at 11:45 for 12:00



The Art Committee is pleased to invite you on a guided tour of the exhibition *INFORMATION* (*Today*) at the Astrup Fearnley Museum of Modern Art. Encrypted networks, digital currencies, artificial intelligence, data harvesting,

algorithmic biases, sentient machines – all are products of 21st century databased capitalism. The proliferation of information, and data's nebulous modes of circulating and of being processed, fundamentally shape modern daily life.

INFORMATION (*Today*) is a group show featuring contemporary artists seeking to unravel this phenomenon.



Some of the artists

Intended as a loose response to the iconic *INFORMATION* show at New York's Museum of Modern Art, curated by Kynaston L. McShine in 1970, *INFORMATION* (*Today*) examines how contemporary artists deal with the relentless flow of information and data that deeply impacts our daily life. If MoMA's exhibition was born from the late 1960s and early 1970s dawn of the 'Information Age', when advancements in new computing and communication technologies – and with them, access to information – seemed suddenly on the rise, in the fifty-some years since, the ubiquity of access and 'connectivity' has arguably lulled us into complacency with its flipside: ever more highly technologized forms of surveillance and the overexposure of our personal data. Exploring the myriad ways in which information signifies in our 'post-truth'

era, when data has so deeply infiltrated our daily lives – whether Instagram 'likes', COVID-19 infection rates, social-media-propelled election manipulation, carbon footprint measurement, or algorithmically driven profiling – such a show seems more urgent than ever.

INFORMATION (Today) features works by an international selection of artists loosely culled from the two generations since 1970; which is to say, born after the original INFORMATION exhibition, for which the processing and formalizing of data is among the central tenets. It includes a range of artistic positions, including recent work and new commissions in diverse media (from sculpture and painting, to video and performance, and from the undeniably material to the wholly immaterial), thus presenting an overview of some of the most promising and challenging artistic practices grappling with data, technology, and information today.

The exhibition *INFORMATION* (*Today*) is produced by Kunsthalle Basel in collaboration with the Astrup Fearnley Museet.

DATE/TIME: Thursday, **March 24** at 11:45 (for 12:00)

SIGN UP: By email to the Office: <u>int.forum@online.no</u> as soon

possible and no later than March 17.

PRICE: Entrance fee is NOK 150 and should be paid individually at

the ticket counter at the museum.

NOK 175.- should be paid for the guide to the Forums bank account 1600 40 36631 or by VIPPS 591747. Please state the event and your name in the transaction (in the KID-number box for bank payment and in the dialogue box for VIPPS) as soon as your registration has been confirmed.

The event will be cancelled if less than 12 people sign up.

PLACE: Astrup Fearnley Museum, Strandpromenaden 2, Tjuvholmen

TRANSPORT: Tram 12 or bus 21 and 54 to Aker Brygge. Bus 32 to Vika

Atrium. Any T-bane line to Nationaltheatret.

Maximum participants: 30

Guests are welcome if space is available. Members have

priority. Please remember your membership card.

For last minute cancellations, please call Inger Ræder

mob.: 976 88 795

NB! Cancellations after the deadline and no-shows will be

charged.

APRIL MONTHLY MEETING

Kjell Magne Bondevik

Monday, April 5



Mr Bondevik is a Norwegian Lutheran Minister and well-known politician. As leader of the Christian Democratic Party, he served as the Prime Minister of Norway from 1997 to 2000, and from 2001 to 2005, the longest tenure since World War II.

Currently, Bondevik is President of the Oslo Center for Peace and Human Rights. He will talk about the Peace Center and its mission.

DATE/TIME: **Monday, April 25** at 18:45 for (19:00)

SIGN UP: To Laila Hæg as soon

as possible and no later than Wednesday, March 30.

PLACE: Vinderen Seniorsenter, Slemdalsveien 72, 0373 Oslo

PRICE: NOK 105.- Please sign up before you pay. Payment

preferably by **bank transfer** to the Forum account: 1600 40 36631 or by VIPPS 591747. No cash will be handled at the

venue.

Please **state the event and your name** in the transaction (in the KID-number box for bank payments and in the dialogue

box for VIPPS)

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

adjoining area.

GUESTS: Guests are welcome if there is room.

No-shows will be charged.

For last minute cancellations, please call Laila Hægh,

mob.: 957 54 282

REPORTS

SPECIAL EVENTS

Timescape 1600-1914 at Norsk Folkemuseum

On a beautiful sunny day in February, a group of Forum ladies and guests met at Norsk Folkemuseum for a guided tour of the latest permanent exhibition: *Timescape 1600-1914*. The exhibition shows how the daily life and culture of Norway's social elite changed and developed over these centuries, influenced by growing trade and connections with other countries.

Our guide was Mr Geir Thomas Risåsen, a historian specialising in culture, and one of the curators of the exhibition, which took many years to prepare. We entered the building, new in 1914, but now completely modernised for this exhibition. Mr Risåsen gave a small introductory speech before guiding us around.



The exhibition is organised in sections with information in both Norwegian and English. Items from the different periods between 1600 and 1914 show the progression from Baroque, through Rococo and Romance, to Art Deco.

We started in the World Views section, which illustrates Norway's view of the world in the 1600s. We were struck by two magnificent stucco ceilings, one of them portraying the four corners of the world, Asia, Africa, America and Europe. These authentic ceilings are from the 1660s, originally from a house in Kongens gate 5, Oslo.

Fredrik Julius Kaas (1758-1827) and his wife Kirsten Kaas (1757-1827)

As we moved through the sections, Mr Risåsen kept spicing the story of the various exhibits with interesting facts and anecdotes. We were amazed by the quantity of exquisite artifacts on show, more than 1500! They are displayed in

small rooms with glass walls, on tables with glass tops, and in drawers to be pulled out. All beautifully laid out. The surrounding walls are painted dark to protect these valuable items.

The exhibition shows the life of the social elite. Through the glass walls, we could admire furniture, paintings, portraits, porcelain, glass, costumes, hats, children's toys, among other things, typical items from the different periods. We could follow the changing lifestyles throughout the years; for example, in the 1900s, skiing became popular due to Fridtjof Nansen and the expeditions of the Polar Heroes.

Six authentic interiors from the different eras, originally owned by notable families, have been reconstructed. Businessman Leuch's banquet room is one of the best-preserved Rococo interiors in Norway.





The exhibition begins in the 1600s and ends in May 1914, when the 1914 Centennial Jubilee Exhibition took place in the grounds of Frogner Manor, now Frogner Park. You can watch a film showing this event, which celebrated the one hundred years of the Norwegian constitution.





It is impossible to do this magnificent exhibition justice with a short description. It must be experienced! Allow yourself plenty of time, you will need it.

After thanking Mr. Risåsen for his expert guiding, we enjoyed refreshments in the museum's Café Arkadia.

Many thanks to the Special Events Committee for arranging a tour of this wonderful exhibition!

Rosemary Hauge

AMBASSADORS' BRIEFING

The Power of Patience

By

Bente Angell-Hansen

Outgoing President, ESA

Pictures by Veronica Scariotta ©

The European Economic Area Agreement (EEA) is blamed for the high energy prices. It might be easy and tempting to blame Brussels when things are difficult. But such a blame game carries risks if the objective is to protect and strengthen legally binding cooperation in Europe that has given stability and predictability.



Over the years, the European internal market has become much more complex and a series of new agencies have been created sometimes leading to difficult debates, such as the one on ACER (energy) in Norway. This internal market of 30 countries is called the European Economic area (EEA). It includes the European Union member states as well as the non-EU member states of Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway who are EFTA (Economic and Free Trade Agreement) members. To monitor that there is a level playing field and that all members follow the rules, the EFTA Surveillance Authority ESA was established nearly three decades ago. ESA's task is to ensure its member states enjoy the same rights and obligations as the EU countries.

Throughout the history of the Agreement, more than 12,500 legal acts have been incorporated into the Agreement.

Today ESA monitors the implementation of approximately 6000 legal acts. We initiate proceedings against our States based on complaints or own initiatives. The process goes through different informal and formal stages, and may end with ESA taking a country to the EFTA Court. However, we always try hard first to find solutions through dialogue with our countries. It takes time and patience, but much of the time it works.





Ambassador of Italy H.E. Alberto Colella

EU Ambassador Nicolas de la Grandville

We have been portrayed as being more rigid than the European Commission and called 'holier than the Pope'. This is always a difficult balancing act notably in political sensitive areas and reflecting the fact that not everyone in Norway is in favour of the EEA Agreement.

Competition and state-aid are two priorities. In the area of competition ESA can fine companies that we believe to be in breach of the Internal Market competition rules. ESA gave Telenor a fine of 1.2 billion NOK and this case is now before the EFTA Court. Like the European Commission we conduct so-called dawn raids against a company. The Commission works very closely with us and accompany us on such raids.

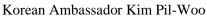
QUESTION TIME

Norway uses one percent of its GDP in state aid. Today most of these funds are used for environment and climate change. It is an important instrument to implement government policy. ESA's role is to ensure that state aid is used in accordance with internal market regulations and that no overcompensation takes place.

In pandemic times state aid has been used extensively to save businesses and jobs. It was necessary to get these measures in place urgently and ESA needed to work under pressure to handle the many requests from our states. Had we not been able to handle this effectively, there was the real risk of reduced support for the Agreement.

Fisheries and agriculture are outside the Agreement's scope, except for veterinary regulations. ESA conducts comprehensive veterinary inspections in close cooperation with the Commission. ESA also conducts inspections of ports and airports. We employ people from 18 countries within the EEA. Apart from giving priority to handling the pandemic, climate change is at the core of ESA's work. We monitor the implementation of the Paris Accord in Iceland and Norway in close cooperation with the Commission and using the same modalities as applied to the EU countries.







British Ambassador Richard Wood



Anita Pratap and Bente Angell-Hansen

Bente Angell-Hansen completed her tenure as ESA President on December 31, 2021. She was a Director General in the Norwegian Prime Minister's Office and she was the first, and so far, only woman Secretary General (Utenriksråd) in the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

IMPRESSIONS OF NORWAY

Queen of the Bohemians

'Dagny Juel's Connections Transcend Countries and Centuries'

by

H.E. Maia Kipshidze

Ambassador of Georgia to the Kingdom of Norway





Madonna - Edvard Munch

Dagny Juel (1867-1901)

Many people know about Dagny Juel, but not many know that she died in Georgia. She is well known in her own right as a writer, poetess and dramatist, but also for her romantic liaisons and connections with several extraordinary people, including giants like Edvard Munch, Gustav Vigeland and Astrid (Mathiesen) Strindberg. Dagny's death was dramatic, both tragic and mysterious.

Born in Kongsvinger on June 8, 1867, Dagny died in Tbilisi, Georgia on June 5, 1901. A beautiful, artistic, creative woman, Dagny was an inspiration to several creative genius of the time. An iconic figure, she was a Queen of the *Christiania Bohemians*, the famous group of avant-garde writers, visual artists and political thinkers who travelled between Berlin, Paris and the Norwegian capital. She was also a prominent member of the Berlin Bohemians in the 1890s.

Dagny was a muse and inspiration to August Strindberg and supposedly the model for Edvard Munch's famous *Madonna* and other works. She was married to the Polish writer Stanisław Przybyszewski. In June 1905, Dagny travelled to Tbilisi with her friend Władysław Emeryk, son of a mine-owner involved in the coal and manganese business in Georgia. In the hotel room, he shot her dead

and then committed suicide. What was his motive? Jealousy, mental instability, fury, rejection? No-one knows for sure. There was one witness: a small and frightened Zenon watched his mother's tragic murder. Dagny was buried at the Kukia Cemetery in Tbilisi, on June 8, 1901. It is quite common to see Norwegians visit her grave. Her life was dramatic. Her death even more so. She died three days before her thirty-fourth birthday.





Dagny Juel

H.E. Kipshidze next to Dagny Juel's portrait at the Munch Museum

Interestingly, she stayed at the then Grand Hotel Tiflis, exactly opposite Hotel London, where Knut Hamsun and his wife stayed back in 1899. Hamsun's trip to Georgia is described in *I Eventyrland. Oplevet og drømt i Kaukasien* (In Fairy Tale. Experiences and dreams in Caucasus), published in 1903.

In 2018, I happened to visit the Women's Museum (Kvinnemuseet) in her home town Kongsvinger, where a whole section is dedicated to her. The section was officially opened by Her Majesty Queen Sonja in 1995. Interestingly enough, I found – on a shelf in the museum library – the critically acclaimed novel written in English by a famous Georgian contemporary writer Zurab Karumidze: *Dagny, or a Love Feast*. He describes the life of the Bohemians as one of 'limitless feasting and wine-crazed discussions.' He was later invited to participate in the Lillehammer Book Festival (May 2019), where he engaged in a fascinating conversation with the Norwegian writer and composer Ketil Bjørnstad. Their interaction was moderated by the historian Ivo de Figueiredo at Lillehammer Kunstmuseum.

International Forum wants to take this opportunity to wish Ambassador Maia Kipshidze a fond farewell. She returns to Tbilisi in March. We deeply value her support and contributions to our Newsletter and events.

Anita Pratap, President

NEW MEMBERS FOR THE ART COMMITTEE



The Art Committee has only seven active members since two of our team have retired, and we are looking for new blood!

We organise an event once a month and hope that two members can help each other with one event. We used to be 12 members which meant helping once a year, but now the frequency has increased.

We visit all the important art exhibitions and often visit artists in their studios. You need an interest in the arts and you should be familiar with online bookings etc. For each visit, the organisers oversee writing the invitation in the Newsletter, deciding the cost, the list of participants, noting those who fail to turn up, and sending the balance sheet to the office. Everything is done digitally.

We are a fun group (plenty of artistic types!) and we also meet privately or go to events as a committee. Those who can, usually lunch together after all events.

Be inspired and get to see everything that is going on in the art world!

If you are interested, please contact the leader of the Art Committee, Jane Steenbuch.



New Website from the City of Oslo



The City of Oslo has launched a new website for newcomers, in which you will find useful information about a series of things, such as

Life in Oslo: Transport around the city, where to shop, culture and activities.

Norwegian society: Get to know the building blocks of Norwegian society.

Health care and welfare: Medical assistance and social services.

Children and families: Kindergarten, school system and activities.

Please click on:

Welcome to Oslo - English content - City of Oslo - Oslo kommune



From the Nomination Committee

The Nomination Committee is now starting its work

We are looking for members, who would like to take an active part in the running of the International Forum over a period of time. Please feel free to suggest yourself or to submit the name of another member whom you think would be able to contribute in some way.

It doesn't necessarily take a lot of time to be a member of a committee and it can be very rewarding. It is also a good way to learn more about the International Forum and to become better acquainted with other members.

The Nomination Committee prepares a list of candidates and submits it to the Board. The list of nominees will be published at least six (6) weeks before the AGM. Members may then send the Board further proposals, which can be put on the final list for election at the AGM. There is no vote by proxy at the AGM. The candidate receiving the most votes will be elected.

Included on the next page is a form which we hope you will fill in. Please return the form **as soon as possible** (by email or post) and no later than **March 10** to the Leader of the Nomination Committee: Ellen Vollebæk.

Please remember that your suggestions will form the basis of the Committee's proposals when members are nominated for election at the Annual General Meeting in 2022.

We cannot emphasize how much we look forward to receiving the names of as many nominees as possible!

Thank you!

For the Nomination Committee:

Ellen Vollebæk (Leader)



PROPOSAL(S) FOR NOMINATION

Proposais:	
I (name)	Tel:
Propose <i>myself and/or:</i>	
	Tel:.:
for the position of *:	
and	
propose:	Tel.:
for the position of *:	
*President, Board Member, Committee leader	
Please send the form to:	
Ellen Vollebæk	



Guidelines for Nominating International Forum's Member of the Year Award

Introduction:

The purpose of the International Forum's Member of the Year Award is to honour a member who, over a number of years, has given outstanding service to the running of the organisation, in accordance with its aims.

- § 1 The **Member of the Year Award** may be given to a full member in appreciation of commendable service to International Forum. This may be for
 - a) having made significant contribution to the running and/or advancement of International Forum
 - b) long, exceptional and dedicated service that has benefited the organisation.

§ 2 Who is eligible for nomination

- a) Members who have held one or several positions in International Forum.
- b) Current Board and Deputy Board Members are not eligible.

§ 3 Nomination procedure

Any member may propose a nominee. The Board will evaluate the nominations. A majority decision will prevail. The Board's decision is final.

- a) All proposals should be submitted to the Board using the Nomination Form or by emailing the corresponding information as requested in the form.
- b) The reasons for proposing the nominee should be fully described.
- c) The completed form should be sent to **The Board, c/o The President,** not later than April 15.

§ 4 The Award

The recipient will be presented with a gold plated IF brooch at the AGM in June. An article about the recipient will be published in the Newsletter.



Nomination Form

for International Forum's Member of the Year Award

a) I propose:	as Member of the Year* *Please fill in the current year
Please list the nominee's activities rela	nted to IF, including positions held:
Please state as fully as possible your re	easons for proposing this nominee:
Proposing member:	
Name:	
Signature:	
Memb. no.: Mob.:	
Email:	
IF member since:	
Please email your nomination to The	e Board, C/O The President,

int.forum@online.no

Crocuses symbolize new beginnings.

No matter how difficult the winter,

These purple buds

Remind us that life starts afresh in spring.



Photo by Gunnel Anita Solheim ©

INTERNATIONAL FORUM



Org.no: 994 566 806

President Anita Pratap

Editor and Layout: Elizabeth Rasmussen and Editorial Team

Editorial Team: Elspeth Walseth and Josephine Kamsvaag

Dispatch Team: 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: March 1, 2022