



# INTERNATIONAL FORUM OSLO

## NEWSLETTER

November 2023  
Issue No. 490

### In this Issue:



**November Monthly Meeting**, November 6, p. 7  
Liv Arnesen, Explorer and Educator:  
'In Tailwinds and Headwinds  
on Expeditions and in Life.'



**The Art Committee**, November 16, p. 8  
*Goya and Munch: Modern Prophecies*



**Special Events**, November 21, p. 9  
Oslo Intercultural Museum



**Christmas Meeting**, December 4, p. 10  
Food and Wine, Christmas carols and raffle





## INTERNATIONAL FORUM

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

Website: [www.iforum.no](http://www.iforum.no) Email: [int.forum@online.no](mailto:int.forum@online.no)

**Visiting address:** Kronprinsens gate 3, Victoria Passasjen, 0251 Oslo

**Bank account number:** 1600 40 36631

**VIPPS to:** 591747

**Board 2023 – 2024:** **Anita Pratap** (President), Heba Mamish, Gloria Battaglia Nicoletti, Sissel Lindeman, Wenche Mohr, Bente Brandt, Bernadette Nirmal Kumar (Deputy), Kirsimarja Tanner (Deputy), Turid Grønlie (Deputy) and Elizabeth S. Rasmussen (Deputy)

**Office Team:** Patricia Blackwell

**Office hours:** Please send enquiries by email

**Editor:** Elizabeth S. Rasmussen

**Editorial Team:** Elspeth Walseth, Robin Wittusen and Renate Scapin

**Secretary:** Elspeth Walseth

**Treasurer:** Anne-Lise Fasteland

**Auditor:** Verena Krienke

### Committee Leaders:

Monthly Meetings: Gunnel Anita Solheim

Special Events: Mona B. Reinboth

Art: Jane Steenbuch

Activities: Gunnel Anita Solheim

If you wish to become a member of International Forum, please contact us by email.



## IN THIS NEWSLETTER

| FEATURES/EVENTS                              | DATE   | TIME  | PAGE |
|--|--------|-------|------|
| <b>PRESIDENT'S PAGE</b>                      |        |       | 4    |
| <b>FROM THE BOARD</b>                        |        |       |      |
| New Member of the Forum                      |        |       | 5    |
| <b>COMING EVENTS</b>                         |        |       |      |
| <b>November Monthly Meeting</b>              |        |       |      |
| Explorer Liv Arnesen                         | Nov 6  | 18:45 | 7    |
| <b>Art Committee</b>                         |        |       |      |
| <i>Goya and Munch:<br/>Modern Prophecies</i> | Nov 16 | 11:00 | 8    |
| <b>Special Events</b>                        |        |       |      |
| Intercultural Museum                         | Nov 21 | 10:45 | 9    |
| <b>Christmas Meeting</b>                     | Dec 4  | 17:45 | 10   |
| <b>Lysebu Resort</b>                         |        |       |      |
| Jette Frølich's Christmas Exhibition         | Nov 5  |       | 11   |
| <b>REPORTS</b>                               |        |       |      |
| <b>Special Events</b>                        |        |       |      |
| Linderud Manor House                         |        |       | 12   |
| <b>October Monthly Meeting</b>               |        |       |      |
| 'Why do women live longer than men?'         |        |       | 14   |
| <b>Art Committee</b>                         |        |       |      |
| Harriet Backer at the National Museum        |        |       |      |

## DEADLINE FOR SUBMITTING ARTICLES

For the **December Newsletter** is **November 15**. Please send your contribution to Elizabeth S. Rasmussen, by email and to [int.forum@online.no](mailto:int.forum@online.no). The Editor and the Editorial Team reserve the right to edit *all* material.



## **From the President**

The work of Nobel Prize winners is inspiring – if you can understand it. But their life story is inspirational and easy for all to understand. Raised in a one-room, mud house in a Hungarian village, Katalin Karikó won this year's Nobel Prize in physiology or medicine. Back in 1989, she began research on that finally produced the covid vaccine. Why did it take so long? What happened?

Life happened. With all its ups and downs, disappointments, and betrayals. The route to success is sometimes more foul than fair, with more heartbreaks than triumphs. Karikó was thrilled when a scientist invited her to work in the United States. But things soon went wrong. He reported her as an illegal migrant to the U.S authorities. She lost her reputation, her job, her career. Instead of being angry, she is grateful to her mentor for bringing her into a world-class environment of scientific excellence. 'I learned so much from him,' she says. Karikó was demoted four times in her career. Jealous colleagues mocked her work, blocked funding, and even conspired to remove her.

Karikó is neither bitter nor resentful. She does not blame anyone. Choosing not to play victim, she treats her experiences as facts, not misfortunes. 'Don't focus on what you cannot change. Don't start feeling sorry for yourself. You just have to focus on what's next, because that's what you can change.' She is encouraged by the famous Hungarian stress researcher Hans Selye. His advice is that 'You must learn to turn negative stress into positive stress.' Problems bring negative stress. But finding a way out is positive stress. Attitude is key. You can't stop Life from throwing problems at you, but you can stop looking at the problems with fear, anger or helplessness. When you get down to doing what best you can to manage problems, stress levels come down, says Selye.

Explorations are fascinating – be they of our internal world of thoughts, emotions and behaviour patterns or the external world of oceans, outer space and polar regions – as shown by the adventurous life of our monthly meeting speaker, Liv Arnesen. There is so much we don't know, so much to learn from inner and outer explorations. The world is wide, the mountains high, the oceans deep and the mind mysterious.

Best Wishes,

*Anita Pratap*  
President

## FROM THE BOARD

### NEW MEMBERS



This month the Board has the pleasure of welcoming one new member.

## COMING EVENTS

### NOVEMBER MONTHLY MEETING

**November 6**

**Educator and Explorer Liv Arnesen**

*‘In Tailwinds and Headwinds on Expeditions and in Life.’*



Liv Arnesen is a former high school teacher, now lecturer, educator, and explorer.  
*‘When you feel your heart beating hard or your blood running fast, you have found something that is important to you, create a room for it.’*

DATE/TIME: Monday, **November 6** at 18:45 for (19:00)

PLACE: PLACE: Vinderen Seniorsenter, Slemdalsveien 72, 0373 Oslo.

SIGN UP: To Gunnel Anita Solheim, by email no later than **November 1.**

PRICE: NOK 105.- **Please sign up before you pay.** Please make your payment **preferably** by **bank transfer** to the Forum account: 1600 40 36631 or by VIPPS 591747.

For more information, please see the October *Newsletter*.

## THE ART COMMITTEE

**November 16**

Guided visit of *Goya and Munch: Modern Prophecies*

The Munch Museum



Edvard Munch's *Harpy*, 1894. Photo © Munchmuseet

Two artists from opposite ends of Europe – Francisco de Goya (1746 – 1828) and Edvard Munch (1863-1944) – lived different lives in two separate historical periods. What brings them together? The new exhibition, shown exclusively at the Munch Museum, takes as its starting point the idea that it was not until Munch's lifetime that Goya began to receive international fame and was recognised as a forerunner of modernism.

Goya created fantastical, disturbing works which responded to the wars, social pressure and hypocrisy of his time. Long after his death, Munch's generation of European artists were amazed and inspired by Goya's inventive use of different media and techniques and his embrace of the darker, mysterious side of the human imagination. For them, Goya was a prophet of the new art, hailed as a forerunner of modernism.

Although it has proved difficult to confirm whether Munch himself was directly inspired by Goya's art, they both clearly shared certain artistic interests. And as

this exhibition shows, many of Munch's friends and associates eagerly championed Goya as a forerunner of modernism because of his vibrant imagination and experimental spirit.

Focusing on the different ways in which they addressed themes relating to society, war, faith and superstition, *Goya and Munch: Modern Prophecies* uncovers fascinating parallels between the two artists. As well as a wide selection of famous and lesser-known drawings, prints and paintings by both artists, visitors will get a rare chance to view complete sets of Goya's famous print series *Disasters of War (Los Disparates)* and *The Caprices (Caprichos)*.

Despite living in different eras, the two artists often dealt with similar subject matters in their work, which still appears just as strikingly modern as it did around 1900. This exhibition includes works generously loaned from international institutions including the British Museum and National Gallery in London, the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, Museo del Prado and Museo Lázaro Galdiano in Madrid, and the National Museum in Oslo.

Prepare for an exhibition which first highlights Goya's importance for Munch and his artistic circle, then leads you into the powerful, modern visions of Goya and Munch.

DATE/TIME: Thursday, **November 16** at 11:00 (for 11:15)

SIGN UP: To Inger Ræder by email or SMS as soon as possible and no later than Thursday, **November 9**.

PRICE: Entrance fee is NOK 160.- for non-members and should be paid individually **preferably online** several days before the event at <https://www.munchmuseet.no/kjop-billetter/inngangsbillett/vanlig/> in order to save time upon arrival to the museum. Also, members should book their entrance ahead of time at <https://www.munchmuseet.no/medlem/>

NOK 120.- for the guide should be paid preferably to International Forum's bank account 1600 40 36631 or by VIPPS to 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.

PLACE: The Munch Museum, Edvard Munchs plass 1, 0194 Oslo

TRANSPORT: Closest stop by tram: Bjørvika. Tram 12 stops at Dronningens gate (11-minute walk to Munch). Tram 13 stops at Bjørvika (6-minute walk). T-bane to Jernbanetorget (12-minute walk)

Maximum participants: 20 Please remember your membership card.

The event will be cancelled if less than 12 people sign up. Guest are welcome if space is available. Members have priority.

For last-minute cancellations, please call Inger Ræder. NB: Cancellations after the deadline and no-shows will be charged.

Inger Ræder

## SPECIAL EVENTS

### Oslo Intercultural Museum

**November 21**



Located in the former Grønland prison in one of Oslo's most culturally diverse district, the Intercultural Museum challenges visitors to evaluate their own prejudices and expand their understanding of other cultures, as well as reflect on important notions such as racism, xenophobia and bias in everyday life. We will be given a short introduction to the museum and the history of the building before we start the guided tour of the exhibit *Typical*. The tour will end with a brief introduction to the exhibit *Beyond Barcode*, which will give us some ideas on what Oslo may look like in the future.

DATE/TIME: Tuesday, **November 21** at 10:45 (for 11:00)

SIGN UP: To Åsny Wedege Walters by email as soon as possible and no later than **November 7**.

PRICE: NOK 150,-. Please sign up before you pay. should be paid preferably to International Forum's bank account 1600 40 36631 or by VIPPS to 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). Please include your phone number when signing up.

PLACE: Interkulturelt museum, Tøyenbekken 5, 0188 Oslo

TRANSPORT: T-bane to Grønland station, exit Grønland torg. Tøyenbekken is on your left just a few minutes from Grønland torg.

Maximum number of participants 25.

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

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

For last minutes cancellations or questions please contact Åsny by email or by telephone.

# DECEMBER CHRISTMAS MEETING

**December 4**



The Monthly Meeting Committee has the pleasure of inviting you to the traditional Christmas meeting.

According to tradition, we are planning a raffle this year, so we ask each member to please bring a small, wrapped gift. The proceeds of the raffle this year will be donated to Fattighuset.

Fattighuset is a charitable self-help organization that considers all humans as potential resources for society. Its target group are people who struggle financially, who are lonely, on welfare, pensioners, jobless or homeless. The organization runs a clothing bank, a food bank, hairdressers, laundry rooms, and bathrooms with showers, a canteen, and a library.

Its main outlet is located in Grønlandsleiret in old Oslo.



This year, we are happy to have Murni Surbakti join us. She is a wonderful singer from Bali, Indonesia, who has been singing in Asia, Australia, Europe and the United States. Murni sings folk songs, pop, jazz, blues, bossanova and Samba. She moved to Oslo in 2019.

At our Christmas meeting, Murni will sing evergreen favorites by Frank Sinatra, Louis Armstrong and Beatles, among others. There will also be a singalong with Christmas Carols.

Refreshments will be served *after the music*: assorted Norwegian open sandwiches (*snitter*), wine, mineral water, coffee, tea and cakes.

We ask our members to kindly be seated by 18:00.

Looking forward to a convivial and festive evening with friends!

DATE/TIME: **Monday, December 4 at 17:45 (for 18:00)**

SIGN UP: To Anita Solheim by email as soon as possible and **no later than Wednesday, November 15**. Because of the catering, we need to know as early as possible how many are coming.

Please state whether you want **gluten free bread**.

PLACE: Vinderen Seniorsenter, Slemdalsveien 72, 0373 Oslo

**PRICE:** **NOK 350.- Please sign up before you pay.** Please make your 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).

**Raffle tickets are NOK 50.-.** If you wish, you can pay before the meeting either by bank account or VIPPS. Please state 'Raffle' and your name in the KID-number box or VIPPS dialogue box.

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

Guests are welcome!

No-shows will be charged. For last minute cancellations, please call Anita Solheim on telephone.

## **JETTE FRÖLICH'S**

### **Christmas Exhibition at Lysebu Resort**

Lysebuveien 12, 0790 Oslo

**November 5 – December 21**



Jette Frølich

Welcome to Jette Frølich's Christmas exhibition at Lysebu Resort. Frølich has been strongly associated with Christmas in her home country, Denmark, for many years. She made her first Christmas paper cuttings and other decorations

in 1964. Her wonderful artwork has been on display at Lysebu every Christmas since 1994 and always draws a full house at the festive opening.

She says that ‘the setting at Lysebu is perfect for my exhibition. It couldn’t be better. It seems to be created for my art, and the atmosphere here is fantastic.’



Examples of Jette Frølich's Christmas Decoration

### PROGRAMME FOR THE OPENING DAY

13:00 Official opening by the Danish Ambassador to Norway, H. E. Louise Bang Jespersen. Bon fires, Norwegian mulled wine (*gløgg*) and gingersnaps (*pepperkaker*) in the courtyard.

13:15 Opening of the exhibition and the sales market.  
The restaurant offers refreshments such as Danish pastries and *smørrebrød* (open Danish sandwiches).

Booking by tel.: 21 51 10 00 or by email: [resepsjon@lysebu.no](mailto:resepsjon@lysebu.no)

For more information, please go to: [Jul på Lysebu med Jette Frølich - Lysebu](#)

*R E P O R T S*  
**SPECIAL EVENTS**  
**Visit to Linderud Manor House**  
**September 26**



On a bright, sunny September morning a 20 strong group of ladies met to enjoy a guided tour of the splendid Linderud Manor House in Groruddalen. Little did we know what treasures awaited us in a place that has become known as the ‘pearl of Groruddalen’. but we were guided to the venue by committee members standing along the way from the T-bane station and met at once by our guide, Kathleen.



Nothing was left to chance by the organisers who did a wonderful job. We were treated to a comprehensive tour of the manor house, which proved to have an unexpected number of rooms filled with an extensive collection of a variety of objects such as glass, canons, furniture and portraits, to porcelain, and a magnificent English Chinoiserie grandfather clock. It was not hard to understand why the manor house and garden form part of the Museums in Akershus (MiA).



The main building was first built in 1713. It is situated in a splendid setting with a commanding view of Groruddalen and surrounded by many acres of what at the time was agricultural land. The Monsen-Mathiesen family owned the property

for over 300 years and were active in administering the agricultural side the estate with 12 tenant farmers to supervise.

The family also had an active social life, with hunting and large parties at which visiting royalty were often among the prominent guests. The lavish table settings we saw, complete with French porcelain and magnificent glassware, bore witness to a lifestyle of luxury and ease, although their personal histories were varied and not always happy.

When Christian Pierre Mathiesen, who was Minister of Agriculture for a short time, died in 1953 the buildings became protected. The last members of the family to live in the house, Jørgen Mathiesen and his wife, Cecilie, did a considerable amount of restoration work on the house, which has undergone a number of quite major changes over the years. They left the manor in 1981.

The last item on our visit inside the house was a porcelain exhibition entitled *Fra Peking til Porsgrunn: Porselenets historie* (From Beijing to Porsgrunn: A History of Porcelain), which is found on the upper floor. The exhibition showed the history of porcelain from early Chinese porcelain to present day production and contained some quite remarkable pieces, including a large punch bowl. The exhibition was curated by Johanne Huitfeldt, a well-known Norwegian expert on porcelain. Sadly, she died in September at the age of 91.



An extra bonus at the end of our tour was the possibility to visit the spacious garden, which has a reputation as one of the best-preserved historic gardens in Norway, containing elements from the renaissance, baroque, English landscape and functionalism. The agricultural tradition of the manor is maintained in the area known as Linderud *nærmiljøhage* (communal garden), which is run by a group of enthusiastic locals from the borough of Bjerke on a 'cooperative' basis. The hobby gardeners cultivate all sorts of fruits and vegetables just next to the main house. A truly inspiring project in the spirit of the original manor farm well worth a visit. Thank you, Hildur, for the lovely pictures!

Jean H. Lundberg

## OCTOBER MONTHLY MEETING

**Karen Helene Ørstavik:**

‘Why do women live longer than men?’



Dr Karen Helen Ørstavik is a medical doctor who has specialized in Medical Genetics. She worked as a consultant at the Department of Medical Genetics at Oslo University Hospital until her retirement in 2007. She was a professor in clinical genetics at the Institute of Clinical Medicine, University of Oslo. Her PhD was on haemophilia, a genetic disorder that impairs the body's ability to make blood clots, causing abnormal bleeding. She became interested in the X chromosome and X chromosome inactivation linked to haemophilia. Her clinical work has focused on families with various genetic disorders.

Her lecture focused on the X chromosome. Despite the at times very technical details, the topic was presented in a light, clear and (largely) understandable way, which made it possible to follow the intricacies of the X chromosome and its importance.

She wished to try to explain why women live longer than men. She began by going through graphs showing how women all over the world tend to live longer than men. The charts cover the period 1846 – 2020. The difference in life expectancy cannot be entirely attributed to external factors such as poverty, smoking, unhealthy living conditions, war, or epidemics. In trying to shed light on this discrepancy, she used haemophilia, a mostly inherited genetic disorder that impairs the body's ability to make blood clots, a process needed to stop bleeding.

Kinship diagrams show that women may be carriers of the gene causing haemophilia and may pass it on to their children, but that girls rarely developed the illness. Boys on the other hand are more likely to be affected.

One fact that may help us to understand this phenomenon is to look at our chromosomes and genes. Humans have 46 chromosomes. Women have two X chromosomes and men have one X chromosome in addition to a Y chromosome. This means that A women would need to inherit two infected X chromosomes to be affected, whereas a man would only need one affected X chromosome.

This may explain why females do not get haemophilia. It is worth nothing that there are many important genes in the X chromosome. All these factors may contribute to an explanation of why women live longer than men. Interestingly enough, scientists have found that female animals also tend to live longer than male animals.

Dr Ørstavik mentioned other related topics, e.g. how having two X chromosomes increases the risk for autoimmune illness and how the treatment of inherited disorders have improved substantially.

Her talk was fascinating, yet challenging, but she managed to convey a complex topic in a relatively simple and understandable manner. The audience of 41 was enthralled and many questions were asked.

Signe Howard

## ART COMMITTEE

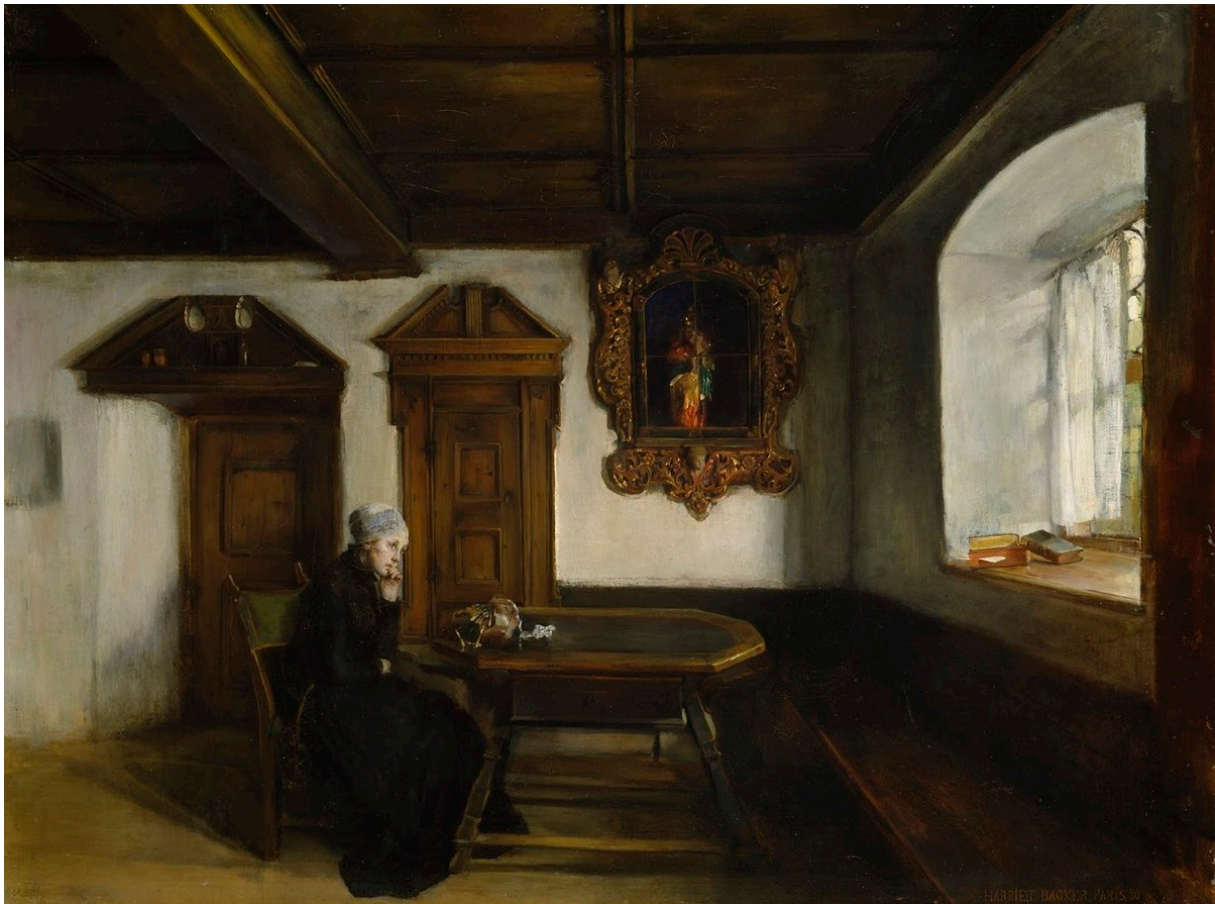
**Harriet Backer** *Every Atom is Colour*

The National Museum



*Portait*

We all love Harriet Backer. We all have a favourite Harriet Backer painting. She has been loved and appreciated ever since her debut in 1880. How did she become so universally loved, and still catch our attention nearly 150 years later?



*Solitude*

We have never seen a retrospective of Harriet Backer, and seldom seen so many of her paintings in one place. The artworks take us on her journey from Norway to Germany to France and back to Norway, during a tumultuous era in art history. Harriet knew most of the highly innovative artists of her time. She was an astute student and colleague, and subtly took the very best artistic breakthroughs into her own style. She focused on the interior of rooms, bringing the new colours and new perspectives into her quiet space, and then adding her own theatrical light and radiant colour. She was neither Naturalist nor Impressionist but brought the *plein air* and Impressionist light into her interiors. She was, first and foremost, a colourist.

Harriet Backer and Kitty Kielland were in Paris from 1878 until 1888. The colour theory of the Impressionists sprang into the palettes of young artists at this time. Paris red, Paris green and Paris blue. The Naturalists and the Impressionists suddenly took a quantum leap away from Academy Art. Harriet Backer was bold enough to paint these colours brighter and with more depth than anyone else. She made use of the operatic baroque lighting of Caravaggio and shone an intense light on every atom of colour. In 1880, *Solitude*, was

accepted at the Salon in Paris and she was well on the way to becoming a professional artist.

The two of them were a formidable team in the world of male artists. They dedicated their lives to art, foregoing husbands and children. They were trailblazing feminists with unusually quiet demeanours and a strategy that took them to the top when Harriet became a member of the Board of the National Gallery. From 1892 – 1910, she ran her own school for painting in Kristiania. She and Kitty were pioneers who paved the way for women to have the opportunity to choose art as a career path.



*Country Cobblers*

Harriet worked on being a portrait painter, and Kitty preferred landscapes, almost as if they were a younger and more modern version of the duo Tidemand and Gude. Kitty was a student of Hans Gude. She moved her landscapes out into *plein air*, adding the Naturalist's looser brushstroke, and left the studio art of the National Romantics far behind. Tidemand's farm interiors from Norway must have given Harriet Backer much inspiration. Compared to Tidemand's darker rooms, Harriet's interiors glow with colour, and her brush is also very much looser and more impressionistic.

In 1886, Harriet and Kitty joined some artist friends at the farm of Christian Skredsvig in Bærum. The Fleskum Summer Art Colony included Gerhard Munthe, Eilif Peterssen and Erik Werenskiold. Harriet and Kitty were friends and acquaintances of the best contemporary artists in Norway and in Europe. Their close friend, Eilif Pettersen, was actively involved with the Skagen Painters and the realism of the fishermen's lives resonates with Harriet's lives of the agricultural communities in Brittany and in Norway.



*Interior*

*The Bleaching Field* brings Erik Werenskiold to mind. Harriet's quiet interiors with women sewing or resting in the gentle light of a window echo Johannes Vermeer's much-loved paintings: an extraordinary synthesis of the best of everyone.

We love the lighting of Vermeer, we love the colours of the Impressionists, we particularly love the colours of Norway, and we find a refuge of a simpler life in the art of Harriet Backer and Kitty Kielland. We need this art more than ever. A quiet place to go that is beautiful and meditative. It is hardly surprising that we love Harriet so much.



This is an exhibition that one can visit several times. It is perhaps a surprise that such ‘old’ art is so splendid, a feast of artistic brilliance, curated with lighting that makes the atoms of colour leap out in the darkness. Harriet style.

Our thanks to Stine Elizabeth Johansen who brought Harriet Backer truly to life for us, and thanks to Josie Kamsvåg for organising the event.

Jane Steenbuch



**INTERNATIONAL FORUM**

**Org.no: 994 566 806**

**President:** Anita Pratap

**Editor and Layout:** Elizabeth S. Rasmussen and Editorial Team

**Editorial Team:** Elspeth Walseth, Robin Wittusen and Renate Scapin

**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.

**Dispatch:** November 1, 2023