



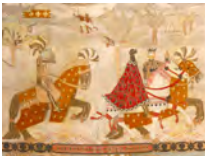
INTERNATIONAL FORUM OSLO

NEWSLETTER

April 2026
Issue No. 516



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Meets Faith in Grønland, Oslo.'



Art Committee, May 28, p. 11
The Munch Museum:
*Edvard Munch and the
Chocolate Factory*





INTERNATIONAL FORUM

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- Nomination Committee: Åsny W. Walters, Berit Lindstrøm and Wenche Mohr

If you wish to become a member of International Forum, please contact us by email, and we will send you an application form.



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DEADLINE FOR SUBMITTING ARTICLES

For the **May Newsletter**, the deadline is **April 15**. Please send your contribution to Elizabeth S. Rasmussen by email to and to info@iforum.no. The Editorial Team reserve the right to edit all material.



THE PRESIDENT'S PAGE



Dear Members,

Last autumn and this winter have indeed been very different from what I had expected when I accepted to be your President. After a *hiems horrendum*, and three hospitalisations, I can only hope that my health will improve soon.

We are now in the middle of a strenuous process, transferring the accounts from Styreweb to Tripletex. Everything has gone smoothly so far, thank God. We have not finished yet, but we shall be able to present an Annual Report and accounts at the AGM in June. For me, this has been the main focus. Those of you who have expenses to claim and invoices to hand in may continue to send requests for outlays and invoices to the Forum email *and* to me. I will pay them and set up an accounting voucher (bilag) for each.

DNB business VIPPS (bedrift) is currently being replaced by Get Paid and I will provide access to committee leaders and other members who need it. Just let me know who should have access. Those who already use DNB business VIPPS can easily make the change themselves by downloading the new app on their phone. I need to register new users before they download the app and provide an access code. It takes only a few minutes.

Spring is just around the corner if the weather forecasters are right. Many migratory birds are back from their winter habitat, happily chirping away, calling us all to come outdoors and enjoy the beginning of the new season. After months of darkness, we who live in the North realise how much we subconsciously have yearned for warmer times when the sun returns. We feel reinvigorated and hopeful.

By the time you get this *Newsletter*, we will have entered the Holy Week of Easter, for many a time of reflection and hope.

I wish you all a happy Easter!

Elizabeth S. Rasmussen
President



MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD

Dear Members,

I think we would all agree...

That the International Forum is a wonderful organisation. It means many things to different people, and while our motivations for joining may differ, we share some common goals: friendship, social interaction, knowledge, culture, etc., and perhaps most importantly, having a good time!

But in recent years, we have faced some significant changes which have brought with them new challenges. Our enrolment has gradually declined, and this has compelled us to assess and re-examine what our needs and priorities should be in the future. This is where we need you! We would greatly appreciate your feedback - what do you see as not only the strengths, but also the weaknesses of the Forum? What needs to change and what should remain the same?

Our membership is composed of a wide cross-section of women, both in backgrounds and cultures. We are a group of resourceful and talented people, who lead busy lives.

However, we are also a **volunteer** organisation which is dependent not only on your **financial support** but also on your **active participation** in Forum's different activities. **Without volunteers, the International Forum cannot function.**

We need members who can set aside a little of their spare time every month. The more members who volunteer, the less work for each... If you think that there is anything you can do: be a Board Member, be the Editor of the *Newsletter*, help proofread the *Newsletter*, assist the Monthly Meeting Committee, the Art Committee or the Special Events Committee, write a report from an event that you have attended, sit on the Nomination Committee, or be our Secretary or Treasurer... please let us know.

If you would like to know more about being a Board Member or part of a committee don't hesitate to contact our President Elizabeth Rasmussen on mobile telephone; Art Committee Jane Steenbuch, mobile telephone; Monthly Meeting Committee, Gunnell Anita on mobile telephone; Special Events Mona Reinboth on mobile telephone; Editorial Team, Robin Wittusen, mobile telephone; Activities, Gunnell Anita, mobile telephone; Nomination Committee, Berit Lindstrøm, mobile telephone.

Our members' ongoing commitment to the International Forum is greatly valued and is what has kept us going for years. Without this commitment, there will not be any future for International Forum.

For the Board
Trudy Brand-Jacobsen

COMING EVENTS

SPECIAL EVENT

A Visit to Queen Sonja's Art Stable

Threads in Time



Thursday, April 23

The Special Events Committee invites you to a guided tour of Queen Sonja's Art Stable.

This truly splendid exhibition presents a selection of the national tapestries from the Royal Collection and private collectors, as well as the Royal Tapestry itself, which depicts moments of King Haakon VII's reign.

Two enormous tapestries in the riding hall depict Sigurd the Crusader, Sigurd Jorsalfare, on his crusade to Jerusalem in the years 1107-1110.

There are also examples of tapestry work on chairs, cushions, etc. which are in use in royal residences, for example Kongsseteren at Voksenkollen.

The exhibition spans the period from the renaissance of tapestry weaving in Norway in the 1890s to the years following the Second World War.

Unlike other European royal houses, Norway chose to use Norwegian well-known and lesser-known artists and craftspeople to create these exquisite works in a national handicraft tradition using local materials such as wool and plant-based dyes.

The exhibition represents a unique chapter in Norwegian art and cultural history which has never before been shown publicly on this scale.

DATE: **Thursday, April 23** at 10:45 (for 11:00). **Please be on time.**
The tour will last for about 40 minutes,

PLACE: Dronning Sonja Kunststall, entrance from Parkveien 50.

SIGN-UP: To Pernille Stavseth by email no later than **April 16.**

PRICE: **NOK 145,-** After signing up and receiving confirmation by email, please make your payment **preferably by VIPPS** to 591747 or pay by bank transfer to the Forum account: 1600 40 36631. Please **state your name and event** in the dialogue box for VIPPS and in the KID-number box for bank payments.

No cash will be handled at the venue.

Maximum number of participants: **25**

TRANSPORT: **Public transport:** The nearest T-bane station is Nationaltheatret. The nearest bus stop is Solli plass.
Car: You may find paid public parking in the surrounding areas.

LUNCH: Åpent Bakeri approx. 75 m from the corner of Incognito Terrasse/Colbjørnsens gate, and Litteraturhuset in Wergelandsveien (approx. 10 min walk along Parkveien).

Guests are welcome if space is available.

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

For questions or last-minute cancellations, please contact Pernille Stavseth by mobile telephone.

ART COMMITTEE

MUNCH MUSEUM

PAULA REGO

Dance Among Thorns



©Paula Rego, *The Dance*, 1988. Acrylic on paper on canvas.
Courtesy The Estate of Paula Rego and Victoria Miro. ©Tate Images

Tuesday, April 28

The Art Committee invites you to a guided tour of the first large-scale exhibition in the Nordic countries of the Portuguese British artist Paula Rego (1935-2022), influential artist and feminist icon.

Rego grew up under the Salazar dictatorship in Portugal, an era in which women's freedom and rights were severely limited. It was not until 2007 that the right to voluntary abortion was legalised in Portugal. Rego had fought for this right since the 1990s, and a whole room is dedicated to her *Untitled* pastel paintings, which show the effect of authoritarian government on women's sexuality, bodies and mental health.

At the age of 17, Paula Rego moved to London to study art. Throughout her career, she has been influenced by the history, culture and literary traditions of both Portugal and Britain. Her artistry draws on her own experience as well as on stories, myths and fairy tales which uncover the darker sides of humanity. Rego explores these themes with a striking blend of humour and gravity. That she was greatly inspired by Munch is clearly visible in her colour-rich, wildly imaginative figurative paintings.

The exhibition presents 142 works including paintings, pastels on aluminium, drawings, prints, picture rugs and several textile sculptures, as well as three works on paper by Edward Munch.

DATE/TIME: **Tuesday, April 28** at 11:45 (for 12:00)

PLACE: Munch Museum, Edward Munchs plass 1, 0194 Oslo

PRICE: **NOK 125.-** for the guided tour, to be paid when your participation has been confirmed.

Entrance to the Museum is paid separately and costs **NOK 220.-** for non-members of the Museum.

However, **if you are not a museum member, please do not pay the entrance fee until everyone has arrived.** It may be possible to be a 'guest' of someone who has a membership.

SIGN UP: To Bente Skarsgård by email no later than **April 20. After signing up and receiving confirmation by email**, please make your payment **preferably by VIPPS** to 591747 or pay by bank transfer to the Forum account: 1600 40 36631. **Remember to state your name and event** in the dialogue box for VIPPS and in the KID-number box for bank payments.

Maximum number of participants: **25**

Guests are welcome if there is space. We need at least **15** participants for the guided tour to be held.

There is a very good café on site.

TRANSPORT: Closest bus stop is Bjørvika. Tram 12 stops at Dronningens gate (11-minute walk to the Museum). Tram 13 stops at Bjørvika (6-minute walk). T-bane to Jernbanetorget (12-minute walk).

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

For last-minute cancellations, please call Bente Skarsgård on mobile telephone.

MAY MONTHLY MEETING



Kari Hempel

‘Faith on the Prairie Meets Faith in Grønland, Oslo.’

Monday, May 4

Dr. Kari Guttormsen Hempel is affiliated with the University of Stavanger (UiS) where she has worked as an associate professor at the Faculty of Educational Sciences and Humanities. Her research focuses on migration, and on how immigrant groups shape community and religious practices, and on how religion affects integration. She has published several books and scientific articles.

She is interested in local history and religion within the context of migration. Her recent work explores immigration, religion and integration, especially Norwegian migrants to the U.S. after 1870 and Pakistani migrants to Norway after 1970.

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

PLACE: Majorstuen Seniorarena, Slemdalsveien 3a, 0369 OSLO

SIGN UP: Sign up to Gunnel Anita Solheim by email as soon as possible and no later than **April 28**.

PRICE: **NOK 105.-** Please sign up before you pay. Please make your payment **preferably by VIPPS** to 591747 or pay by bank transfer to the Forum account: 1600 40 36631. **Remember to state the event and your name** in the dialogue box for VIPPS and in the KID-number box for bank payments.

Guests are welcome.

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

For last-minute cancellations, please call Gunnel Anita on mobile telephone.

ART COMMITTEE

Edvard Munch and the Chocolate Factory



MUNCH MUSEUM

Thursday, May 28

Experience Edvard Munch's historic decoration for the Freia chocolate factory for the first time in an exhibition that connects his interest in creating art for public spaces with themes of cacao, workers' rights and women's emancipation.

Edvard Munch's large-scale paintings for the Freia chocolate factory in 1923 were the first ever decorative artworks to be commissioned by a factory. It was also the first time that artwork of this type had been commissioned for a women's canteen. The temporary relocation of these frescos from Freia's headquarters to the Munch Museum has made it possible to view them at a close range, together with a rich selection of sketches and other related works.

Taking the frieze of paintings Munch created for Freia as a starting point, the exhibition explores his interest in making art for public spaces, as well as the project's broader social context. At the time, Freia – Norway's most iconic chocolate brand, both then and now, was seen as a progressive company which prioritised the wellbeing, health and welfare of its employees. Two thirds of Freia's staff were women, and the exhibition highlights women's campaign for rights, as both employees and human beings.

DATE/TIME: **Thursday, May 28**, at 12:45 (for 13:00)

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

PRICE: **NOK 100.-** NOK for the guide.

Entrance to the Munch Museum is separate and costs **NOK 220.-** for non-members of the Museum.

However, **if you are not a museum member, please do not pay the entrance fee until everyone has arrived.** It may be possible to be a 'guest' of someone who has a membership.

SIGN UP: Please sign up to Katarina Plavnik by email as soon as possible and no later than **May 21.**

After signing up and receiving confirmation by email, please make your payment **preferably by VIPPS** to 591747 or pay by bank transfer to the Forum account: 1600 40 36631. **Remember to state your name and event** in the dialogue box for VIPPS and in the KID-number box for bank payments.

No cash will be handled at the venue.

Maximum number of participants: **25**

Guests are welcome if there is space. We need at least **15** participants for the guided tour to be held.

TRANSPORT: The closest bus stop is Bjørvika. Tram 12 stops at Dronningens gate (11-minute walk to the Museum). Tram 13 stops at Bjørvika (6-minute walk). T-bane to Jernbanetorget (12-minute walk).

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

For last-minute cancellations, please call Katarina Plavnik on mobile telephone.

A C T I V I T I E S

WEDNESDAY BRIDGE

April 8

The next Wednesday bridge will take place on April 8 at 10:30. The hostess is Inger Støtvig, and she lives at Vestliveien 12, 0750 Oslo.

If you would like to join us, please call Inger on mob.: 934 13 276 or send an email .

We are a friendly group of women who enjoy playing duplicate bridge. We usually have a light lunch after the game.

Inger Støtvig

REPORTS

MARCH MONTHLY MEETING

Øyvind Svendsen

Europe at a Crossroads: The EU and the Changing Global Order.

At our Monthly Meeting on March 2, Øyvind Svendsen from NUPI (Norwegian Institute of International Affairs) addressed a central question: Is the liberal international order – built after World War II on democracy, rule of law and international cooperation – now weakening?

For decades after World War II, the global system was structured around what is often called the *liberal international order* or *rules-based order*. It was largely built and led by the United States, with Europe as its closest partner. Its



foundations included democracy, respect for human rights, economic openness and relatively free trade, and binding international cooperation. The key institutions were the UN, WTO, IMF, World Bank, NATO, and the EU.

Today, however, many European leaders believe that this order is ‘dead and over’, or at least fundamentally ruptured.

Globalisation is increasingly seen as a risk rather than an opportunity. Economic cooperation is being replaced by economic competition and weaponised interdependence. Great rivalry among the world’s powers has returned. Democracy is in global decline and major international institutions have been weakened. Economic tools such as political sanctions, tariffs, and investment are used strategically. ‘The strong do what they can; the weak suffer what they must.’

Svendsen argued that the global system is under increasing pressure. Great power rivalry has returned, democracy is in decline, and economic interdependence is increasingly used as a strategic tool.

U.S. policy shifts have created uncertainty in transatlantic relations, while Russia and China openly challenge the existing order.

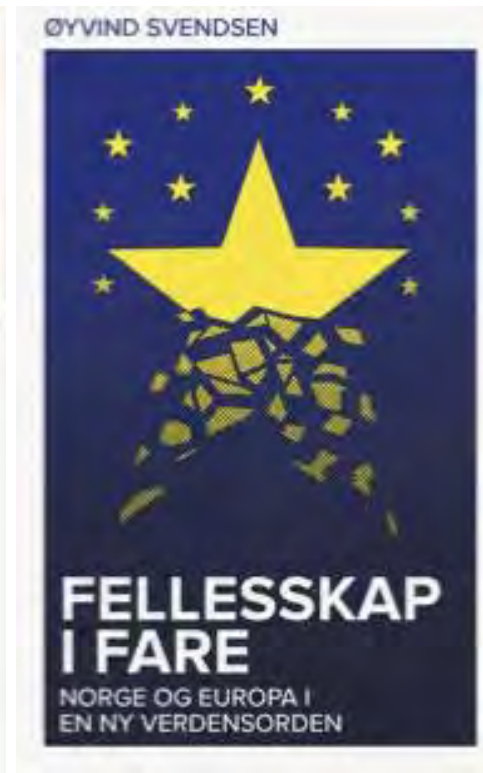
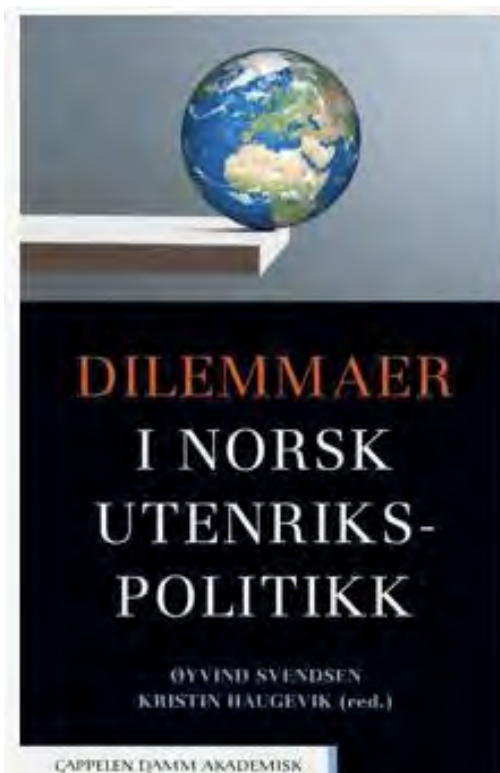


The war in Ukraine marks a turning point for the EU. Traditionally a ‘normative power’, the European Union is now evolving into a more geopolitical actor, strengthening its strategic and security role. At the same time, Europe faces internal democratic challenges and growing questions about its global legitimacy.



For Norway, the situation creates strategic uncertainty. As a NATO member outside the EU but closely integrated through the EEA, Norway may face difficult choices if the international security architecture changes further.

The lecture presented a sober picture of a world in transition. The key issue is not whether change is happening, but how Europe – and Norway – will adapt.



The lecture was very well received, and many participants expressed appreciation for its clarity and relevance.

Gunnel Anita Solheim

SPECIAL EVENTS

Visit to the Old War Academy



On February 24, nineteen International Forum members were met by General Manager Asgeir Myhre at the entrance of the Old War Academy. In honour of our visit, the flag was flying.



We were first taken into a meeting room and given a general talk about the Academy – its history and present situation.

The building was originally built in the 1630s as a private residence. But after extensive changes, it had become a new building around 1760. It had several owners before it was eventually given to the Military Academy in 1802 by Bernt Anker. This was the first institution offering higher education in Norway. But despite its name it did not offer any extensive military training. After a reorganisation in 1804 the school became an officer training school and an

independent unit with its own command. In 1969 the War Academy was moved to Linderud where it is currently located.



Despite the numerous renovations over the years, the building was in need of extensive repairs. The Old War Academy Foundation was established in 2019, and it formally took charge of the building in 2021 for NOK 10. The purpose of the foundation was to renovate the building and open it for the public. The renovation cost amounted to approx. NOK 350 million. No money was granted by the government, but private gifts and loans financed most of the work. A new roof was installed, using some of the old tiles. The façade and the main gate and several of the rooms have also been restored. At the moment, work on a new foundation is in the progress.



After the talk, we were taken on a guided tour of both the ground and first floors. The rooms were all beautifully decorated with much history reflected in the walls. Several of the big mirrors were split in two, apparently to avoid having to pay mirror tax! The music room is still missing its grand piano, which is waiting to be transferred from storage. Most of the rooms had names, for instance the Hunting Room, which had beautiful old paintings from 1750.

As mentioned, the Academy is now open for use by the public for meetings, weddings, and other events. One can also be a member of the foundation. Members are able to visit on some weekdays for refreshments. And on occasion, interesting talks are arranged. The Norwegian military also uses the facilities.

Åsny Wedege Walters

IN MEMORIAM

Astrid May Scott

28.11.1938 – 09.03.2026



Photo: Sidsel J. Semb©

Astrid May Scott departed quietly on Monday, March 9, at the age of 88.

After living for nearly 50 years in the USA, May moved back to Norway. She soon became a member of the International Forum, where she made a great contribution to the Monthly Meeting Committee.

May was energetic and happy until the end and will be deeply missed by those who knew and loved her.

Lillan Akcora and Laila Hægh

AROUND OSLO

THE VIKING PLANET

Explore the Viking Age

At Norway's First Digital Viking Museum in Oslo

Fridtjof Nansens plass 4, 0160



For hours, prices and languages, just click on the link: [The Viking Planet](#)

The Viking Planet resurrects the times of the Vikings using VR-technology, holograms, interactive screens and 270-degree films.

At this digital museum you will not only learn about the Vikings but also *experience* how they lived. Join them on their expeditions, feel the power of the elements on board a Viking ship during a storm, and take a picture of yourself in Viking armour!

The Museum is open during parts of the Easter week. The current program runs Monday through Sunday between 10:00 and 18:00 until May 16.

A great place for both young and old!

INTERNATIONAL FORUM



Org.no: 994 566 806

President: Elizabeth S. Rasmussen

Editor: Elizabeth S. Rasmussen

Editorial Team: Elspeth Walseth, Robin Wittusen and Renate Scapin

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

Dispatch: April 1, 2026