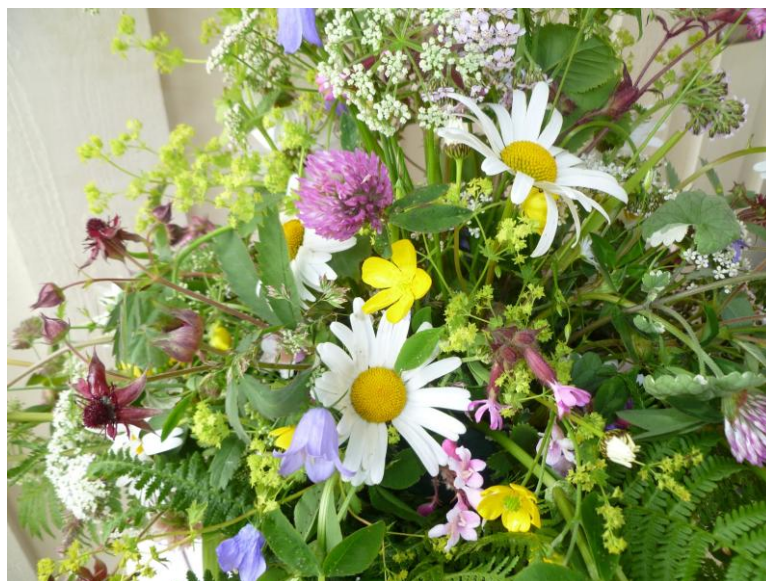




# INTERNATIONAL FORUM OSLO

## NEWSLETTER

June 2026  
Issue No. 518



### Coming Events:



**Annual General Meeting, June 8, p. 5**



**The Art Committee, June 11, p. 11**  
Vestfossen Kunstlaboratorium  
Ida Lorentzen: *The Silence Afterwards*





## INTERNATIONAL FORUM

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Special Events: Mona B. Reinboth

Art Committee: Jane Steenbuch

Activities: Gunnel Anita Solheim

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 **August** Newsletter, the deadline is **July 15**. Please send your contribution to [info@iforum.no](mailto:info@iforum.no) and [wittusen@online.no](mailto:wittusen@online.no). The Editorial Team reserve the right to edit all material.



## THE PRESIDENT'S PAGE



Dear Members,

This is my very last missive to you as President. At the Annual General Meeting on June 8, I will step down from the Board. It has been a true privilege to serve you, but my health has unfortunately put severe restrictions on my time and made it difficult to be present at events and perform my duties properly. I have focused on what I perceived as being the priorities: the *Newsletter* and the accounts.

In January, I realised that I would not be able to present anything resembling normal accounts. Paying invoices and expenses in the bank and making sure that receipts and invoices are kept for entry into the system is easy. Anyone can do that. How to enter data into a rather complex accounting system is another thing. It became an insurmountable task for me and a source of much frustration, I have to admit. So, finding a more user-friendly accounting system and support became an obvious necessity. The Board settled on Tripletex (accounting software) and Account Group as the supervising accounting firm. I have used my personal auditor as an advisor in all this, as my bookkeeping skills are less than adequate. I wish I had had some of Vicky Alme's skills!

Account Group will give the new Board a Teams session on how to feed the required documents into Tripletex. Hopefully, an IF member will come forward and volunteer to take on this task. Account Group will set up the full accounts at the end of the Forum's financial year. It will also check the entries once a month and correct things that are not correctly entered. The Board strongly recommends changing the financial year from May-April to January-December. The AGM can still be held in June. A change to a normal financial year will give the Treasurer and the Auditor more time to prepare the accounts in time for the AGM. This transfer is one of the things that we shall vote on at the AGM.

When a new Board has been elected, I hope that they can rely on the support and trust of all members. This will be a good crew. I shall also be available for questions and clarifications to ensure a smooth transition.

This is not a goodbye. Far from it. I will not leave the Forum in June. I have too many friends whom I wish to continue to see, and I will try to participate more in the day-time events. So, see you all around!

Elizabeth S. Rasmussen  
President



## NOTICE OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

### Majorstuen Seniorarena

**June 8**

In accordance with the Statutes of the International Forum, formal notification is hereby given of the Annual General Meeting to be held this year on **Monday, June 8** at Majorstuen Seniorarena at **18:00**. We hope our members will enjoy this end-of-year social gathering, which includes a plentiful buffet, refreshments, wine, mineral water, coffee, tea and cakes *after* the business items on the agenda have been completed.

The AGM is **free of charge**, but you must **sign up as soon as possible** so that the correct food order can be placed.

Please sign up to Anita Solheim by email: [gunnelanitas@gmail.com](mailto:gunnelanitas@gmail.com) and to [info@iforum.no](mailto:info@iforum.no) as soon as possible.

***Remember that the AGM is for members only.***

### A G E N D A

1. Welcome by the President
2. Approval of a member to take the minutes of the meeting
3. Approval of two signatories to the minutes
4. Approval of four tellers
5. Amendments to the Statutes
6. The Board's Annual Report
7. Membership Fee
8. Elections
9. The Grethe Frydenlund Award
10. Any Other Business



**ART COMMITTEE:**

<b>Leader:</b> Jane Steenbuch	GBR	GM
Trudy Brand-Jacobsen	CAN	GM
Katarina Plavnik	SWE	GM
Inger M. Ræder	NOR	FO
Bente Skarsgård	NOR	GM
Ellen de Vreede	NLD	GM
Janette Øksnes	GBR	GM

**SPECIAL EVENTS COMMITTEE:**

<b>Leader:</b> Mona B. Reinboth	NOR	GM
Bente Brandt	NOR	GM
Rosemary Hauge	GBR	GM
Hildur M. Haugen	NOR	GM
Jean H. Lundberg	GBR	GM
Sonia N. Mykletun	NOR	FO
Jessie Sandosham	CAN	GM
Pernille Stavseth	NOR	GM
Astri Sunde	NOR	FO
Åsny Wedege Walters	NOR	GM

**Website Administrators (not elected):**

Gunnel Anita Solheim  
Heidi van Weltzien Høivik



## GRETHE FRYDENLUND AWARD

### A TRIBUTE TO

**Vicky Alme**



Vicky at a Monthly Meeting at Vinderen

When I called Vicky to prepare for this tribute, she was overwhelmed that she had been awarded the Grethe Frydenlund Award. She genuinely felt that there must be others who deserved it more. This is typical of her modesty.

Vicky grew up in an ordinary working-class family in the UK. It was very different then. There were strong influences, such as class differences, which governed what one could expect out of life. In fact, they developed into quite an international family, supported by events and choices to travel and work abroad. This applied to both her husband Odd and Vicky, during the formative years after leaving school.

After finishing A-levels at the local grammar school, she made up her mind to work as an *au pair* for a year in France – despite her mother's very strong wishes to the contrary. Returning to England, she began studying Pharmacy at Glasgow University, but the programme was moved to Strathclyde University, also in Glasgow, and this is where she met Odd, her future husband, who was one of around two hundred Norwegian students there at that time.

At the end of *his* studies, she accompanied Odd back to Norway and started a family there. However, Odd was keen that Vicky should gain a professional qualification, so she returned to Scotland to finish her third year. She was not alone. During her last year, she had the twin boys with her, and another baby was born in spring. She then went back to Oslo with the children. After Easter she returned to Glasgow with the twins. Odd stayed in Oslo with the 4-week-old baby til the end of her semester. She had a Norwegian au-pair with her the whole last year.

Vicky and granddaughter Anne Ingeborg. Vicky wearing a Marken bunad from Sunnmøre.



At that time, it was quite rare for a pregnant woman to study at university. However, with Odd's help in taking care of the children and supporting her, she completed her studies most satisfactorily. Vicky was then able to pursue a career as a Pharmacist in Norway. In 1987-88, she also gained a master's degree in business studies.

It was whilst working in Drammen in the 1990s, that Vicky first heard of International Forum through two other members of a Sewing Bee. When retirement brought with it a move to Oslo, she didn't hesitate to join and very soon became a member of the Monthly Meeting Committee. Shortly thereafter, Inger Malterud requested help in the Office and Vicky offered her services.

In those days, IF had a staffed office, and Vicky became a member of the Office team, coming in at least once a week. If members needed help or information, they would call Vicky. She also handled the membership lists, keeping them always up to date. A big job every autumn was the renewal of membership, involving the distribution of membership cards, following up late payers and so on. This was before the digital world was as developed as it is today.

Now Inger Malterud wasn't slow – to put it mildly. She realised what a resourceful person Vicky was, and before long had asked if Vicky would become the organisation's new Treasurer. Despite having no experience in this field, Vicky took it on. Auditor Karin Skoglund prepared the Financial Report, but Vicky presented it to the members and answered questions. She herself gives all the praise to Karin, whom she says taught her everything about what the work of a treasurer involves. 'Karin was fantastic,' she says. This may be true; however, it was thanks to Vicky's willingness to learn, her dedication to the job

in hand, her flexibility and her accuracy that resulted in her success as Treasurer. There was never a penny misplaced or missing. Any queries from members were answered fully and satisfactorily. International Forum did not function with a budget back in those days, but the annual Financial Report explained how the money had been used.

All in all, she was an invaluable resource towards the successful running of the International Forum for many years. To quote our Honorary Member and former President, Berit Lindstrøm: 'I had the pleasure of working with Vicky for four years and I knew I could always rely on her. It's a while since she was at the Office, but ladies like Vicky are the reason that we still exist as an organisation.'

For her part, Vicky found it fascinating to get to know the different Presidents, each with their own particular style of running the organisation. She also enjoyed meeting members from all over the world and from a section of society that she wouldn't normally have come into contact with. She sees it as an important part of education to know something about how other people live and to learn about their particular culture. This has given her a new perspective, which she wouldn't have had otherwise.



On a personal level, Vicky is never afraid of asking questions and is always ready to give her honest opinion, even if this means swimming upstream.

At Monthly Meetings in particular, Vicky is one of the members who can be relied upon to have an interesting question or comment.

Vicky and Kumiko Larssen at Vinderen

Throughout her time as a member, she has been committed to IF's *welfare and well-being*, a commitment that continues even though she no longer holds an 'office'.

Vicky Alme is indeed a worthy recipient of the Grethe Frydenlund Award.

**Patricia Blackwell**

# COMING EVENTS

## THE ART COMMITTEE

**June 11**



**Our final event before summer!**

**Vestfossen Kunstlaboratorium**

**Ida Lorentzen:** *The Silence Afterwards*

**(NB! We are privileged to have Ida Lorentzen as our guide)**

VESTFOSSEN is a three-story gallery which offers three different exhibitions (there is a lift to all floors).

The top floor is devoted to Ida Lorentzen and Michael O'Donnell's exhibition *The Silence Afterwards*. While Lorentzen mainly concentrates on paintings and drawings, O'Donnell's production includes sculptures, installations, video works, and multi-media works. This is where we will begin our tour.

Everyone may then go down to the first floor, which shows the Mezzanine VKL-Collection (Vestfossen Kunstlaboratorium). The VKL Collection ranges from works by artists of past generations who were central to Norwegian art history to works by younger and international artists.

On the ground floor, the exhibition *Can't See the Forest* showcases works of trees, bushes, and other types of vegetation by 76 artists, mostly from Norway. Vestfossen was a pulp mill, and this floor is a wilderness of artworks. Ida

Lorentzen's husband, Ulf Nilsen, has a large painting on show which many of you will remember from our visit to his studio.

DATE/TIME: **Thursday, June 11** at 10:15 (for 10:30) at the main gate to Frognerparken

SIGN UP: By email to Ellen de Vreede [ellendevreede@gmail.com](mailto:ellendevreede@gmail.com) no later than **June 5**.

PLACE: Vestfossen Kunsthøgskolen, Fabrikkgata 11C, 3320 Vestfossen.

PRICE: The entrance fee is **NOK 80,-** for seniors. The guiding is free, but we charge you **NOK 25,-** for a gift to the guide. 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.

TRANSPORT: We will organise a **carpool from Frognerparken** main gate on Kirkeveien. **Please let Ellen know if you can drive.** It is about one hour from Oslo, and there is free parking. We are expected to be back in Oslo around 16:00.

#### **How to Drive There:**

Vestfossen is in Buskerud, between Drammen and Kongsberg. Take E18 to Drammen, then E134 towards Kongsberg. Follow the signs to Vestfossen Kunsthøgskolen.

The **Cellulose Cafe** is located in the entrance hall to Vestfossen and serves sandwiches, salads, cakes, coffee, sodas, juices, and alcoholic beverages. We will book a table.

The maximum number of participants is 25.

Guests are welcome if space is available.

For last-minute cancellations, please call Ellen on mob.: 902 94 917.

# REPORTS

## SPECIAL EVENTS

### Queen Sonja's Art Stable

**April 23**

#### *Threads in Time:*

*From the National Tapestries to the Royal Tapestry*

On April 23, 25 ladies gathered for a guided tour of the exhibition *Threads in Time* at Queen Sonja's Art Stable. The main attractions were the National Tapestries and the Royal Tapestry, showcasing Norwegian tapestry from the 1890s to 1955.



The two large National Tapestries were exhibited in the large and airy Riding Hall, giving visitors plenty of room to admire the beautiful works of art depicting King Sigurd the Crusader (Jorsalfare) and his journey to Jerusalem between 1107 and 1111. He travelled on Viking ships from Norway along the coast of Europe, through the strait of Gibraltar to Sicily and from there to Jerusalem.

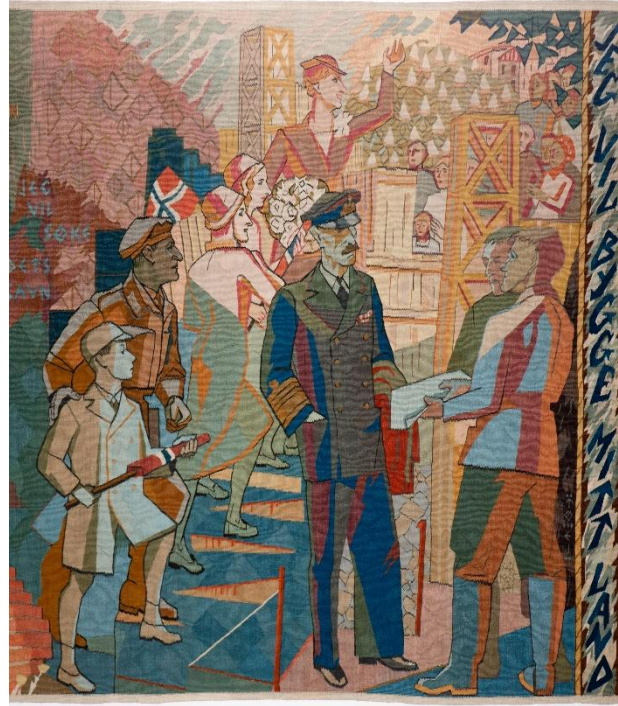
Entry into Miklagard (Constantinople)

He returned to Norway via Miklagard (Constantinople) where he left his ships, mounted a horse loaded with gold and continued over land in Europe back to Norway.

The journey was a prestigious victory for the young Norwegian king at the time and placed Norway on the European map as well as in a Christian context.

In 1899, Gerhard Munthe painted drafts for the two tapestries of Sigurd Jorsalfare's long journey and commissioned the tapestry weaver Frida Hansen, who was well-known around Europe, to weave them in beautiful colours. Unlike weavers throughout Europe, Frida Hansen and other Norwegian tapestry weavers used plant-dyed yarn for their works.

The tapestries were exhibited at the World Exhibition in Paris in the year 1900 with great success. The tapestries were then acquired by King Haakon and Queen Maud personally when they came to Norway in 1905 as the new Royal Family in the young independent nation Norway, which had finally been freed from the Union with Sweden.



Left: The Art Stable. Right: Detail from the Royal Tapestry. Photo: Jan Haug, The Royal Collections© King Haakon VII at the centre.

*The Royal Tapestry* features scenes from the occupation of Norway from 1940-1945, the King and the Crown Prince and the joyous return of the whole Royal Family in June 1945. The motives on this tapestry are drawn by Alf Rolfsen and woven by several different tapestry weavers.

They hung for decades in the Royal Palace but were taken down by Queen Sonja in the 1990s in order to preserve the materials.

All three tapestries have never before been presented to the public.

The exhibition also presents a number of tapestries with mythological motives, and also furniture with tapestry-woven upholstery, fire screens with animal motives and also some geometrically patterned door-curtains – all on loan from the Royal Family's privately owned Royal Lodge, Kongsseteren at Voksenkollen.

The exhibition runs until December 6.

A warm thank you to our guide, Karoline, for excellent guiding!

Pernille Stavseth

## MAY MONTHLY MEETING

Monday, May 4

*Faith on the Prairie Meets Faith in Grønland, Oslo*

Dr. Kari Guttormsen Hempel

Dr. Kari Guttormsen Hempel gave us an insight into the similarities and differences between Norwegian immigration to America and Pakistani immigration to Norway. She is a historian, and migration is a major part of history. People have always moved.



There are two main types of migration: voluntary and involuntary. And there are many different kinds of migrants, including persecuted ethnic or religious groups, labour migrants, and family and career migrants. Dr. Hempel studied two major migrations more than 100 years apart: Norwegian immigration to America starting in 1825, and Pakistani immigration to Norway after 1970.


The Norwegians immigrated to the Midwest in 1825, 1880, 1900, and 1930, but very few after that. Pakistanis came to Norway in 1970 as guest labourers, with the biggest group in 2010. America wanted people to cultivate the land, and Norway needed people to join the workforce. Between 1825 and 1900, nearly one million Norwegians left the country to go to the U.S. By 2024, there were 66,000 Pakistanis in Norway.

Religion was important to both groups, providing psychological and practical support. Dr. Hempel's research was based on two religious communities: an American-Norwegian Lutheran congregation in Minneapolis, and a Norwegian-Pakistani mosque in Oslo. She focused on three general areas: changes occurring in the immigrant congregations, significance of religion in the integration process, and influences of the immigrants on their new country. She found interesting similarities and differences in how religion was practiced and how the immigrants adapted to the culture and norms of their new country. For example, the Norwegians in the U.S. had to work for many years before they could afford to build their churches, whereas Pakistanis in Norway received financial support from the government to build their mosques.

Dr. Hempel's findings are treated in detail in her book, *Tro på prærien møter tro på Grønland [Faith on the Prairie Meets Faith in Grønland]*, which was available at the meeting. Her talk, illustrated by a comprehensive slide presentation, concluded with a moving recording of Paul Simon's *American Tune* from 1975.

### American Tune

◦ 4. Oh, we come on the ship they call the Mayflower  
 We come on the ship that sailed the moon  
 We come in the age's most uncertain hour  
 And sing an American tune  
 Oh, it's all right, it's all right  
 It's all right, it's all right  
 You can't be forever blessed  
 Still, tomorrow's going to be another working day  
 And I'm trying to get some rest  
 That's all I'm trying to get some rest



4. Vi kommer på skipet de kaller Mayflower  
 Vi kommer på skipet som seilte månen  
 Vi kommer i tidens mest usikre time  
 Og synger en amerikansk melodi  
 Men det er greit, det er greit, greit  
 Du kan ikke være evig velsignet  
 Likevel, i morgen blir det nok en arbeidsdag  
 Og jeg prøver å få litt hvile.  
 Alt jeg prøver å få litt hvile

Paul Simon's *American Tune* (Music Norwegian Psalm: *Velt alle dine veie*)



Those of us who have immigrated to Norway, for whatever reason, can identify with many of her points. For both parties – Norwegians coming to America and Pakistanis to Norway – immigration was a change and a great challenge for them. As Victor Hugo said: 'Change your opinions, keep your principles; change your leaves, keep intact your roots.'

During the question period, Signee Thoresen explained how she was raised in one of these Norwegian Lutheran communities, and how coming to Norway made her realise how differently Norwegians were in terms of religious fervour and traditions (The Editor).

We extend a warm thanks to Dr. Hempel for this interesting talk.

Signee Thoresen

# AROUND OSLO

Lillehammer Kunstmuseum

*Medieval Modern*

**May 9 to 13 September 2026**



Agnes Slott-Møller *Den fagre liden fugl* (1922)

Eier: Sorø Kunstmuseum Foto: Ole Akhøj©

Medieval modern is based on the friendship between the Danish artist couple Agnes (1862–1937) and Harald Slott-Møller (1884–1937) and the Nobel Prize-winning Norwegian author Sigrid Undset (1882–1949), and on their shared fascination with the Middle Ages – in particular the Chivalric tradition – and the English Pre-Raphaelites.

For the first time in the Nordic region, the Lillehammer Kunstmuseum presents a broad selection of works by Agnes and Harald Slott-Møller – both paintings and decorative and applied arts – highlighting the strong connection between the artists' major works and the writings of Sigrid Undset. The exhibition also shows works by renowned Raphaelite artists such as Dante Gabriel Rossetti, William Morris, and Edward Burne-Jones, who are represented with several works.

This is a truly delightful exhibition! The exhibition is a collaboration with Frederiksborg, the Museum of National History, in Denmark.

There is a train to Lillehammer (RE10) every 28 minutes past the hour from Nationaltheatret station and every 34 minutes past the hour from Oslo S. Lillehammer station is 300 m from the Kunstmuseum.

# 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:** June 1, 2026