

SCANDINAVIAN
CONTACT

Newsletter of The American Scandinavian Society of New York, Inc.

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President: Michael Halpern



Michael Halpern

Michael Halpern New ASS President

The 1985 Annual Meeting of The American Scandinavian Society was held on May 1 at the New York Genealogical Society, 122 East 58th Street, New York City. Once again President Brush could welcome a large number of members and also took the occasion to thank the membership for the support accorded him during his two terms as president. He also reported on activities during the last year and voiced great optimism regarding the Society's future.

The main business of the evening was, of course, the election of new officers for the coming year. The slate proposed by the Nominations Committee had been circulated and was accepted by unanimous vote.

The line-up of the 1985-86 officers is as follows: President Michael Halpern; Executive Vice President, Edward Michaelsen; Vice President, Denmark, Rev. Henrik Fossing; Vice President, Finland, Tom Wilen; Vice President, Iceland, Robert W. Warner, Jr.; Vice President, Norway, Nils Flo; Vice President, Sweden, Ed Conradson; Vice President, U.S.A., Kenneth K.

Fisher; Treasurer, Angus McDowell; Recording Secretary, Rolf K. Stang; Corresponding Secretary, Ellen S. Brush; Director, Elfi von Kantzow Alvin; Director, Mari-Louise Forsgren Hedlund; Director, Neel Halpern; Director, Bjorn Lindgren.

Following the elections Dr. Brush singled out a few ASS members for their contributions over and above the call of duty, and special tokens of the members' gratitude were presented to Neel Halpern, outgoing Program Committee Chairperson, and Jean Taylor, Dr. Brush's secretary, who had done yeoman work for the Society.

Michael Halpern, our new president, thanked Dr. Brush for his hard work for the Society, and presented him with a memento on the occasion. He also voiced his optimism for the future which depends on the interest and cooperation of every member.

The business part of the meeting was capped by the serving of refreshments, both solid and liquid, as well as much socializing between old friends and new acquaintances.

Our Gala Christmas Dinner-Dance

This year's Christmas dinner-dance, at the Hotel Pierre on Friday, December 13, promises to be more exciting than ever. Our honored guest from Scandinavia will be Bjørn Wiinblad, the internationally acclaimed designer and artist whose beautiful and artistic interpretation of "The Nutcracker" has greatly enhanced productions by both The Royal Danish Ballet and The Dallas Ballet.

An exhibit of Wiinblad's original drawings for "The Nutcracker" will be on display in the Gold Room at the Pierre that night. A beautiful ceramic trivet decorated by Bjørn Wiinblad and especially commissioned for our Christmas ball will be presented to each

A.S.S. Celebrates Kalevala's 150th Anniversary

On November 21 the Columbia University Orchestra and Glee Club will feature music inspired by the Kalevala Epic. The American Scandinavian Society joins Finnish and American groups in sponsoring the concert. The event, which is free of charge, begins at 8 P.M. in St. Peter's Church in Citicorp Center on Lexington Avenue at 53rd Street. For ticket information, contact Anna-Riitta Fuchs, (212) 289-1163. See also note under "Coming Events."

attending guest. Other surprises are in the planning stage — all related to Mr. Wiinblad and his Christmas ballet.

We will also enjoy our traditional Lucia procession, headed this year by Joan Lindstrom. She and Rolf Stang will then lead us in the singing of Christmas carols that we introduced so successfully last year. There will also, of course, be loads of Christmas presents in addition to three grand prizes, including trips to Scandinavia.

A gourmet dinner with fine wines, an open bar during the reception hour, dancing and music into the wee hours by Walter Eriksson's Orchestra complete this very special event.

The invitations to be sent out fairly soon will also be real works of art, showing Bjørn Wiinblad's interpretation of the front curtain of "The Nutcracker," with Clara asleep and dreaming about Christmas.

The chairman of this gala event is Neel Resling Halpern, assisted by several committee members.

Tickets to the affair will be priced at \$135 p.p. to A.S.S. members, while the price of tickets to nonmembers has been set at \$150.00 p.p.

For further information please call (516) 627-6876 or (516) 627-5763 or (212) 924-7700.

President's Message

What a wonderful way to begin our 1985-1986 Season — with the outstandingly successful FASHION SHOW. Unquestionably a highlight; a major success and a tribute for any season to all those efforts given by the Program Committee. The joint efforts under the direction of Edda Magnusson culminated in a fabulous evening. Indeed over 250 people participated in this highly successful event.

On October 10th — under the expert guidance of Ms. Elfi Alvin — we will enjoy the Wallenberg Exhibit at the Lindgren Gallery. An event that many hundreds of people throughout the Scandinavian-American Community have been anticipating and looking forward to with great zeal. The Wallenberg Exhibit is indeed a tribute to the major artistic talent that has already been recognized in many corners of the world.

November 4th — an evening with Iittala/Finnish Glass. We will celebrate and honor this glass manufacturer at the Cooper-Hewitt Museum. The event is being heralded throughout the art and cultural world as outstanding and extremely well presented by the director, David McFadden.

Furthermore the entire Society is thrilled with the Christmas Presentation to be held at the Hotel Pierre, December 13, 1985, the theme being the "Nutcracker Suite." The world famous designer Björn Wiinblad has generously given his time and talent to make this event super memorable.

Continuing into 1986, we expect to develop great and exciting momentum for the entire American-Scandinavian Community, both in social as well as in cultural programs.

We look forward to seeing all of our members and their friends at these upcoming events.

Paintings by Curt Hillfon Shown April-May

Works by the Swedish painter Curt Hillfon were shown at the Björn Lindgren Gallery last spring. Presented by the American Scandinavian Society's Art Committee, the show was very well attended and ran from April 25 to May 24. It represented indeed another feather in the cap of our Art Director, Elfi von Kantzow Alvin.



Three Icelandic committee members: Edith Warner, Edda Magnusson, Anna Gudmunds

Fashions and Furs from Scandinavia

When the American Scandinavian Society of New York opened its new season with a "Fashions from Scandinavia" show, it was the most successful season-opener yet in its history. Tavern on the Green was the setting on Monday, September 23, to show fashions from Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, and Sweden.

To start, there were gorgeous furs from Finland that made women gasp at the thought of wearing them and that made men hold tightly on to their wallets. There were beautiful leather "fun clothes" and wools from Iceland. Sweden showed both stunning evening clothes and comfortable and smart daywear for both men and women. From Norway there were the traditional Norwegian designs as well as sophisticated fashions in sequined fabrics, leathers, and silks. Denmark not only showed magnificent furs, among them a full-length white mink, which must have been coveted by every woman present, but there were practical sports clothes in wool and beautiful knits, as well.

Ten top models, courtesy of Eileen Ford Inc., as well as five other professional models showed the fashions to best possible advantage.

Edda Magnusson wished everyone welcome, and Neel Halpern and Rolf Stang were on the scene again as Masters of Ceremonies. For an hour, their charming repartee and commentary enhanced the show describing no less than 150 items. Among the dignitaries were Mrs. Lennart Bodström, wife of Sweden's foreign

minister, Mrs. Magnus Faxen, Mrs. Villads Villadsen and Mr. and Mrs. Ivar Gudmundsson.

It is clear that Scandinavian designers are well able to compete with designers from the fashion capitals of the world — remaining uniquely Scandinavian, but bringing something obviously international in appeal. Hopefully, this will be an annual event; the Society, in repeating such a successful evening as this, can play a major role in promoting new Scandinavian designs to the New York fashion world.

Svanhild Våge



Kristin Holby, a model and fashion coordinator, modeling a stunning evening dress created by the Icelandic dress designer Maria Ragnarsdottir.

Work by Annika Wallenberg Shown

The American Scandinavian Society kicked off its Fall/Winter Arts Program on October 11 with a showing of collages and sculptures in stoneware by the Swedish artist, Annika Wallenberg.

The selection of artworks will be on view from October 14 through November 8 at the Bjorn Lindgren Gallery, 575 Madison Avenue, New York City.

This exhibition provides the first opportunity for an American audience to see Ms. Wallenberg's mastery in clay; her compositions frequently surprise the viewer with the warm feeling of fabrics instead of the traditional heavy coldness often associated with clay.

Ms. Wallenberg has been acclaimed in Scandinavia for her superior feel for naturalism in her motifs taken from everyday life. Most of her works have been framed in acrylic, and are suitable for hanging.

Gallery hours for the exhibit are 11:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., Monday through Friday.

Scandinavia Invades Manhattan's Carnegie Hill

The Art Committee of The American Scandinavian Society invites all members and friends to a Guided Tour of the Finnish Glass Exhibition at the Cooper-Hewitt Museum at 91st Street and Fifth Avenue. We have been especially invited by its well-known curator, David McFadden, and we will learn about the history of the famous Finnish glass-making craft and its development.

The Tour will take place on November 5, at 6:15 P.M.

Prior to the Tour everyone is also invited to a reception given at the recently opened Swedish Cottage at 1281 Madison Avenue (at 91st Street). The reception is scheduled for 5 P.M. On view will be beautiful handpainted Swedish furniture, some of which dates back more than a century, as well as delightful Scandinavian antique objects. Delicious Danish pastry, from the new Danish bakery at Lexington Avenue and 96th Street, will also be served.

Invitations have already been mailed to all A.S.S. members.



At the Bessastadir luncheon: l. to r.: Edith Nielsen-Warner, Robert W. Warner, Jr., Neel Riesling Halpern, Michael Halpern, President Vigdis Finnbogadottir, Ambassador Marshall Bremont, Mrs. Bremont.

A.S.S. Officers at Presidential Luncheon

The Halperns and the Warners recently received an invitation from Iceland's President, Vigdis Finnbogadottir, to a formal luncheon at her residence, Bessastadir, Iceland. The festive luncheon was attended by the U.S. ambassador and his wife, as well as many notable Icelanders from the arts and business community. The occasion was to honor Neel Halpern for her contributions during "Scandinavia Today" and her outstanding work for the American Scandinavian Society.

Surprise party for Neel Halpern

On Thursday May 2, Club El Morocco was the setting of a very special dinner-dance. Neel Resling Halpern, the outgoing Program Chairperson of the American Scandinavian Society, was honored by some of her co-workers and the Society's members (almost 90) at a surprise party. Neel Halpern, who has chaired the Program Committee for the past five years, has been one of the most instrumental forces in having brought the American Scandinavian Society to where it is today, namely a society that offers a high quality of programs, both cultural and social.

Throughout, the guests danced to the music of Bobby Rosengarden's Trio, and when the party ended at midnight, it had without doubt been one of the Society's best.

Marianne Juhl Lectured on Karen Blixen

One of the most successful A.S.S. affairs of the past spring season was the lecture given on April 21 by author Marianne Juhl on Karen Blixen, the Danish author who may be better known as Isak Dinesen.

As Rolf Stang has written, Ms. Juhl conveyed Blixen's feeling of triumph following a life of struggle in the sense that in the role of professional writer she did enjoy the satisfaction of seeing her books succeed. The lecturer also pointed out that after losing her beloved farm in Africa, as well as both her marriage and the love that followed it, she returned home to Denmark, whereupon she became — at the age of 45 — one of the world's best short story writers. Of Blixen's writings, Dr. Juhl said: "When a career starts in maturity, there is a looking inward that can be enormously revealing. Especially when the person is as honest as Karen Blixen."

This absorbing and well-attended lecture was given at the New York City Information and Visitors Center at Columbus Circle. It takes an honored place in our series of distinguished lectures starting with Sigrid Undset in 1982. In Rolf Stang's words: "Hopefully, this means that within the next three years, we can expect a presentation on the Swedish novelist Selma Lagerlöf, to complete the female triumvirate that represents so well an important aspect and era of Scandinavian art and culture." Your motion is hereby seconded, Rolf!

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The American Scandinavian Society
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Coming Events

October 11-November 16: The first retrospective of paintings by the Norwegian master Frits Thaulow. Hirschl & Adler Galleries, 21 East 70th Street, New York City.

October 16-November 30: "The Swedish Vision," turn-of-the-century Swedish paintings. Shepherd Gallery, 21 East 84th Street, New York City. Free admission.

November 3, 3 P.M.: An illustrated concert with a multi-art program. Songs by Margareta Edström, of the Swedish State Opera; accompanied by Nancy Sjöström. The program will include songs by Sibelius, Nielsen, Grieg, Stenhammar, and Peterson-Berrier, in addition to a slide presentation. At the Church of Sweden, 48th Street, New York City. Free admission. The program will be repeated on November 7, 8 P.M. at the Pecant Library in Southport, Connecticut.

November 12-December 13: Swedish painter Eddie Figge in a solo exhibition, being the second part of "Nordic

Quintessence," curated by Olle Granath. ASF Gallery, 127 East 73rd Street, New York City.

November 18, 8 P.M.: Staged reading of *Hedda Gabler* by Henrik Ibsen. Source Productions, at St. Peter's Church, at Citicorp Center. For tickets: 212-734-4289.

November 18, 4:30 P.M.: Lecture on the two Icelandic poets Olafur Johann Sigurdsson and Snorri Hjartarson, by Hallberg Hallmundsson. City University Graduate Center, 33 West 42nd Street, New York City, Room 1027. Sponsored by the Scandinavian Seminar. Free admission

November 19, 6:30 P.M.: Foreign Affairs Lecture by H.E. Keijo Korhonen, Permanent Representative of Finland to the U.N. ASF Gallery, 127 East 73rd Street, New York City.

November 21, 8 P.M.: Concert featuring works by Sibelius and Wuorinen, with the Columbia University Orchestra and the Columbia University Glee Club. Howard Shanet, conductor; Mar-ni Nixon, soprano; Theodore Uppman,

baritone, and David Braynard, tuba. St. Peter's Church, Citicorp Center. Tickets from Profesor Shanet, 212-280-3825 or Mrs. Anna-Riitta Fuchs, (212)289-1163

December 7, 2:30 P.M.: Tribute to Jean Sibelius. Concert featuring Anne Kauppi, piano; Kurt Nikkanen, violin; Roberta Prada, soprano. Donnell Library Center, 20 West 53rd Street, New York City. For information: Finnish Consulate General, 212-832-6550.

Notice

Your society has a dedicated member serving our corporate needs once a week at our new office. We now need several more office volunteers to help our growing society.

If you can spare two to three hours one day a week, please contact Robert Warner at office telephone (212)586-2000. Typing, answering our phone and handling mail are some of the duties involved. The office is well equipped with an electric typewriter, copier, telephone, and filing space. Your assistance will be greatly appreciated.