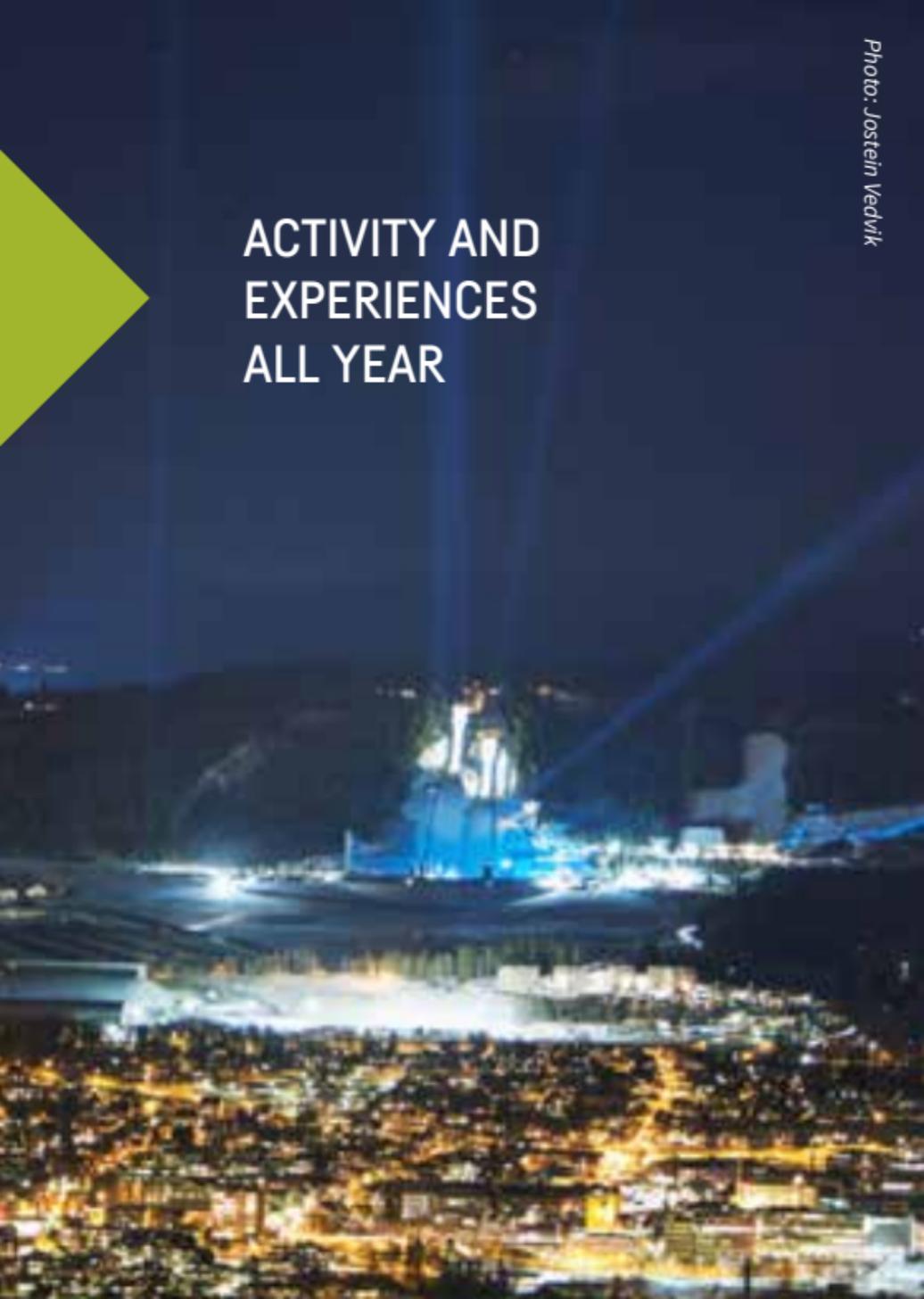


LILLEHAMMER CITY OF LITERATURE

An aerial night photograph of a city, likely Oslo, Norway. The city lights are visible in the foreground, and a large stadium is illuminated in bright blue in the middle ground. The background shows dark hills under a dark sky. A green triangle is in the top left corner.

ACTIVITY AND EXPERIENCES ALL YEAR

Photo: Jostein Vedvik

LILLEHAMMER

Lillehammer is among the most important cultural cities in Norway. The region has rich literary traditions and holds a leading position nationally. The Norwegian festival of literature, the Inland Norway University of Applied Sciences, Lillehammer Museum/the homes of Bjørnson and Undset, The Nansen Academy, the municipal and literary organizations all collaborate in a number of areas. Following the 1994 Winter Olympics, a strong event and activity profile was established and the city is the annual host of large-scale international programmes within the fields of culture, sports, peace advocacy and the travel industry.



Nansen Academy



Svetlana Aleksijevitsj and Åsne Seierstad. Photo: A.Eidem.

THE NORWEGIAN FESTIVAL OF LITERATURE

The Norwegian Festival of Literature is the largest literature festival in the Nordic region and is ranked as one of the 20 best literature festivals in the world (Penguin Random House, The Writers' Academy 2017). The festival, which lasts for six days, features some 400 authors and artists from the entire world and attracts more than 25,000 visitors. It is the year's most important meeting place for literary Norway.

The festival is international and visitors have included Herta Müller, Ngugi wa Thiong'o, Zadie Smith, William T. Vollmann, Margaret Atwood, Karl Ove Knausgård, Adonis, Ko Un, J. M. Coetzee and Svetlana Aleksijevitsj.



THE NANSEN ACADEMY

Founded in 1938 as a humanist and anti-totalitarian institution in response to the fascist tendencies of the time, the academy currently functions also as a house of literature and a literature academy. The academy holds a book week each year and meetings with authors are a key aspect of the study programme. The academy has its own creative writing programme, which every year educates and cultivates literary talents. The Nansen Academy works with many other projects and courses, the most well-known of these being a unique peace and dialogue advocacy programme within the Nansen Center for Peace and Dialogue. Since 1995, 150 dialogue seminars have been organized at the academy for groups from regions at war.

NOBEL PRIZE LAUREATES



In Lillehammer and Gausdal we find the homes of two of Norway's three laureates of the Nobel Prize for literature, Bjørnstjerne Bjørnson (Prize 1903) and Sigrid Undset (Prize 1928). Bjørnson fought for small nations' right to freedom and independence and as time passed, he became more and more involved in human rights issues. Undset was a strong voice in opposition to the racial theories of Nazi Germany and she was forced to flee the country when Norway was occupied in 1940. The author homes Aulestad and Bjerkebæk are open to the public, offering guided tours,

special events and performances. Both locations have new public facilities with visitors centres and cafés.

Bjørnson's home Aulestad is beautifully situated 20 km from Lillehammer city centre. Here we travel one hundred years back in time, but the Bjørnsonian commitment is always contemporary. The written word and the pen were his weapons, and he was an important nation builder in the period leading up to Norwegian independence in 1905. Bjørnson lived at Aulestad from 1875 until his death in 1910.



Aulestad. Photo: C. Damgård.

Undset's home Bjerkebæk is located within walking distance from Lillehammer city centre and is one of Lillehammer's most beautiful cultural attractions. The two medieval works *Kristin Lavransdatter* and *Olav Audunsson* were both written while Sigrid Undset was living at Bjerkebæk. Undset was awarded the Nobel Prize in

literature in 1928, “in particular for her powerful descriptions of life in the Nordic region during the Middle Ages”.

The Norwegian Festival of Literature Sigrid Undset Days includes an Undset lecture every year. In collaboration with Campus Lillehammer, the festival also schedules an annual lecture in Bjørnson’s name. The organizations the Sigrid Undset Society and the Bjørnson Academy are based here.



CAMPUS LILLEHAMMER

Campus Lillehammer is the largest division of the recently amalgamated Inland Norway University of Applied Sciences, offering a large number of study programmes, also in creative fields. One example is the Norwegian Film School, offering Bachelor and Master degree programmes in professional art educations. The local campus also offers TV studies, including documentary film courses.

Script-writing and story-telling constitute an important foundation in both film and TV studies. Along with the students from the Culture Project Management programme, the film and TV students are important contributors in the planning and implementation processes of a number of cultural events in the Lillehammer region.

The academic staffs carry out active research and development work, producing a large number of projects and scientific publications every year. There are also several R&D institutions here, including the national centre of expertise on cultural and creative industries, Knowledge Works.



Start of the semester at Campus Lillehammer. Photo: F. Olsen.

HOUSE OF LITERATURE

The Lillehammer House of Literature is the most important literary venue of the city and is operated by Lillehammer municipality in close collaboration with the Nansen Academy, the Norwegian Festival of Literature, Inland Norway University of Applied Sciences and the Lillehammer Library. The House of Literature is an active and important stakeholder in the cultural life of the city and holds a number of open events every week. With author visits, discussions, debates, theatre, music and evenings offering in-depth presentations on literary and other subjects of current interest, the House of Literature contributes to the city's maintaining a broad and solid programme which reflects our population.



Literature festival in Søndre Park. Photo: Lhmr kommune.

LILLEHAMMER LIBRARY

Lillehammer Library and Lillehammer House of Literature share the large, well-lit premises of the historical Meierigården estate in the centre of Lillehammer. The library is a culture and knowledge hub and is bound by law to carry out dissemination activities and serve as a meeting place for public discussion and debate. More than 600 people visit the library every day, where they can enjoy exhibitions and literary presentations. The personnel have a high level of expertise in the field of literature, serving as guides in the information jungle and sharing knowledge about non-fiction and fiction. Long traditions and modern facilities.



*Lillehammer library and
house of literature.
Photo: Lhmr bibliotek*

INTERNATIONAL CITY OF REFUGE

Since 2008 Lillehammer has been an ICORN international city of refuge for authors suffering from persecution. In so doing, the city has assumed a particular responsibility not only in the struggle for freedom of expression, but also to provide practical assistance for individuals who find themselves in dangerous situations. As an International City of Refuge, Lillehammer has until now made a commitment to host five persecuted writers from Zimbabwe, Vietnam and Iran. Here they receive a safe place to live, economic security, a professional and social network and the opportunity to share and carry out the writing profession and international involvement. Through participation in the organization ICORN, International Cities of Refuge Network, Lillehammer gains access to a literature and cultural network in Europe and other parts of the world. The network and authors are a great source of inspiration for Lillehammer as a city of culture.

ACTIVE WRITERS' COMMUNITY

A number of authors, of both fiction and non-fiction, have lived and live in the Lillehammer region. Many of the authors are members of the writers' organization Oppland Forfatterlag, through which they exchange experiences and share texts with one another and with audiences. The creative writing programme at the Nansen Academy, Inland Norway University of Applied Sciences, the museums and Eastern Norway Research Institute, are other venues for literary production.



FOR aig veit existen af vord

Oyvind Rimberend
Solans konges

*Famous quotes in the streets of
Lillehammer. Photo: N. litteraturfestival.*

CULTURAL HERITAGE AND LITERARY STRONGHOLD

In Lillehammer both local residents and visitors can experience our Norwegian cultural heritage. The extensive open-air museum Maihaugen boasts a unique collection of traditional Norwegian houses and outbuildings with their authentic interiors intact, as if they were taken straight from the Norwegian folktales. In the streets and lanes of modern-day Lillehammer you can wander around in the Norwegian literary stronghold. Along the path of «quote stones» you go from Edda via Henrik Ibsen, Sigrid Undset and Knut Hamsun to modern Norwegian authors like Jon Fosse and Dag Solstad.



Refuge writers in Lillehammer. Photo: NRK

LITERATURE REGION

Literature is one of the target areas of the Oppland Cultural Strategy 2016-2020 scheme, approved by the county council. The County Library promotes innovation and development, organizing local meetings and administrating an authors' network open to all authors of the county. Through Book Bus, the mobile public library scheme for the schools, the love and joy of reading is promoted for children and young people. Debates and seminars are organized for library staff during the Norwegian Festival of Literature. In collaboration with the festival and the county's 26 public libraries, the 'Boklek' tour is arranged, in the context of which all first graders of the county have the chance to meet an author at their local public library. The County Library has also initiated the innovative library festival Granitol, an international meeting place for library staff taking place every third year in the region. A number of literary works are staged outdoor in the region, including Peer Gynt (Henrik Ibsen) and Kristin Lavransdatter (Sigrid Undset).

FILM CITY

The Film City of Lillehammer has an active and growing film production community. In recent years a number of feature films have been produced in the region. The regional film centre Østnorsk filmsenter is located centrally in the city and is part of a professional community along with a dozen other film companies. Here one finds scriptwriters, score composers, producers and post-production resources. The region has also made its mark within film and TV for children and young people. The regional film fund Film-invest is also located here.

INVESTING IN CHILDREN AND YOUNG

The Norwegian Festival of Literature has a comprehensive programme for children and youths: Pegasus. Here authors meet children and youths from the pre-school level to college, with activities such as reading out loud, writer meetings, debates and workshops. An important event is the U Prize, where secondary school students from the whole country elect their favourite book. The Cultural Rucksack, which is a comprehensive literature programme for students, courtesy of the County Council and the municipality, ensures that all children are introduced to literature at school. The strong focus on the development of future readers has led to reading having a solid stronghold in Norway. Lillehammer also hosts the Amandus Festival, a national film festival where young film makers meet the professional film industry.



Enjoying reading in the park
Photo: Ø. Nordås

MEDIA, ARENAS AND VENUES

Two newspapers are based in Lillehammer. Norway's leading commercial radio channel, P4, has its main office here, and The Norwegian Broadcasting Corporation (NRK) has district offices for radio and TV here. Kulturhuset Banken and Maihaugen are the region's main culture venues. National jazz, performing arts and film festivals take place here yearly. The Lillehammer Art Museum is one of Norway's leading art museums and publishes several books each year. A flourishing local history circle also produces some books every year. Quite a few professional painters reside in the area, and together with other artists they form a creative and exciting cultural environment.

The junior colleges in our region have yearly collected and donated about 500,000 NOK to build and run a school in Sierra Leone, Africa. The Norwegian Amateur Theatre Association, which is based in Lillehammer, is currently collecting funds to build a library in Nepal. These are examples of a commitment to promote knowledge and education internationally in areas of the world where children and youths lack the same opportunities that we have here in Norway.



LILLEHAMMER

KOMMUNE

www.lillehammer.kommune.no

www.litteraturfestival.no

<https://nansenskolen.no>

www.inn.no

www.lillehammer.com

<https://bjerkebek.no>

<https://aulestad.no>



Litteraturhus
Lillehammer

STIFTELSEN
LILLEHAMMER
MUSEUM



Nansenskolen
Norsk Humanistisk Akademi

NORSK SIKREND OG SET-OG-SENE BILDER
LITTERATURFESTIVAL

 HØGSKOLEN
i INNLANDET