

Nature + Culture

Nurturing Connections

Report to the Community FY 2016



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Cover: Birch Forest, Lars Lerin. 2009-2011

Mission

The American Swedish Institute is a gathering place for all people to share experiences around themes of culture, migration, the environment and the arts, informed by enduring links to Sweden.

Vision

The American Swedish Institute will be a leading museum and cultural center of international reputation which invites all people to gather to connect their pasts to their shared future, to understand their heritage in relation to others, and to discover their role as neighbors and global citizens. Vibrant, ongoing ties to Sweden will illuminate and inspire all these endeavors.

ASI AT A GLANCE

156,348 People Connected and Engaged at ASI in FY 2016

63,577 Turnblad Mansion and Museum Admissions

43,535 Diners at FIKA

23,547 Facebook Fans

12,872 Volunteer Hours Donated by 171 Volunteers

10,805 Adult Program Participants **6,393** Festival Attendees (Julmarknad, Midsommar and Winter Solstice)

5,100 Clubs, Organizations and Performing Groups Visits by 31 Groups

4,497 Active Member Households

3,434 Youth & Family Program Participants

1,506 School Partnership Program Participants 1,025 Kids at the Castle Guests

594 Artists Engaged with ASI

Language / Culture Classes Serving 1.023 People

30 Slöjd/Handcraft Workshops Serving 268 People

Outdoor Play Cart

A MESSAGE FROM BRUCE KARSTADT, ASI PRESIDENT / CEO

The single white oak tree which has taken root in our courtyard is known as a *vårdträd*, or guardian tree. These mystical trees are believed to protect the land and its people; and this symbiotic relationship can also be seen as a metaphor for the great care that Swedes and their Nordic neighbors give to the natural environment. Sweden's status as a nature-conscious nation can be traced back to the I7th century, when Swedish botanist Carl Linnaeus pioneered modern-day ecology.

With this inspiration, the American Swedish Institute engaged our communities in exploring the theme Nature + Culture during the 2015-16 year with a pair of major exhibitions, a steady stream of art offerings, lectures, concerts, events and many lively conversations.

The year was highlighted by exhibitions of work by two acclaimed Swedish artists — Lars Lerin, a Swedish art star long recognized as one of the world's foremost Nordic watercolourists; and Magnus Nilsson, internationally lauded chef and photographer. *Watercolor Worlds*, Lerin's first exhibition in the United States in more than 30 years, garnered enormous critical and popular praise, bringing record audiences to ASI to appreciate his watercolors of rural and built-up Nordic and other landscapes. Celebrity Chef Magnus Nilsson showed another side of his multi-faceted creativity by presenting a series of large-scale photographs as part of his first-ever exhibition, *Magnus Nilsson's Nordic: A Photographic Essay of Landscapes, Food and People*. These images portray the people and places he visited during his three-year journey throughout the far-flung Nordic region while researching his landmark text, *The Nordic Cookbook*.

Beyond these seminal cultural experiences, our programs and services reached an incredible breadth of the community, affirming that the American Swedish Institute is not just a notable landmark (as valuable as that is). More than that, we are recognized as a lively and welcoming community center, a place of learning and a gathering space where many people from different cultures intersect. Collaboration with people and organizations from a wide cross-section of our community is a hallmark of our programming, and strengthens and enriches all that we do.

Consider these examples drawn from this past year:

• Story Swap is an annual program in which ASI staff and volunteers facilitate conversations and exchange among young immigrant students and community elders. When a Somali high school student sits down with an 80-year-old grandson of a Swedish immigrant to share stories about their heritage over meals of meatballs and sambosas, they find so much more in common (from spices to sports) than they might expect.





- Quilting Art Today showcased the traditional to the abstract in an extraordinary exhibition of quilts created by Nordic, regional and local artists.
- A concert collaboration with Source Song Festival, hosted by acclaimed Swedish baritone Håkan Hagegård and esteemed Minnesota composer Libby Larsen, featured exemplary music from Sweden as well as American works, including a new song cycle by Larsen.
- Cow Calls in Dalarna was a one-hour reader's theater piece matching a cycle of original poems by Duluth playwright/poet Bart Sutter to traditional music, that evoked the lost world of Sweden's summer pasture camps.
- The ASI hosted a charming exhibition of original woodblock prints created by Minnesota artist Betsy Bowen to illustrate *The Troll with No Heart*, a University of Minnesota Press book with text by folklorist Lise Lunge-Larsen.
- We welcomed Jonas Hassen Khemiri, one of the most important author/playwrights of his generation in Sweden, to Minneapolis for a reading of a new English translation of his play *~[Almost Equal To]*, which premiered to sold-out audiences at the Royal Dramatic Theatre in Stockholm, in our first collaboration with Pillsbury House Theatre.
- We continue to be a cherished venue for long-standing community traditions, whether dancing around the *majstång* at *Midsommar*, eating Swedish-style crayfish at a communal *kräftskiva* table, or experiencing one of Sweden's loveliest Christmas traditions, a *Sankta Lucia* concert.

These highlights, just a small part of all that happened on our campus this past year, illustrate that our work is in true alignment with our mission to be "a gathering place for all people to share experiences around themes of culture, migration, the environment and the arts, informed by enduring links to Sweden." I'm deeply grateful for the opportunity to be part of a team of capable staff, volunteers and Board leadership whose creativity, energy and persistence never cease to amaze me.

Of course, all of this is possible because of generous financial support from donors, members and other patrons who, like the *vårdträd*, protect, nourish and sustain the American Swedish Institute. Thank you! We look forward to seeing you often in the coming year!

Justante

Bruce Karstadt American Swedish Institute President/CEO



CONNECT

EXHIBITIONS, GUESTS, PROGRAMMATIC PARTNERS AND ARTS AND CULTURAL PROGRAMS

Osher Gallery and Turnblad Mansion Exhibits:

The Watercolor Worlds of Lars Lerin Magnus Nilsson's Nordic: A Photographic Essay of Landscapes, Food and People Quilting Art Today A Different Way of Seeing Mansion in Mourning A Nordic Christmas: Myths, Legends & Fairytales A Troll with No Heart: Woodcuts by Betsy Bowen and Stories by Lise Lunge-Larsen Only Mama is Awake

Family Gallery Exhibits:

A Troll Family Adventure Makers Village

Theatre

Impossible Salt, *The Stranger* Staged Reading, ~[*Almost Equal To*] by Jonas Khemiri with Pillsbury House + Theatre

Film Screenings

Alive Inside 2016 Winter Film Series – Swedish Film Institute

For You Naked

Performances

Veterans of Orphei Drängar Ballroom Music Series featuring Christopher Kachian and The Musical Offering Lucia Concerts *Julglädje* ASI Spelmanslag 30th Anniversary Concert Cow Calls in Dalarna Source Song Festival, An Evening of Song *sjUNG* Swedish Youth Choir

Special Events

A Night of Social Wonder: The Way Music Moves Me Julmarknad Neighborhood Open House Winter Solstice Akvarell Bash: The Watercolor Worlds of Lars Lerin Cocktails at the Castle – Light Up the Night



A Nordic Christmas: Myths, Legends & Fairytales, Magnus Nilsson, The Watercolor Worlds of Lars Lerin (BELOW, L to R)



Phillips History Museum *Craft-Sprit* Beer and Spirits Tasting Party A Night at the Chef's Table *Midsommar* Crayfish Party *Cocktails at the Castle – A Different Way of Seeing Julbord* Holiday Feasts

Nordic Partners

Nordiska Akvarellmuseet Embassy of the United States, Stockholm, Sweden Danish American Center Finnish Honorary Consulate House of Sweden Icelandic-American Association of Minnesota Norway House Minneapolis-Uppsala Friendship Committee Royal Norwegian-American Consulate The Swedish Embassy to the United States

Special Guests from Sweden and the Nordic Region

Magnus Nilsson Bera Nordal, Sofia Olofsson, Roine Andersson Jonas Khemiri Po Tidholm Professor Richard Tellström Frida Lindberg – Alice Lund Textilier AB Professor Jan Palmblad – Karolinska Institute Sofia Jannok Rickard Åström

Other Programs

Kids at the Castle Summer Day Camp ASI at Minnesota History Day Birthday Parties Easter at the Castle Malmberg Fellow: *Mohamud Mumin, Shape of Things That Are*

Craft-Sprit Beer and Spirits Tasting Party (BELOW)



Summer Day Camp (BELOW)





INSPIRED BY OUR SURROUNDINGS – THE NORDIC LANDSCAPE IN CONTEMPORARY ART

In our 2015-2016 fiscal year of programming, the American Swedish Institute (ASI) presented exhibitions that explored the ties between nature and culture with a particular emphasis on the Nordic countries.

Lars Lerin's first appearance at ASI was in April of 1986, when as a young artist he displayed a brief, four-week display of his watercolors. Thirty years later, Lars Lerin's watercolors have reached a level of mastery that is renowned all over the Nordic region. Lerin's intricate use of detail on a grand scale leads to watercolors that submerge the viewer in a faraway place. Presented in Osher Gallery and the Turnblad Mansion, the *Watercolor Words of Lars Lerin* represented the re-introduction of Lerin's work to North American audiences. Developed and produced by ASI in partnership with the Nordic Watercolor Museum, *Nordiska Akvarellmuseet*, the exhibition attracted 18,800 attendees over 17 weeks (1,100 visitors per week). Lerin's focus on the natural Swedish landscape evokes a deep appreciation of the environment and its natural beauty.

Chef Magnus Nilsson's endeavor to unravel the mysteries and culture of Nordic food led him all over the vast northern region, leading to a compilation of 700 heirloom recipes in his masterwork *The Nordic Cookbook*. In Nilsson's words, "I decided to explore how similar our Nordic cultures really are, but also how they differ...and how it can be tracked through the food we eat." Often sleeping on sofas or in tents to track down his research subjects, Nilsson photographed stunning scenes of the Nordic landscape. Drawing from this work, and in special collaboration with the Swedish Photography Museum *Fotografiska*, Magnus Nilsson, publisher Phaidon and ASI produced a major traveling exhibition: *Nordic: A Photographic Essay of Landscapes, Food and People*. Our first accompanying exhibit catalog was made possible with special support from Chuck and Jill Koosmann. An unprecedented 11,837 people visited the exhibition in nine weeks and helped lift ASI's profile as a

gathering place for Nordic food traditions. *Nordic* went on to travel to Los Angeles where it made its West Coast debut, showcasing ASI's standing as a renowned cultural center that engages locally and connects internationally.

In coordination with the exhibit, *Craft-Sprit*, North Meets North and the Night at the Chef's Table gave ASI members and guests a special opportunity to sample some of the region's finest cuisine as prepared by notable Twin Cities chefs with special guest Magnus Nilsson. Fika's own chef John Krattenmaker, together with Spoon and Stable's Gavin Kaysen, Bachelor Farmer's Paul Berglund, Restaurant Alma's Alex Roberts and many others created memorable food events. Guests dined on everything from Flying Jacob, to grilled trout and whole roasted pig while raising their glasses in a *Skål* with Chef Nilsson. Special thanks to our media sponsor the Star Tribune, as well as Delta Air Lines and Cooks of Crocus Hill for partnerships that made the *Nordic* exhibition run a success.

The Watercolor Worlds of Lars Lerin (BELOW)





Chef's Table (BELOW)



Craft-Sprit Beer and Spirits Tasting Party guests with Magnus Nilsson (BELOW)

The Watercolor Worlds of Lars Lerin (BELOW)



Music by Improvestra during Akvarell Bash (BELOW)





CURTURE

YOUTH AND FAMILY FOCUS

ASI strengthened its commitment to being a place where families can gather and play, learn and interact with Swedish culture and the outdoors. This emphasis on environmental learning is rooted in Swedish values and practices that focus on outdoor play to encourage beneficial childhood development and an appreciation of the natural world. ASI aspires to espouse those same values in our youth and family programming to foster a natural curiosity and appreciation of the outside world.

Svenska Skolan, ASI's language and culture program for children ages 4 - 13, continues to grow. Children engaged in "A Year in Sweden," learn about the country's geography and customs. Kids at the Castle continues to attract families eager to explore the Turnblad Mansion, have fun together indoors and outside and maybe get a little dirty. The Outdoor Play Cart, in ASI's courtyard, is stocked with games, books and other items that pique interest and engagement with the natural world.

LANGUAGE, CRAFT AND CULINARY PROGRAMS GROW

ASI's Swedish and Finnish language class participation grew by 10%. Handcraft course participation grew 21% and Nordic Table foodways programming grew 33%. Together, language, craft and foodways help increase understanding of culture and heritage.

As inspired by Magnus Nilsson and food historian Dr. Richard Tellström, ASI presented a food traditions lecture and heirloom recipe exchange plus a series of Nordic Cooking and Culture workshops where participants prepared classic Nordic dishes accompanied with insights on Nordic culture.

Nordic Table Workshop in ASI's Courtyard (BELOW)



Kids at the Castle (BELOW)



ASI COLLECTIONS CATALOGUED AND ACCESSIBLE TO OUR COMMUNITY

Thanks to a Minnesota Historical and Cultural Heritage Fund grant more than 7,000 material objects were catalogued and made available online for researchers, authors and community members. ASI's collections include our library, archives and objects that express the best of contemporary Swedish culture and represent the historic and ongoing experiences of Swedish America.

ASI's material collections focus on:

- Artwork and objects pertaining to the Turnblad family and the American Swedish Institute
- Fine and Decorative arts, particularly works by Swedish-American or leading Swedish artists
- Objects reflecting the daily lives of Swedish Americans
- Objects related to select Swedish American organizations and businesses
- Objects representing all cultural groups in Sweden

The collection is strong in paintings, prints and drawings, Swedish glass, woven textiles and needle arts, as well as Swedish folk and vernacular clothing. Other collection categories include: armaments, art ceramics, birch weaving, ceremonial artifacts, dinnerware, figure carving, furniture, housewares, jewelry, memorabilia, music, personal artifacts, sculpture, tools and equipment, toys, models, miniatures, and the items in the Turnblad Mansion.

ASI's historic folk art collection was researched and will be included in a definitive guide to Nordic design in an upcoming publication by Phaidon Press.

Coffee Party, Herman Rosell. 1932 (BELOW)



Traditional Swedish Wool Folk Jacket, Dala-Floda/Dalarna/Sweden (BELOW)





DEEPENING CROSS CULTURAL UNDERSTANDING IN THE PHILLIPS WEST NEIGHBORHOOD

ASI represents one of the key cultural anchors in the Phillips West Neighborhood. Along with our many local partners, we support meaningful cultural exchange among neighboring organizations. This focus on engaging locally could not occur without support from the Marbrook Foundation for our Pippi Project and Story Swap programs along with the continued assistance of our members and donors.

Pippi Project

The Pippi Project is an ongoing partnership between Minneapolis Public Schools, the American Swedish Institute and local author Susan Marie Swanson. ASI staff work with students at Andersen United and Bancroft Elementary schools to create fictional stories inspired by Astrid Lindgren's famous Pippi Longstocking novel. Students develop their own fictional characters, design a dust jacket and write their own creative short story. This practice in storytelling equips students, many of whom are from immigrant backgrounds, to express and share their own experiences. Parents are invited to a closing party at the school where students share their "Pippi Project" and celebrate accomplishments. This creative experience plays an important part in helping raise student's their cultural awareness while giving them the tools to begin sharing their own cultures.

Story Swap

Now in its 11th year, Story Swap is an opportunity for young, recently arrived immigrants to participate in an authentic exchange with elders from the ASI community. Through a series of "swaps" at ASI and Wellstone High school, they share stories about immigration, music, craft and food. Students visit the ASI, hear the story of the Turnblads, partake in a traditional Swedish Smorgasbord and an informal exchange of experiences, stories and conversation. This experience is reciprocated when the elders go to Wellstone high school to share food, stories and traditions from the student's cultures. Story Swap is rooted in ASI's mission to be a gathering place to share experiences around culture and migration. The challenges for many new immigrants are daunting and Story Swap serves as an opportunity to address the wellbeing of immigrant students by listening to their experiences and welcoming them to their new home.

Pippi Celebration at Andersen Elementary School (BELOW)





PICA Headstart

Each spring ASI invites the Phillips neighborhood chapter of PICA Headstart to host their pre-school graduation ceremony at ASI. Preschoolers and their proud parents fill Larson Hall and celebrate this special landmark in their education. PICA students can regularly be found at ASI when they are either touring the Mansion or enjoying some outdoors playtime in the courtyard.

Brian Coyle Center

In partnership with the Brian Coyle center and the Somali Museum, ASI worked to create an afterschool program to serve new immigrant families: 75 Brian Coyle Center participants visited the ASI and the Somali Museum to share an experience that drew parallels between Swedish-American immigration in the 20th century and modern immigration in Minneapolis.

Bruce Karstadt, US Ambassador to Somalia Stephen Schwartz &

Wellstone Story Swap at ASI (BELOW)



PICA Headstart at ASI's Community Garden (BELOW)





THANK YOU

FY 2016 VOLUNTEERS SERVE OUR MISSION

INDIVIDUALS

HOURS 12,872

Volunteers giving 100 hours or more:

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(BELOW) 2016 Volunteers of the year: Gerrie Berg, Sue Droegemueller, Arlene Restad, Lynda Kochevar, Patti Carlson, Erma Comstock



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As of September 30, 2016.

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As of September 30, 2016.





ASI CLUBS, AFFILIATES & PARTNERS FY 2016

Core to the fabric of our gathering place are the clubs, affiliate organizations and community partners that nurture the spirit of community, honor heritage and history, and extend ASI's reach in new and innovative ways that benefit the community we serve.

ASI CLUBS AND PERFORMING GROUPS

ASI Cloudberries ASI Male Chorus ASI Male Chorus Auxiliary ASI Spelmanslag F.E.S.T (Friends Encouraging Scandinavian Traditions) Gustavus II Adolphus Society Kaffestuga Friends Minneapolis-Uppsala Friendship Committee Punschklubben Scandinavian Friends Swedish Hospital Alumni Association Sons of Norway—Vonheim Lodge Svea Club

(BELOW) ASI Male Chorus



Svenska Sällskapet Svenkarnas Dag Girls Choir Swedish Genealogical Society of MN Twin Cities Dalaföreningen Twin Cities Nyckelharpalag Twin Cities Swedish Folk Dancers Vasa Jr. Folk Dancers Vasa Order of America – John Morton Lodge Vasa Order of America – Stenbock Lodge Värmlandsförbundet Västergötland Society

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Lise Lunge-Larsen

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ASI thanks donors whose gifts help care for the Turnblad Mansion and ASI collections and present exhibits, heritage experiences, language and handcraft classes, and contemporary Nordic programming. Gifts also support special capital improvement projects. The following list recognizes donors who contributed \$100 or more during FY 2016 (October 1, 2015 – September 30, 2016). Three Crown and Linneaus membership dues are included in giving totals. We are grateful for all gifts received in support of our mission. *Tack!*

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Life Members have made a membership commitment for life and given a gift that symbolizes their gratitude for the American Swedish Institute and supports our exhibits, programming, neighborhood outreach and care of the Tumblad Mansion and its collections. Thank you!

Ira Adelman

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(Life Members in FY 2016 — October 1, 2015 – September 30, 2016)

Winter Solstice Celebration (BELOW)



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Heritage Society Members have made a commitment to ASI's future, ensuring that we can continue to explore cultural nuances and uplift the importance of our environment. Gifts include naming the ASI as a beneficiary in estate plans and/or a gift of \$3,000 or more to the Heritage Endowment Fund. *Tack så mycket*!

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SOURCES OF FUNDS AND EXPENDITURES FOR GENERAL OPERATIONS AND CAPITAL PROJECTS FY 2016*

SOURCES OF FUNDS FOR FY 2016

Operations

Donations and Grants	\$1,759,700
Memberships	272,400
Admissions	431,200
Programs, Classes and Events	363,400
Cultural Enterprises, Net of	
Cost of Sales	712,300
Endowment Support	150,000
Other	122,500
Total Sources of Funds for Operations	\$3,811,500

Other

Donations for Capital Projects	\$1,607,200
Total Sources of Funds for Other	\$1,607,200

EXPENDITURES FOR FY 2016

Operations		Other	
Museum, Programs and		Capital Expenditures	\$12,000
Operational Support	\$3,267,000	Capital Debt Reduction & Interest	\$1,593,500
Total Operations Expenditures	\$3,267,000	Total Capital Project Expenditures	\$1,605,500

*For the period October 1, 2015 - September 30, 2016. The above financial information accurately represents operations but is not presented in accordance with Generally Accepted Accounting Principals. For audited financial statements, see ASImn.org.



(ABOVE) Traditional Icelandic smokehouse beside Lake Mývatn, Magnus Nilsson 2013



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