

Oslo, Norway

icelandair runs connecting flights from reykjavik to everywhere. and when they offer sales, you can end up in somewhere like oslo for \$450 round trip, which, **DAMN**. so that's where mo and i voyaged for *her* spring break.

2 March 2020

love this city's transportation system. trains, trams, buses mix together so efficiently. got to our super-duper-no-frills hotel, also efficient and inexpensive, dropped our bags, one of us showered, threw on all the coats/sweaters/gloves cause yeah, it's cold there. snow turned the numerous parks muckety. not that the place is dirty cause nope. clean. stereotypically so.

walk walk walked and walked to Vår Frelser Gravlund and then around it looking for an entrance. not as bad as the time we circled a mile-long fenced-in graveyard in budapest — here we found a break in the fence about a quarter mile in and trudged through mud-tree-hills filled with gravestones (and presumably bones) and, did i say, mud? searched, and found, ONE bust among the hundreds that depicted a dead woman (as opposed to men). oh, munch is buried here. ibsen too, but we didn't find him.



didn't get a picture of the one woman we found but do love this guy's' mustache

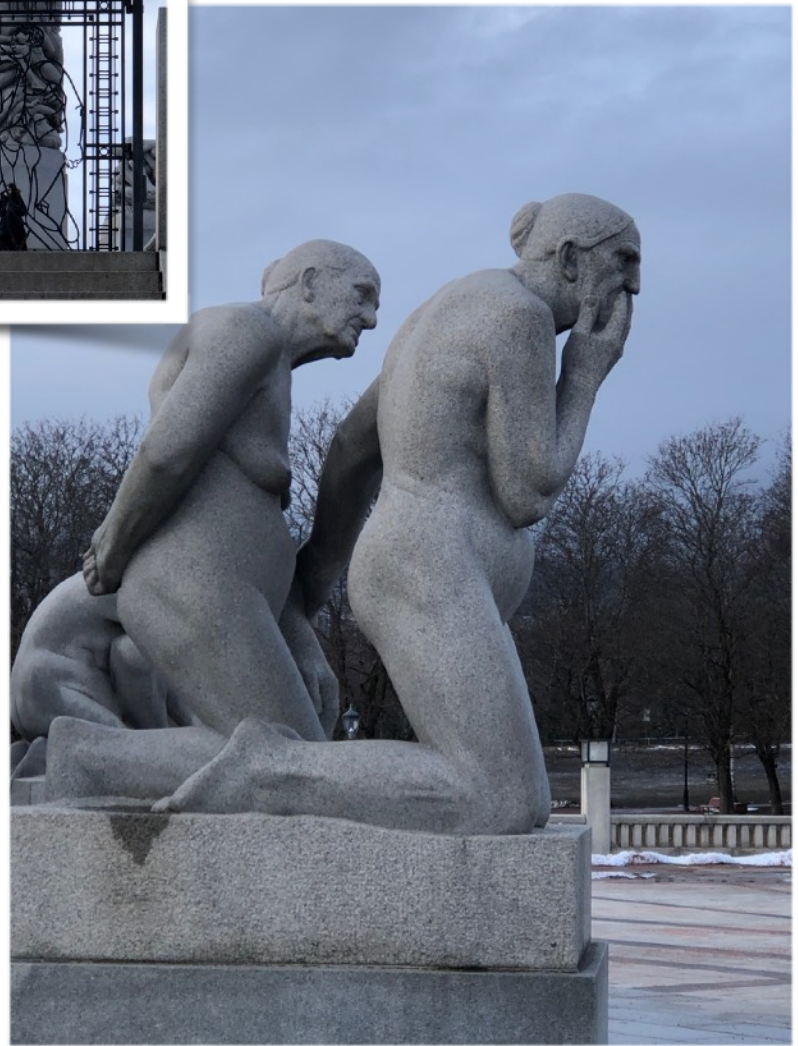


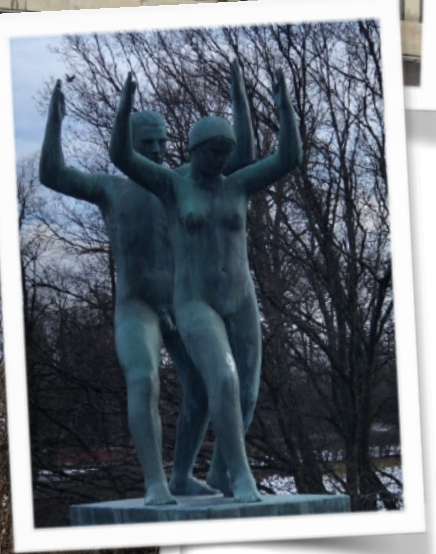
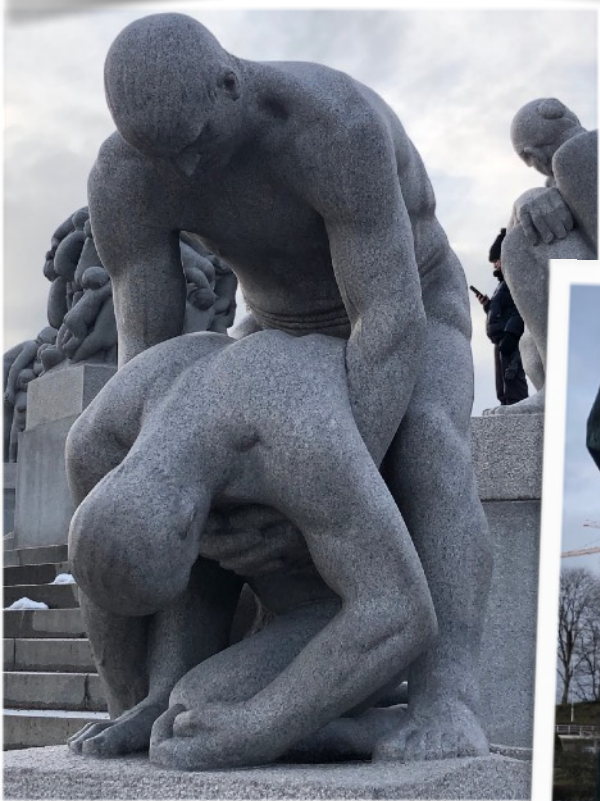
munch's grave

chilly and hungry, stepped into a bakery and oh yum. got this spelt bread that was airy gooey soft inside and crunchy outside. sooo good. and then we walked walked and walked and walked to the Frognerparken and the Vigeland sculptures within. geez, never seen anything so cohesive on such a giant scale. they really pay attention to art there. can you imagine our government funding a huge, non-patriotic, non-military, non-monumental sculpture garden? yeah, we have them in museums and on private land, but this is in a city center landmark park. incredible. art for art's sake. found out later that one man (Vigeland) designed each and every of the 212 bronze and granite figures for the project (whew) and had artisans fulfilling his sculptural designs and layout over decades. just the scale of it all left such an impression.



love her annoyed expression





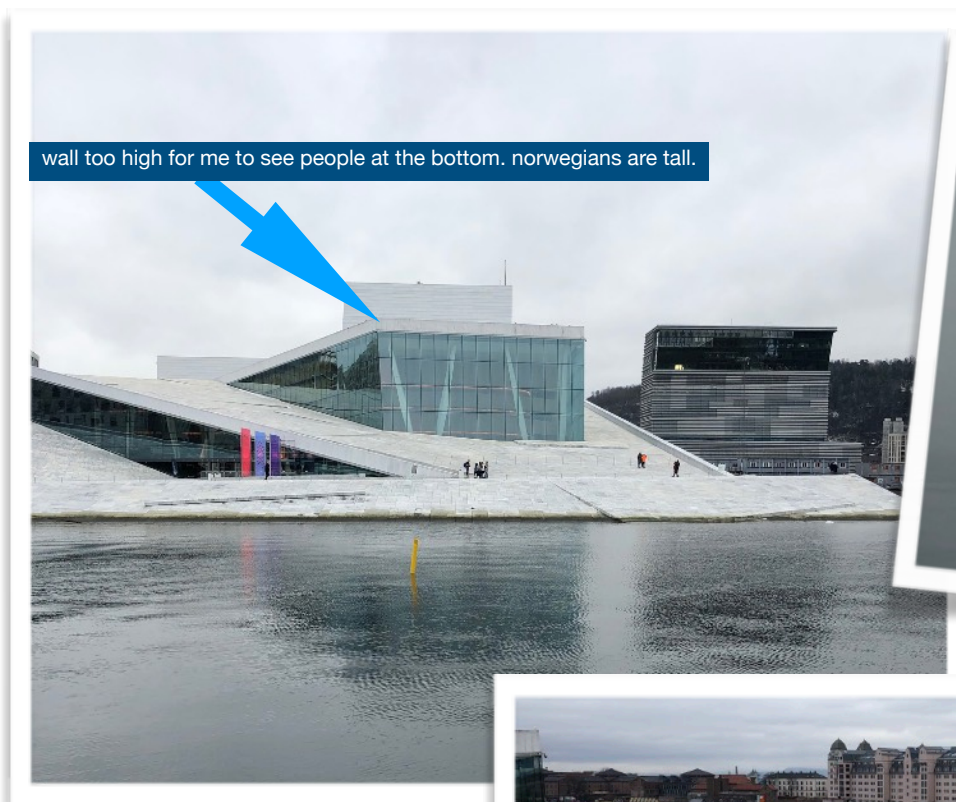
but it was cold there and the sun was going down and we were hungry. mo found a sushi-something-fusion place and i had eh fish and she had eh pasta. eh-est meal of the trip. decided to stop walking and catch a cab. couldn't find one, and no such thing as norway lyft/uber. but a convenient tram stopped a block away. perfect.

we crashed.

3 March 2020

up way early for here not for home and found a yoga studio. did consider not being able to understand yoga in norwegian, but figured i could follow along. turns out, no worries. the sub teacher became a yoga instructor in miami. knows the english terms for everything better than the norwegian. so i need not have felt guilty about her — did still about the other six or so people in class who's first language is norwegian. they didn't always get it when i did and that's kinda weird and privilegey.

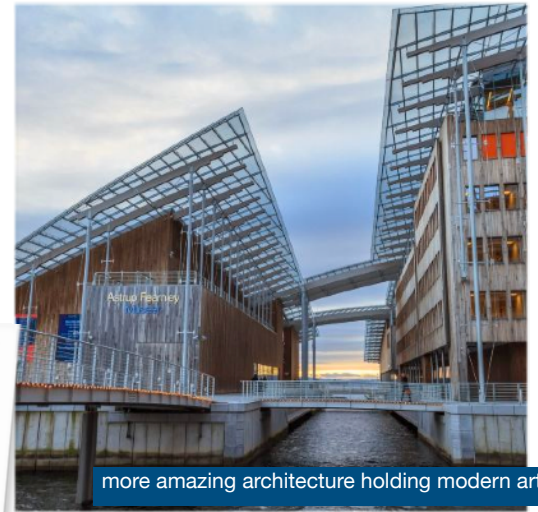
mo had showered by the time i got back, and i showered and we started walking walking. first stop was the opera house, only a couple blocks from citybox hotel. cold and windy but i was energized for climbing that roof. fun idea that the kennedy center's new addition makes use of too. walking on the roofs.



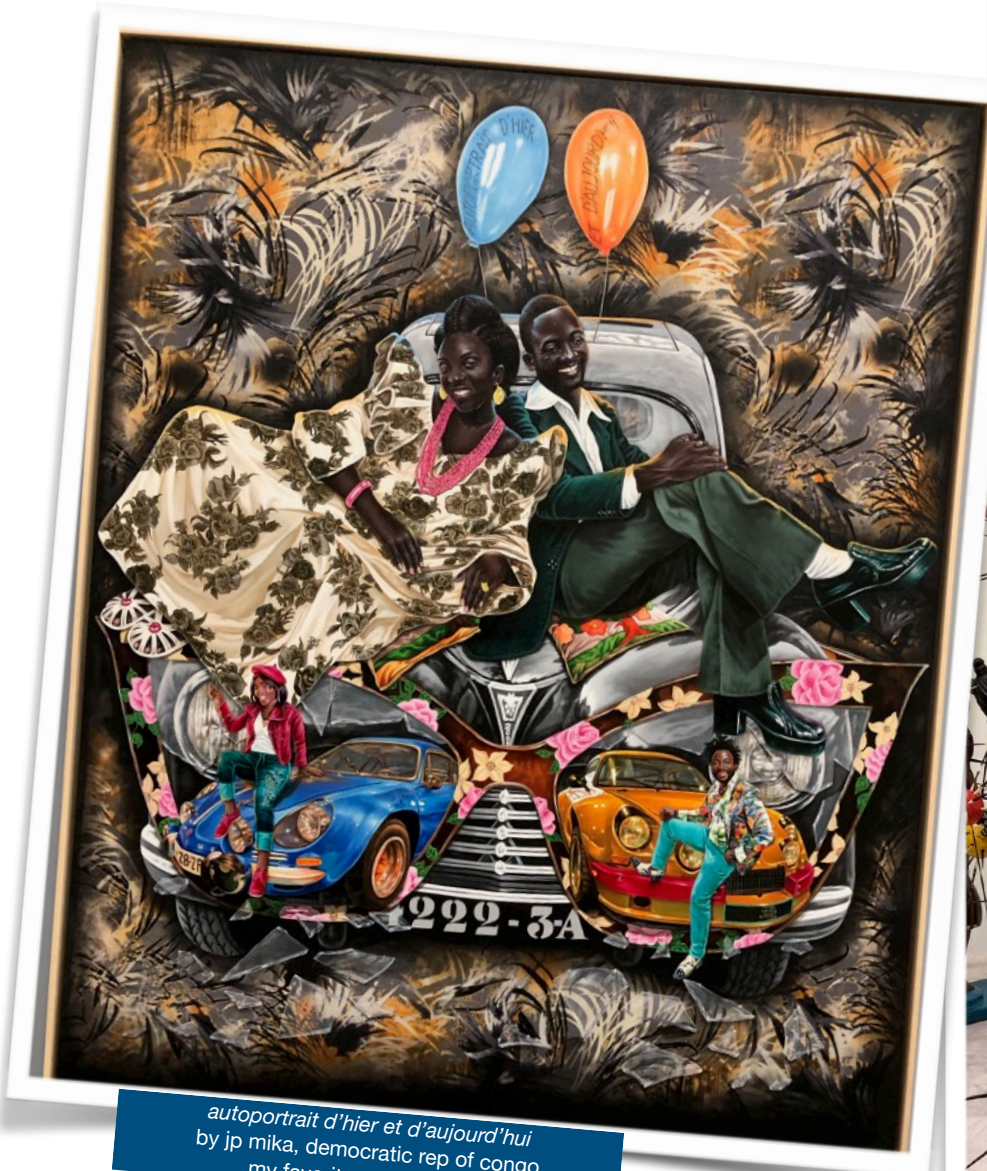
wet now too, but walked around the Akershus Fort a little and then Nasjonalmuseet Arkitektur, really fun architecture museum that used to be a bank. guy (wikter?

had a name tag but damn if i remember) let us in free cause mo's an architecture student and i'm an artist (!). great exhibit about oslo housing design 1910 to present. learned so much. highlighted international cultural differences involving community versus privacy. also an exhibit about Wilhelm von Hanno in an old bank vault, which maybe-named-wikter told us a whole story about being robbed. m-n-w came over to talk again while mo was in the bathroom and he was surprised that we found oslo interesting at all.

back out into the rain. walk walk walk around the harbor to the Astrup-Fearnly Museet that has the best contemporary african art exhibit, called *Alpha Crucis*. we spent a looong time here, actively avoiding the large school trips which we probably would have stuck closer to if we understood norwegian. but such a really great exhibit.



more amazing architecture holding modern art



autoportrait d'hier et d'aujourd'hui
by jp mika, democratic rep of congo
my favorite of the exhibit



yellow woman
by john goba, sierra leone



j'aime la couleur
by chéri samba, democratic rep of congo



galaxie, la ville du futur
by rigobert nimy, democratic rep of congo



beauté scooter
by jp mika



trayvon martin
by omar victor diop, senegal

good and expensive lunch at a restaurant close by that i thought was further, but mo was right. again. this was the trip of my not getting-things-right (direction or time) juju. mo had good juju.

for the most part, we didn't dwell on best restaurants. don't do that since scott cause he cared much more about it than me. he liked living good and large. i'm fine with much more simple good food. not that i didn't enjoy his choices, cause i did. paying more attention to (and listening more to) my voice is all. being an older woman has some great perks.

so, didn't enjoy the second half of the art museum (permanent collection). nuff said.

trod through the rain and stopped off at the Nobel Peace Center, but no heart or feet for it. like how they copy the building edifice onto a tarp while buildings are under construction.

at the hokey, very fun dr jekyll pub, mo had a highly alcoholic "cereal killer". my drink had something about sex in the name.

then a vegetarian restaurant close by. walked back to the hotel. couldn't sleep. watched some "good place" and eventually nodded off around 4am.

4 March 2020

roused mo for the neat viking museum, with a neat bus ride to/from the museum. less than two km from the city we were rolling through the burbs of the wealthy. really pretty houses, lots o land. viking museum: big boats, incredible woodwork, strong viking women.

worth the trip. (actually, gender equality there, aside from what we already know about it, was really evident. so many dads with young kids around town on a weekday. not as many as the moms, but a damn site more than at home.)



oseberg viking ship, burial site of two important women, though noone seems to know exactly who they were





3D scanning the oseberg

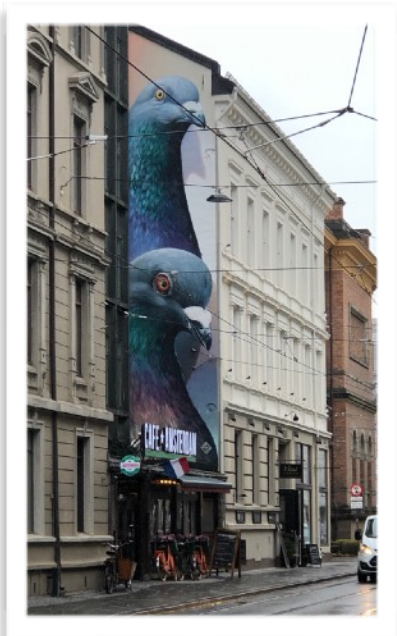
decided a trip to the freia chocolate factory was necessary. but nah. security guard smiled sadly as he told us it wasn't open today. we



laughed though, cause we had traipsed all the way out there, still hadn't eaten, but DID find a super duper cool knitting/yarn shop. the proprietor dyes the raw wool, all from norwegian sheep. she told us a funny story about ethically sourced silkworms. we liked this lady.

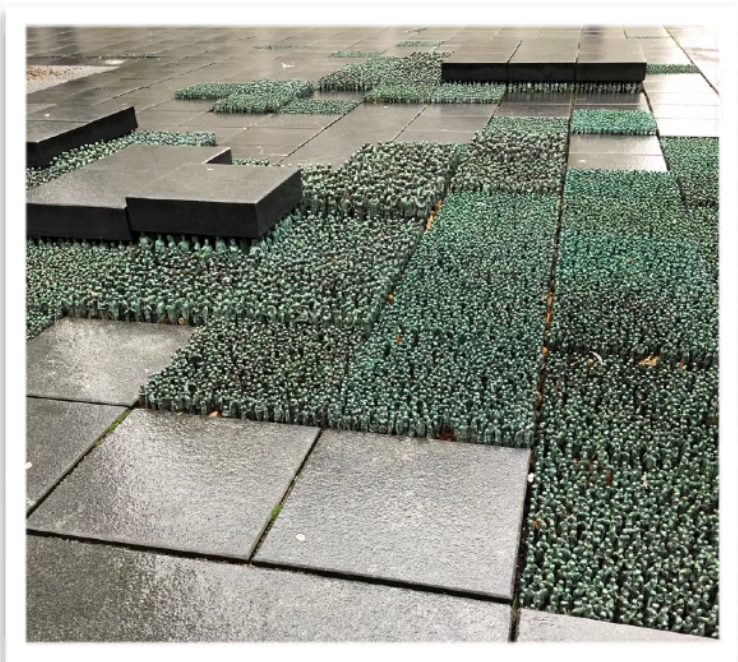


bus toward Grass Roots Square and immediately waylaid by 3D-ish looking giant pigeon mural and then the pub underneath it. and then lost ourselves for a while in the universe of a politics-and-prose-level bookstore. loved browsing all these super cool books. but this poster caught my attention for the longest (asked to buy one, but none in stock). yes, we bought books.



johabne hjorthal designs cool book covers and this poster

found the same bakery chain different outlet for more spelt bread. all on the way to Grass Roots square where atlasobscura.com had told us about these guys.



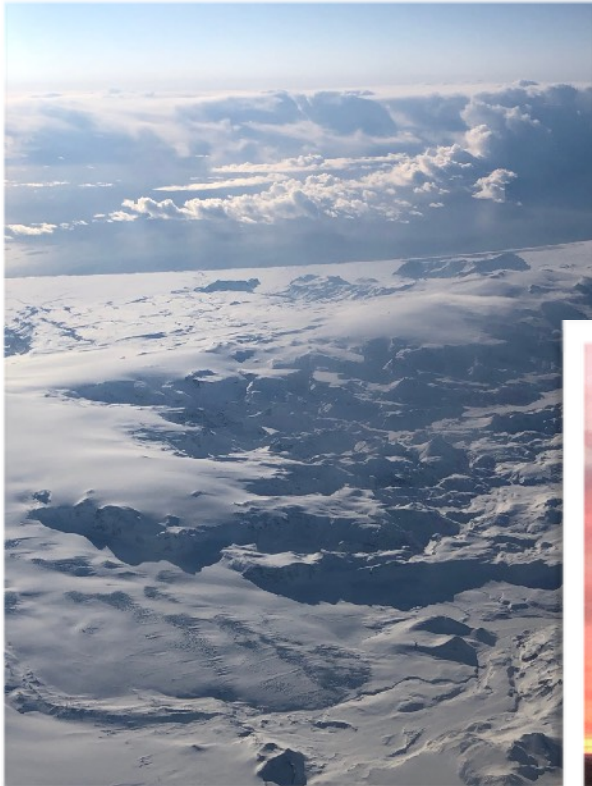
miniature bronze figures in grass roots square, by korean-american artist do ho suh

snowdrops falling again. set out to find the Blå Club and its area of reputed coolness. nothing too special, but it wasn't open yet either so probably rocked at night. saw some groovy murals. and then walked to the vintage clothing-mix-with-high-end-indie-fashion area. mo found a shirt of her dreams. raining harder, so ducked into an irish pub that had two kinds of cider: sweet for mo and dry for me.

walking to a suggested food hall, we saw a cozy-looking place with veggie options advertised. played scrabble, listened to 80s indie punk, ate a decent meal, had a drinky drink. then eventually made it to the CityBox, and mo konked out but the party across the street had some loud kids and music. did think for a few seconds about crashing. already in my pajamas. not gonna happen.

so oslo. super nice, interesting people. cool art. thought-provoking architecture (architecture firms e-ver-y-where. the way starbucks are at home. ok, not that bad.) weather sucked, but the sun did come out as we walked into the airport the next day!

gorgeous views over iceland.



and also arriving back home.

