

-----Original Message-----

From: Samuel Adamson [<mailto:sam@samueladamson.com>]

Sent: Thursday, March 29, 2018 12:19 PM

To: Monica Bakken; rektor@uio.no; postmottak@hf.uio.no

Subject: [postmottak] Centre for Ibsen Studies

To the Members of the Faculty of Humanities Board, University of Oslo

I am a playwright in the UK. I have written several English-language Ibsen versions for major theatres here, including a new version of A DOLL'S HOUSE for Southwark Playhouse, a new version of PILLARS OF THE COMMUNITY for the National Theatre of Great Britain, and an adaptation of LITTLE EYOLF (re-titled MRS AFFLECK) also for the National Theatre. A new original play of mine, WIFE, will soon be announced as part of the opening season of the newly renovated Tricycle Theatre here in London. This play is inspired by A DOLL'S HOUSE and looks at the impact of that play on one family across four generations.

It's come to my attention that the Centre for Ibsen Studies at the University of Oslo is again at risk of having its funding cut, and I write to you to express concern at this unfortunate development. I have in the past approached the staff at the Centre and have been delighted by their response to my queries, and I have often accessed the Centre's digital resources. My understanding is that this kind of support for artists working on international Ibsen productions will no longer be possible if the funding is cut. I urge the Board to recognise the importance of the Centre's work in supporting artists like myself, for whom Ibsen and his work are abiding inspirations.

I understand that the Faculty Board will be discussing the future of the Centre at its April Meeting. I would like the concerns expressed in this email to be conveyed to the Board Members.

Many thanks.

Yours sincerely

Samuel Adamson

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-----Original Message-----

From: Christopher Balme [<mailto:balme@lmu.de>]

Sent: Friday, April 06, 2018 9:28 PM

To: Monica Bakken

Cc: postmottak@hf.uio.no; rektor@uio.no

Subject: [postmottak] Ibsen Centre

Dear colleagues

while I was in Oslo recently for a doctoral defence, I heard disturbing reports about proposals to severely curtail the activities of the Ibsen Centre. I find this extremely worrying. In my field of theatre studies the Ibsen Centre is by far the most prominent Norwegian institution. This concerns the global initiatives that promote the tertiary studies of Ibsen; the support provided to international artists engaging in Ibsen productions; the management of the production of quality translations of Ibsen's texts in multiple languages; and the development and maintenance of the global networks of institutions, scholars, and artists working within the field of Ibsen studies. Of critical importance is the continuing expansion and maintenance of the digital infrastructure developed by the Centre over the past decade to support international Ibsen scholarship: Henrik Ibsen's Writings, IbsenStage, the Ibsen Bibliography and, most recently, the virtual reconstruction of the Bergen Theatre where Ibsen did his theatrical apprenticeship. These digital resources have created a state-of-the-art virtual Ibsen Centre that has been acknowledged internationally as a significant Norwegian cultural presence. Particularly the latter is a key resource and benchmark in the area of digital humanities in theatre studies.

Yours sincerely
Christopher Balme

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Prof. Dr. Christopher Balme
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-----Original Message-----

From: Melissa Reeves [<mailto:melissareeves@netspace.net.au>]

Sent: Monday, March 26, 2018 2:00 AM

To: Monica Bakken <monica.bakken@hf.uio.no>

Subject: Risk to the funding of the Centre for Ibsen Studies

To the Members of the Faculty of Humanities Board, University of Oslo I would be grateful if this email could be attached to the Faculty Board papers for the April meeting.

I am an award winning Australian playwright currently engaged in adapting *An Enemy of the People* for a major theatre company in Sydney – Belvoir St. Theatre. Belvoir Street has a history of creatively ground breaking productions of iconic, classic plays, many by Ibsen. Most notably, a highly successful production of *A Wild Duck* that was performed at the International Ibsen Festival in Oslo.

I approached staff at the Centre for Ibsen Studies with a request for dramaturgical advice over my adaptation; the Centre staff were very generous with their time giving me a series of one on one consultations, and providing me with excellent research materials. The historical and political background to the play, and the period, were immensely valuable, as were the contemporary books and articles examining the philosophical themes running through the play, and the many and varied ways in which past productions have tackled it.

I understand that this kind of focused support for artists working on international Ibsen productions will no longer be possible if the current funding arrangements for the Centre are changed - and I urge the Board to recognise the importance of the Centre's work in supporting artists because it is making a major contribution to the quality of contemporary international productions of Ibsen's plays.

Yours sincerely, Melissa Reeves

Fra: "jjiansuns" <jjiansuns@aliyun.com <<mailto:jjiansuns@aliyun.com>> >
Dato: 6. april 2018 kl. 11:47:59 CEST
Til: "monica.bakken" <monica.bakken@hf.uio.no <<mailto:monica.bakken@hf.uio.no>> >,
"rektor" <rektor@uio.no <<mailto:rektor@uio.no>> >
Emne: The Centre for Ibsen Studies
Svar til: jjiansuns <jjiansuns@aliyun.com <<mailto:jjiansuns@aliyun.com>> >

Dear Colleagues,

I am writing on behalf of the Nordic Literature Research Institute affiliated to the Nordic Center at Fudan University in Shanghai. Upon hearing that the Faculty of Humanities Board at Oslo University will be meeting to discuss the possibility of terminating the financial autonomy of the Centre for Ibsen Studies, my colleagues and I feel it necessary to appeal to the Board for making a favorable decision for the Centre.

As we all know, Ibsen has been a household name in China ever since he and his plays were introduced into the country at the beginning of the 20th century. He contributed greatly to the modernization of China after his plays were translated into Chinese and performed in the theatres in Beijing and Shanghai. Many Chinese people, especially the young intellectuals and students, get to know Norway and its culture and literature through Ibsen and his masterpieces. In the past decades, Ibsen studies flourished in China thanks to the great support of the Centre for Ibsen Studies both financially and academically.

Fudan University has become one of the main beneficiaries of such support. As early as the 1980s, a course on the selected readings of Ibsen's plays was offered at Fudan. From 2003 to 2006, a series of activities, such as Ibsen International Seminar and Ibsen Memorial Week, were held at the university assisted by the Centre for Ibsen Studies. Taking advantage of the academic accumulation at Fudan University and international academic platforms such as IIC and the Centre for Ibsen Studies, this institute successfully held an international Ibsen seminar on Ibsen's drama in 2008 and co-sponsored the 12th International Ibsen Conference in 2009 at Fudan, which was the first International Ibsen Conference held in the East. The conference was attended by more than 80 scholars from 18 countries and was widely acclaimed. This would not have been possible without the huge financial and administrative support of the Centre for Ibsen Studies at Oslo University. The academic cooperation and the scholarly exchange were much promoted between our institute and the Centre after these events. The scholars from both sides, together with many colleagues from other countries, have participated in many joint research programs on Ibsen organized and sponsored by the Centre. So far the cooperation and exchange have yielded fruitful results and the international Ibsen Studies is gathering momentum with the Centre as the core supporter.

Therefore, in view of the current situation and the past achievements, we sincerely hope that the members of the Board will review the motion carefully and give the Centre a favorable consideration. We will be grateful to you all for your kindness.

With best wishes,

Sun Jian
Professor of English

Honorary Director
Nordic Literature Research Institute
Fudan University
Member International Ibsen Committee

-----Original Message-----

From: KK Tam [<mailto:tamkk@hotmail.com>]

Sent: Tuesday, April 10, 2018 11:24 AM

To: Monica Bakken; postmottak@hf.uio.no; rektor@uio.no; kk.tam@su.se

Subject: [postmottak] Letter to the Faculty of Humanities Board at UiO

Dear Members of the Faculty of Humanities Board at UiO,

I am writing this letter to express my concern about the future of the Centre for Ibsen Studies (the Centre). More than half a year ago, I sent a letter of concern to the Faculty of Humanities Board (the Board) and expressed my reservation for the possible restructuring of the Centre that would jeopardize its academic autonomy.

Currently the Centre has invested heavily in teaching, research and international networking for promotion of Ibsen Studies, not to mention its own publications and involvement in international Ibsen publications. The Centre has been playing a leadership role in all three areas. As I have pointed out in my previous letter, the Centre is not simply a Norwegian setup, it is actually an international organization and has built up a community on different continents. Any change in its finance and structure will definitely affect the image of Norway and the leadership of the Centre in the global dimension of Ibsen Studies.

Speaking as Head of the International Ibsen Committee and as someone from outside Norway, I would say that for more than twenty years we international Ibsenites have been looking to the Centre as an authority and a resource centre that can provide directions and guidance in Ibsen studies. The Centre's digital archive "IbsenStage" is beginning to generate important results in the internationalization of Ibsen research. The work of "IbsenStage" must continue and not be disrupted; otherwise projects in other countries will have to be discontinued. The International Ibsen Conference is a major means for scholars from all corners of the world to meet and exchange on research findings. Without the Centre's leadership and coordination, there cannot be any more International Ibsen Conference. If UiO decides to give up its role in international Ibsen studies, I am sure other countries will be willing to take on the role. However, no one will expect this to happen, and we respect the leadership of the Centre at UiO.

Although I wrote to the Board about my concern for the Centre, I have so far not received any response from the Board. Despite the fact that I am a bit disappointed about this, I, like other members on the International Ibsen Committee, work for the Committee because we all respect UiO and its Faculty of Humanities and wish to contribute to Ibsen Studies. I have a close working relation with all the directors of the Centre since its inception twenty years ago, and I really think that this is the time we should make efforts in building up trust and strengthening our work, rather than eroding it and dividing the Ibsen community.

As we are going to meet in Skien this September for a major International Ibsen Conference, I hope there can be a meeting around that time with the Dean of the Faculty of Humanities Board, or his representative(s), so that the International Ibsen Committee can be informed of the rationale behind the restructuring and its possible consequences. This would also be an opportunity for the Board to hear the views of the international community.

Thank you for your consideration of my concerns and my request.

Kwok-kan Tam, PhD

Head of the International Ibsen Committee

Fellow, Hong Kong Academy of the Humanities

Member of the Board of Directors, International Association of Theatre Critics (HK)
Visiting Professor (current), Stockholm University
Chair Professor and Dean-Designate, Hang Seng Management College, Hong Kong
Former Chair Professor and Dean of Arts & Social Sciences, Open University of Hong Kong
Former Chairman and Professor of English, the Chinese University of Hong Kong

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3 April 2018

Dear Monica Bakken,

I am writing to you to express my concern over the proposed changes to the funding arrangements for the Centre for Ibsen Studies at the University of Oslo. I am a scholar of Ibsen and have been so since 1991. It is because of the Centre for Ibsen Studies that I became an Ibsen scholar in the first place: I studied there during my year on a Fulbright Grant (1990-91) and was taught by some of the world's most distinguished Ibsen scholars including Edvard Beyer. I went on to the University of Oxford to do a DPhil on a comparative analysis of the reception of Ibsen in England and France, which became my book *Ibsen and Early Modernist Theatre, 1890-1900*. I have been working on Ibsen in many contexts, including science; I wrote extensively about Ibsen's engagement with evolutionary thought in my 2015 book *Theatre and Evolution from Ibsen to Beckett*. I am currently writing *Henrik Ibsen: A Very Short Introduction* for the popular, high-quality series of Very Short Introductions published by Oxford University Press, for which I contributed *Modern Drama: A Very Short Introduction* in 2016 which emphasized the importance of Ibsen to the development of modern drama. In addition to many articles, book chapters, and reviews relating to Ibsen, I regularly work with theatre companies as a consultant for their productions of Ibsen, most recently *The Master Builder* at the Old Vic (adapted by Sir David Hare and featuring Ralph Fiennes) and *The Lady from the Sea* at the Donmar Warehouse, translated by Elinor Cook. I could not have had this career as an Ibsen scholar without the Centre for Ibsen Studies: its staff, its publications, its conferences and workshops, its digital resources, its performance festivals, and its international network of scholars. These are exceptional resources and they allow the Centre to set the standard for Ibsen studies globally. They also ensure that Ibsen studies is not some elite, closed club or dusty museum for preserving Ibsen—it has done extraordinary work in keeping his plays alive and relevant to today's readers and audiences across the world, and consciously extending into new and exciting areas like Africa, India, the Middle East, China, and Japan. This work is vital and it could not be done without the Centre as it currently exists.

In short, the Centre for Ibsen Studies is the hub of Ibsen scholarship for the global community, and has essentially been for Ibsen what the Shakespeare Institute in Stratford-upon-Avon is for Shakespeare—both are flagship institutions for the study of the world's leading dramatists. To do anything that would reduce the Centre's capacity to continue to be world-leading would be disastrous.

When I founded the Ibsen Network here at TORCH (The Oxford Research Centre in the Humanities) in 2013, and subsequently the Nordic Network in 2015, I relied on

colleagues at the Centre for Ibsen Studies for advice, guidance, and scholarly contributions. Since Oxford does not have a Scandinavian or Nordic Studies department or programme, it was vital for us to establish these networks so as to give those of us here who research and teach in these areas an institutional home. We could not have achieved this without our links to the Centre for Ibsen Studies, and those connections in turn gave our networks a guarantee of quality. They flourished largely because of the input from scholars like Tore Rem, Frode Helland, Julie Holledge, and Ruth Schor, as well as Narve Fulsås of the University of the Arctic who has played such a crucial role in establishing Henrik Ibsens Skrifter online and promoting digital Ibsen abroad.

Please do all you can to support the Centre for Ibsen Studies and allow it to continue to do its work of supporting world-leading Ibsen scholarship.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kirsten Shepherd-Barr". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a long horizontal line extending from the end of the name.

Kirsten E. Shepherd-Barr
Professor of English and Theatre Studies
Faculty of English
Fellow of St Catherine's College
University of Oxford



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April 4, 2018

Faculty of Humanities Board
University of Oslo

Dear Members of the Faculty of Humanities Board:

I am writing out of concern for news I received about the potential reduction of budget autonomy and supported activities for the Centre for Ibsen Studies at the University of Oslo. I write in several interested capacities: as a current member of the International Ibsen Committee, as former President of the Ibsen Society of America, and as Professor of Scandinavian at the University of California, Berkeley, where I have taught for twenty-four years. I have been active in international Ibsen research for that entire time, having published many articles and a book in that field (*Ibsen's Houses* with Cambridge University Press, 2015). For all of this research activity, I have depended directly on the Ibsen Centre's resources, both on site at the University of Oslo and online through the many wonderful research resources that have been produced by the Centre. My own book would not have been possible without the substantial investment made by the university in the Centre, and I have always regarded it as an amazing resource for study. I think it is safe to say that the combined materials made available in the *Henrik Ibsens Skrifter* project, on the IbsenStage website, and in the online Ibsen Bibliography are unmatched by any other author research field, and I have relied on them constantly for research when I am in Oslo, but more importantly, also when I am working in Berkeley.

Just a month ago, I was teaching a graduate seminar in the Scandinavian Modern Breakthrough here in Berkeley and spent forty-five minutes showcasing all of these Ibsen Centre materials and demonstrating them in detail. The graduate students were impressed not only by the richness of the research resources available from their remote desktops here in California, but also by the innovative methodology of the IbsenStage project. One of my students, for example, is very interested in digital humanities approaches and was intrigued by the groundbreaking applications of actor-network methodology in that project, quite apart from its specific Ibsen-related content. She is currently incorporating that resource into her semester project for my course.

I realize that there are always local budgetary pressures that force institutions to reevaluate the more altruistic efforts one makes for an international research field as a whole, but I think in this case it is crucial to register how actively we at UC-Berkeley and other North American research institutions are making use of the resources that have been created by the Ibsen Centre. They bring great research attention to the University of Oslo—this set of materials comprise some of the world's leading resources

for the study of a dramatist, and it would be a shame if a shift in the funding structure and budgetary autonomy of the Centre diminished these ongoing projects. Since all of these databases are by design continual repositories of Ibsen performance and research, it would be a great disappointment to see them converted them into virtual museum objects, into databases with end dates. Even if curtailing or ending the projects is not the immediate effect of the Centre losing budget autonomy, I worry that taking the decision-making process away from the Ibsen Centre would have that effect in the long run. I urge you to reconsider this plan. The Ibsen Centre is a research gem with impressive international stature; I point scholars and students to its resources whenever I get the chance, and I would like to continue doing so.

I would appreciate it if this letter could be logged and included in the Board members materials for the April 20 meeting.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Mark Sandberg". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the typed name.

Mark Sandberg
Professor
Department of Scandinavian
Department of Film & Media
University of California, Berkeley



School of Arts

The 8th floor, Yifu Building
Nanjing University
22 Hankou Road
Nanjing 210093, China

TO: The Board of Humanities
Oslo University

Date: April 6, 2018

To whom it may concern,

It has been 16 years since I received my Doctor of Arts degree from University of Oslo, Norway. I wrote my dissertation on “Henrik Ibsen and Modern Chinese Drama”, which was later published in English in Norway. Ever since, I have been teaching at Nanjing University, one of the top 9 universities in China (also called C-9). Over the years, my teaching and research on Ibsen and Norwegian literature and culture have benefited a lot from my collaboration with the Ibsen Center, Prof. Frode Helland in particular. In the past, I have invited several professors from the Ibsen Center and other Norwegian institutions to give lectures or seminars on Ibsen and Norwegian culture, which were usually warmly welcomed by the faculty and students alike. During 2010-2012, I organized a national Ibsen festival at Nanjing University every year, for which the Ibsen Center offered a lot of support. In terms of research, I was part of the international project on “Ibsen between Cultures”, which was led by Prof. Helland. The project was a fine example of international cooperation, which would not succeed without the support of the Ibsen Center. In 2009, the Chinese-Nordic Cultural Center (CNCC) was established at Nanjing University (<http://cncc.nju.edu.cn>). Prof. Helland was the president of the Academic Board of the CNCC here. In collaboration with the Ibsen Center, the CNCC has organized quite a few academic events so far, many of which are about Ibsen and Norwegian culture. In short, the Ibsen Center has contributed a lot to the academic activities of Ibsen studies at Nanjing University and in China. It has been a strong partner in many Ibsen events in China, which helped to spread the good reputation of the Oslo University and

Norway.

I would like to take the opportunity to explain how important it is to carry out research collaboration between Nanjing University and Oslo University, not just in Ibsen studies but also in other fields of humanities, social sciences and natural sciences. As one of the oldest Chinese universities and the former national central university during the Republican era (1911-1949), Nanjing University is well-known for its tradition of humanities teaching and research. Located in Nanjing, one of the 4 ancient capitals, or the capital of China for 10 dynasties, the University has been praised by its international partners. I think that Oslo University and Nanjing University are a good match, since the international ranking of the two universities are very close to each other, and they also share many other similarities. Most importantly, Nanjing University would really care about having Oslo University as its international partner, not least because the CNCC can play a role in this process.

“One-thousand-mile trip starts with a first step”, as an old Chinese saying goes. I sincerely hope that Oslo U and Nanjing U would take the first steps to a long journey of good collaboration. In that regard, I believe that the Ibsen Center will continue to play a good role. With that, I wish you all support the Ibsen Center and the Chinese-Norwegian cooperation of research and teaching in the future.

Sincerely yours,



Chengzhou HE

Yangtze River Chair Professor of English and Drama

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Tuesday, 10 April 2018

To the Members of the Faculty of Humanities Board, University of Oslo:

I request that this letter be included in the papers distributed to the members of the Faculty Board prior to their meeting on 20 April 2018.

Last year I wrote to the Board prior to its meeting on June 2nd regarding an Agenda item that had significant implications for research into global flows of world theatre, namely the current arrangements for allocating funding to the Centre for Ibsen Studies. Although I did not receive any response to my letter, I made enquiries regarding the outcome of the meeting and was given to understand that the item had been removed from the Agenda. I have recently learned that, once again, this item has been scheduled for discussion at the meeting to be held on 2 April.

In my past capacity as Associate Dean of Research in the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences at The University of Queensland, I collaborated with Professor Helland to create research infrastructure to support the study of the international dissemination of performance culture. In Australia, we have attracted over \$4.5m AUD of institutional and government funding for this project. Our major European partners are the Centre for Ibsen Studies at UIO and the Victoria and Albert Museum in London. Together we are working with scholars and performing arts collections in the UK, Germany, France, Belgium, China and India to build interoperable digital repositories to facilitate collaborative research.

The relative financial autonomy of the Centre has enabled the long term planning necessary for this international collaboration. In my current position as Executive Director for the Humanities and Creative Arts panel at the Australian Research Council, I am acutely aware of the importance of international research networks. I note that it is the institutional mandate of the Centre to further the global dissemination of Norwegian culture, a mandate that has made this project possible because of the significance of Henrik Ibsen in the development of nineteenth century world drama.

I am deeply concerned that in the interests of streamlining administrative processes within UIO an on-going international collaboration that owes so much to the Centre of Ibsen Studies will be undermined.

Sincerely,

Professor Joanne Tompkins
Executive Director, Humanities and Creative Arts