



Sabine Popp prepares one of the projectors that will display artistic video interpretations of Svalbard's life and history in windows throughout the abandoned Taubanesentralen (cable car building). The exhibit, to be viewed from the outside, will be unveiled at 5 p.m. Friday as part of KunstPause. The annual festival of art, performances and other activities begins Thursday.

## An artful start for long night

*KunstPause focuses on historic aspects of everyday life through pictures and performances*

Sabine Popp came to Svalbard to find tales of life in places of darkness and isolation. So when she enters, say, a decaying cabin filled with trash it really is a treasure.

"When you see that trash you start to make up your story – who are these people?" she said.

Getting an entire ramshackle industrial building on a hilltop to tell tales that will literally illuminate Longyearbyen is epic. Popp, a

**See KUNSTPAUSE, page 4**

## Fine for illegal helicopter flights upheld by court

*Rare hearing in Svalbard finds Russian mining company broke non-commercial agreement*

An appellate court unanimously upheld a 50,000 kroner fine this week against a Russian mining company for taking a film crew on an illegal helicopter flight in Svalbard in 2007, in violation of a permit allowing non-commercial activity only.

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The Nesodden/Frogn choir and Drøbak Storband perform one of Duke Ellington's Sacred Concerts at Huset on Saturday during the inaugural Storband Weekend.

## Sellout or not, a big experience

*Scores of musicians keep rooms full at first Storband Weekend*

One great thing about inviting 85 musicians and their families to a festival is there's guaranteed to be an audience.

Concert venues large and small were full, if not packed, despite slower than hoped ticket sales for four days of big band, choral and small ensemble performances during the inaugural Storband Weekend last Thursday

through Sunday. Even though some events were "mostly us listening to each other," as one musician put it, there was unmistakable energy and appreciation for the work done by their peers.

"I think for everybody it's been fun to be able to get together," said Eli Grindflek,

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## Who's to blame and how to express your wrath

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## Copyright stuff

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## Corrections policy

When we screw up you'll know about it – on the front page. One of the big complaints about newspapers is they tend to bury corrections and clarifications deep inside where few people who read the original article see them. If we need to fix something, an alert box on the front page will state what story is in error and where the full correction is printed.

## Submitting material

Letters, columns, photos and other material are welcome, but we can't offer pay for published items since nobody here is getting paid at the moment. Submissions in electronic form (text, Word documents, JPEGs, etc.) are highly preferred, although typing and/or scanning of items will be considered on a per-case basis. We reserve the right to edit submissions for length, clarity, accuracy, libel and other reasons, but we will also make every reasonable effort to contact the author about any changes prior to publication.



Appellate court members take their seats Tuesday in a temporary courtroom – the conference room at the Radisson SAS Polar Hotel – to hear an appeal by the Russian state-owned mining company Trust Arktikugol. The court upheld a 50,000 kroner fine against the company for taking a film crew on helicopter flights in 2007, in violation of an agreement allowing only non-commercial flights.

## Attorney: Further appeal of fine unlikely

### COURT, from page 1

The verdict, following what may have been the first such hearing in Svalbard, confirmed a district court ruling that the state-owned Trust Arktikugol broke the terms of its agreement even though the company argued it was not paid for the flight. Norwegian officials also argued the permit only allowed flights between Longyearbyen and Barentsburg, while the flight in dispute traveled to the ice fjords.

Establishing a clear legal definition of allowable flights was the goal of prosecutors, rather than punishment for the one conducted.

"The prosecutor has shown that this is a symbolic amount, as central to the case is highlighting that Norwegian law to be adhered to by all of Svalbard," the decision by the seven-member appellate panel notes. "The High

Court has no information about the company's finances. It is not argued that it lacks the financial ability to carry a fine of 50,000 kroner."

Deputy Gov. Lars Fause, the prosecutor for the case, said the ruling achieves its goals.

"I think they will uphold the respect for Norwegian authority," he said.

Trust Arktikugol has two weeks to appeal the ruling. Nadia Thraning, a Tromsø attorney defending the company, said a decision about an appeal is not certain, but her initial impression is the company will accept the judgement.

"If I guess, there will be no appeal," she said. "My impression of what my client means is all of the lawful practices were followed in this manner."

**There's more! Visit [www.icepeople.net](http://www.icepeople.net) for the complete story.**

## Spread of swine flu in Svalbard apparently slows

Fewer people sought treatment for H1N1 flu during the past week than the previous week when the first cases of the disease were confirmed in Svalbard, officials said.

As many as 30 residents reported symptoms of the ailment, also known as swine flu, within days after the first two cases were confirmed Oct. 29. None were serious enough to require in-patient or mainland treatment.

"Five or six patients this week have been to hospital (but) nobody's been hospitalized," said Aksel Bilicz, a medical practitioner at Longyearbyen Hospital. "When I talk to

people, not many have been away from work."

It is uncertain if more vaccinations will be available in about a week as originally promised by Norwegian health officials, who now say delays are possible due to demand. Bilicz said 552 doses have been administered locally to date, which is a possible reason for the slowdown in cases.

"Somebody told me when 35 percent of the population is vaccinated the spread of the disease might be slowed," he said.

**There's more! Visit [www.icepeople.net](http://www.icepeople.net) for the complete story.**

## Memo: Yes, I know Svalbard has no trees

To both locals who read my feature online about Svalbard for *The Observer* of London: I have no idea what town is in that picture.

The trees are a pretty good clue it's not Svalbard.

*The Observer* got their pictures from others. The print edition avoided the mixup.

There's also something in the first sentence about it getting as cold as -20°C. Uh, yeah, I know it gets a lot colder than that. Again, something I didn't say that got altered in their office. But my bad nonetheless – they sent the edits back to me and I missed it.

Not upset at anyone there. Stuff happens.



Sigbjørn Sigurdsson, center, a Tromsø music teacher, works with students Friday at Longyearbyen School on two songs the youths wrote in preparation for a miniconcert the following day at Lompensenteret as part of Storband Weekend.

## Big sounds, sights and studies mark festival

### STORBAND, from page 1

an alto sax player with the Drøbak Storband. "It's also fun to be up here."

Hans-Gunnar Skreslett, the festival's director, said organizers deliberately kept the event relatively small in scope and expectations limited, believing it might take a few years to catch on among locals. He said about 200 tickets were sold to the public and hopes to continue the festival, possibly on an every-other-year basis.

"I think everything went quite well," he said. "Of course there was not as much audience as we hoped from Longyearbyen, but there were so many people here there were always people at the performances."

Mainland musicians besides the Drøbak ensemble were the Vesterålen Storband and Nesodden/Frogn choir. They and the Longyearbyen Storband played separate and collaborative shows, beginning with an open jam session Thursday at Barentz Pub. Performances at Longyearbyen School and The University Centre In Svalbard followed the next day, with an evening show where various vocalists fronted with differing big bands.

Saturday saw the choir and Drøbak band join to perform one of Duke Ellington's Sacred Concerts at Huset, after which all of the en-

sembles played a dance marathon at Brasseri Nansen. The festival concluded with a Sunday performance by the choir at Svalbard Church.

Not that the weekend was all about big sounds.

For visiting musicians, who willingly paid their own way due to the event's limited budget, there were also moments between concerts for sightseeing tours and dogsledding (on wheels due to insufficient snowpack). For local players, young and old, it was an opportunity to meet and learn from acclaimed talent.

Among the latter was a workshop where Sigbjørn Sigurdsson, a Tromsø music teacher, and Henning Gravrok, a Bodø saxophonist, spent a few hours Friday and a couple more Saturday working with about half a dozen students from Longyearbyen School. The visitors helped arrange two songs written by Inger-Johanne Mørk and Simen Henriksen for a mini-concert they and the other youths performed Saturday afternoon at Lompensenteret.

Even in a few hours, a lot can be taught, Gravrok said.

"It depends on the talent," he said. "It's a lucky occasion they composed a tune. We can start it from there and build it up to a band."

**There's more! Visit [www.icepeople.net](http://www.icepeople.net) for the complete story.**

## HEADLINES STOLEN FROM SVALBARDPOSTEN VERDENS NORDLIGSTE AVIS

### UNIS successfully test drills possible CO2 disposal site

A drilling test has been successfully conducted into sandstone potentially suitable as a depository for liquid carbon dioxide by The University Centre In Svalbard. The project, in cooperation with StatoilHydro, drilled an 870-meter-deep well at the old aurora station in Adventdalen, encountering thick sandstone at the bottom 100 meters that may be suitable for storage. "Now we pump water into the sandstone layer to find out how much water the sandstone can accept per hour," said Alvar Braathen, a geology professor at UNIS. A largest test lasting three or four weeks is scheduled at the beginning of next year.

### Ny-Ålesund monitoring site to also bring fiber optic cable

Norway's mapping authority is planning to build a new monitoring station in Ny-Ålesund to collect more precise data than the existing one. The project, expected to cost nearly 200 million kroner, will also require a fiber optic cable be extended from Longyearbyen to the station, which will improve communications access for other scientists in the community. The station monitors variations in the Earth's crust and corrects data from GPS satellites.

### Company acquitted, captain blamed in glacier tour case

Ocean Wide Expeditions has been acquitted of charges and an 800,000 kroner fine related to an August 2007 cruise that traveled too close to a calving glacier, resulting in injuries to 23 people. A trial ending Thursday in Nord-Troms District Court found no evidence officials with the Dutch tour company asked the captain to approach the glacier in Hornsund as closely as he did. The Russian captain was more concerned about giving passengers "a spectacular and spooky experience than security," according to the court. Attempts to serve the captain with a summons have been unsuccessful.

## Weather forecast for Longyearbyen

### Wednesday

Low clouds and windy. S winds at 37 km/h. High 4C (-8C wind chill), low -3C (-13C wind chill).

### Thursday

Cloudy, breezy, overnight snow. WSW winds at 32 km/h. High -1C (-5C wind chill), low -6C (-10C wind chill).

### Friday

Clear and colder. N winds at 12 km/h. High -6C (-10C wind chill), low -20C (-20C wind chill).

### Saturday

Partly cloudy and cold. E winds at 6 km/h. High -16C (-16C wind chill), low -19C (-23C wind chill).

**Extended forecast:** Sunday, frigid with snow, -17C (-23C), -19C (-31C); Monday, wind and snow, -14C (-18C), -17C (-18C); Tuesday, cloudy and cold -13C (-13C), -13C (-14C); Wednesday, mostly cloudy, -9C (-13C), -13C (-16C).

Data provided by [AccuWeather.com](http://AccuWeather.com)



A passerby inspects historical photos by Erling J. Nødtvedt, a priest in Svalbard between 1951 and 1960, on display at Fruene as part of KunstPause 2009.

## Art fest brings color to onset of night

### KUNSTPAUSE, from page 1

national arts grant winner, will debut a series of ten video interpretations in the windows of the Taubanesentralen building at 5 p.m. Friday for her "Future's Past" exhibit as part of this year's KunstPause Svalbard festival.

The annual event, featuring mostly free exhibits, performances and other activities throughout Longyearbyen, begins Thursday and ends Sunday. Roger Zahl Ødegård, a city cultural official who is one of the event's organizers, said this year's theme ties in with the Norwegian Year of Cultural Heritage 2009 being observed nationwide.

"We decided to focus on old buildings, old things from the daily life," he said.

Highlight events include a concert of hymns as interpreted by various local musicians at 8 p.m. Friday at Svalbard Church, a traditional procession from the Titankrana to an outdoor market with various events in the town center at 11 a.m. Saturday, a three-course meal and concert by the acclaimed Valkyrien Allstars at 7:30 p.m. Saturday at Brasseri Nansen, and a concert by Tonje Unstad at 7:30 p.m. Sunday at Galleri Svalbard.

KunstPause was started in the hope of drawing more visitors, but is now primarily for locals, Ødegård said. Still, it's hard to call the onset of the three-month polar night the slow season when the past two weekends have featured the Dark Season Blues and inaugural Storbånd Weekend music festivals.

"If we are to survive in the darkness it's necessary to be involved and have interesting things to do," Ødegård said.

Popp, a Finse resident, is plenty familiar with Svalbard's darkness after making her first visit in January. She spent about four weeks in Ny-Ålesund capturing images conveying the "still, isolated and dark" winter character of her hometown for a mainland exhibit. She said she is fascinated by artificial light and shapes in spaces, calling it theater even when there are no people.

**There's more! Visit [www.icepeople.net](http://www.icepeople.net) for the complete story.**

### KunstPause schedule

#### Thursday

- 6 p.m.: Opening reception at Galleri Svalbard. Presented by Kristin Furu Grøtting, deputy chairman of the cultural and leisure board. Preview concert by Liv Mari Schei (vocals/piano) and Staffan Johansson (guitar). Opening of art exhibition "Sølvtråden" by Tove Sundt-Hansen.
- 6 p.m.: Opening of art exhibitions "Kjært Barn Har Mange Ansikter" by photographer Aino Grib and "Blå Minner/Blue Memories" by various artists using multiple mediums. Nybyen. On display 6-8 p.m.
- Thursday, 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Friday through Sunday.
- 8 p.m.: Lecture: Planning and design of buildings in Longyearbyen and Pyramiden by Wenche Frogm Sellæg, a doctor and longtime politician, and Pernille Skar Nordby, author of a thesis on Pyramiden's buildings. Longyearbyen Library.
- Historical picture display: Works by Erling J. Nødtvedt, a priest in Svalbard from 1951 to 1960, will be exhibited at Fruene during business hours.

#### Friday

- 5 p.m.: Debut of exhibit "Future's Past" by Sabine Popp, an interpretative video projection of Longyearbyen's history and culture displayed in the windows of the abandoned Taubanesentralen building. Visible from the exterior during KunstPause.
- 8 p.m.: Concert "Salmer i Polamaten" ("Hymns of the Polar Night") in differing styles by various local musicians. Svalbard Church.
- 10 p.m.: Concert by Liv Mari Schei and Staffan Johansson. Brasseri Nansen. Admission 150 kroner adults, 80 kroner seniors and students.

#### Saturday

- 11 a.m.: March from the Titankrana to outdoor events in the town center. Procession will last about an hour. Transportation to the start is available at the Radisson SAS Polar Hotel at 10:30 a.m.
- 11 a.m.: Opening of lithograph exhibit by Olaf Storø. Galleri Storø. On display until 3 p.m. Saturday and from 1-4 p.m. Sunday.
- Noon - 2 p.m.: Outdoor market in the town square featuring a bonfire, barbecue, competitions, entertainment and other activities.
- Noon: Presentation of "Fiskene Fra Fanø" exhibit by Danish painter Anne Dorte Kragh. Sølvsten Galleri & Ramme. On display starting Thursday.
- 2 p.m.: Children's performance "To Menn og en Tavle" by brothers Egil and Svein Nyhus, who will draw and narrate the show. Longyearbyen Library.
- 7:30 p.m.: Three-course meal, auction and concert by the Valkyrien Allstars. Brasseri Nansen. Tickets for event are sold out.

#### Sunday

- 11 a.m. - 5 p.m.: Open day at the Nybyen arts and crafts center. Featured will be black-and-white images of Svalbard heritage captured by the Longyearbyen Fotoklubb.
- 7:30 p.m.: Concert by Evenes songwriter Tonje Unstad. Galleri Svalbard. Admission 100 kroner adults, 50 kroner seniors and youths.

## What's up

### Nov. 12-15

KunstPause Svalbard 2009: Concerts, art exhibitions, theater performances and other activities throughout Longyearbyen. See full schedule at left.

### Nov. 15

Deadline to apply for Longyearbyen's dedicated kindergartens for admission beginning in January. Online forms available at [www.lokalstyre.no](http://www.lokalstyre.no).

6 p.m.: Movie: "Pony on the Cliff by the Sea," animated Japanese adventure/family film, ages 7 and up. Huset.

8 p.m.: Movie: "Svik," Norwegian thriller, ages 15 and up. Huset.

### Nov. 17

7 p.m.: Meeting of the local government board. Mediateket in Lompensenteret.

### Nov. 18

7 p.m.: Meeting by Bydrift with homeowners to discuss new requirement for food waste disposals in sinks. Mediateket in Lompensenteret.

### Nov. 20-22

Climate weekend "'Rop på Arktis" ("Cry from the Arctic"), featuring seminars and other activities in advance of the Copenhagen climate summit. Full schedule at [www.icepeople.net](http://www.icepeople.net) and the Nov. 17 issue of *Icepeople*.

### Nov. 22

7 p.m.: Concert "The Star From the East," featuring Russian folk songs and storytelling combined with the Christmas gospel and Arctic winter. Performers include the Longyearbyen Blandakor, Store Norske men's choir, soloist Liv Mari Schei, the Store Norske Mandskor, the Moscow Balalaika Quartet and others. Tickets at the door 200 kroner adults, 100 kroner youths. Huset.

### Nov. 23-27

5:33 a.m. and 8:27 a.m.: Svalbard Church Priest Leif Magne Helgesen offers morning devotions on NRK 1.

## What's online

[Icepeople.net](http://icepeople.net) provides daily updates of news about Svalbard and the world's polar regions, plus extras for articles from the print edition. Among the latest news:

- *Ice Age engulfed Europe in months*
- *'Fingerprinting' all of Svalbard's plants*
- *Walkout possible at Copenhagen summit*
- *Study: Polar dinosaurs had feathers*