

LAURA'S CHOICE

NEW FILM ON 'COMPLETED LIFE'

Laura Henkel (90 years) died at Pegasos clinic near Basel on 19 December 2019. She was accompanied by her daughter Cathy, and grand-daughter Sam.

While Australians travelling half way across the world to Switzerland is *hardly a new story*, it is not often that someone who is old, but not

sick, makes the big trip. But this describes South African-born Laura to a tee.

Like many Exit members, Laura saw the 2018 global media story about 104-year old West Australian ecologist, Professor David Goodall.

Laura was inspired by David's belief that his death was his own and that he was not prepared to have the Australian medical profession decide his future.

Like David, Laura had always strongly believed that she had the right to end her life when she wanted. She saved her pension for decades before to ensure the Swiss option would be open to her when she might need it.

While most Exit members will get their drugs (or other option),



Laura Henkel's final night: Philip Nitschke, Laura, Sam Lara & Cathy Henkel

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having little desire to leave home to die, there will always be a minority of people who prefer the outside assistance of a Swiss service such as Pegasos.

Laura's main fear was that she might have a stroke 'and that would be the end of it': the 'it' being her independence and dignity. Once she had her Swiss date, she became quite desperate to get on the plane and get the affair over and done with.

However, what makes Laura's story especially unique is that not only is her daughter Cathy an award-winning film-maker but that her grand-daughter, Sam Lara, is also following in the family footsteps.

For a woman whose early life was on the stage (Laura was a professional actress before marriage in South Africa), a new Australian documentary involving three generations of women seems a fitting way to end a hard life well lived. Indeed, Laura's very final words were 'I hope you make a good film'.

Philip was pleased to greet Laura, Cathy and Sam on their arrival at Zurich airport and to spend time with Laura during her final days in Basel. The two of them struck up a great personal rapport, discussing issues such as the over-population of the planet in the context of climate change and the utter ridiculousness of 'the State' (in almost all western countries) refusing to let old people 'exit' when they think their time is up.

Exit understands that 'Laura's Choice' will be completed in the second half of 2020. Some Exit members will recognise Cathy and Sam from a recent appearance on SBS TV's program *Insight*. The Henkel family also spoke to the media in the weeks prior to Laura leaving Australia for Switzerland.

Exit hopes that Laura's Choice will have a powerful impact upon the way that governments' perceive and understand the end of life choices debate/ dilemma. However, in countries such as Australia, New Zealand



Talking with Philip on her final night



Laura & Cathy Henkel making their way through Basel's Christmas Market to their hotel



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The final paperwork at Pegasos

CORONA VIRUS & EXIT WORKSHOPS

At the time of press, Exit is carefully watching the evolving global situation concerning Corona Virus. The contagious nature of the virus is especially relevant to Exit members. Did you know the average age of Exit members is 75 years? This places almost everyone (inc. Philip Nitschke) in the high risk category. This is why Exit takes the virus so seriously. It is no good learning how to die well, if you die badly in the meantime.

At the current time, it is expected that the Australian tour and the London and Dublin workshops will all be postponed. Delaying the Australian tour until November 2020 will allow the epidemiology of the Corona Virus to be better known. It will also allow the tour to take place in the early Australian summer, rather than during the southern hemisphere flu season. This should help minimise any risk to everyone participating.

Registrations for all workshops remain open. It is strongly recommended that members reserve their place as soon as possible as this will help Exit with planning venues.



'Corona Virus' cakes, Milan Italy

Before Corona, Exit expected to hold two workshop tours of Australia in 2020. By combining the tours into one, it is likely that bigger venues will be required. This is why we would like to know well ahead of time, who would like to come.

To reserve a place, visit: <http://bit.ly/exitworkshops>

Or go to the Exit website, click on Programs-Workshops-Register Online. Or by phone on: 1300 10 3948 (EXIT) (Aust) or 07883 509 765 (UK/ Ireland).

LAURA'S CHOICE CONT

and the UK, one should not hold one's breath. This is largely because public discussion is endlessly bogged down in the medical model of law reform which advocates assistance only for the terminally ill. There is no consideration given to the broader concept that dying at your time is a human right and should be made possible for ALL elderly people of sound mind.

The medical model contrasts starkly with the tenor of the debate in the Netherlands where 'completed life' is centre of the agenda. Older Dutchies are driving their quest for this fundamental right with great force. But then the Dutch, unlike the rest of us, have had the good fortune of living with euthanasia legislation for well over two decades. Of course public understanding would mature and grow in this time.

Read more about Laura on the Exit website at: <https://exitinternational.net/about-exit/exit-remembers/>



Laura was keen for her story to be told...

SARCO OPENS AT CUBE MUSEUM

With Venice in lock-down and this year's Venice Biennale postponed until later in the year (because of Corona Virus), we cannot help but think that 2019 was the ideal year for Sarco to have made its artistic debut.

With Venice Design (May - November 2019) behind us, Sarco has since moved to the Cube Design Museum in Kerkrade in the Netherlands.

Cube is Holland's first museum entirely dedicated to design. Cube says it displays 'meaningful design that has an impact on the world'. Nowhere is this more evident than in the new *(Re)Design Death* exhibition that will run until February 2021.

Sarco is one of 50 international invited exhibits. Housed over two floors in brutalist concrete rooms, *(Re)Design Death* is a masterpiece of both curation and display. The exhibition is designed around the four themes of: preparation, saying goodbye, mourning and living on and eternal life. Sarco can be found under the 'saying goodbye' banner.

Preparation

With the advancement of medical science, dying has increasingly become a medical process. There are people who assume that we will no longer have to die in the foreseeable future. For the time being, however, we die at the average age of 80.9 years for women and 76 years for men. Preparation is, therefore, not an unnecessary luxury.

Saying Goodbye

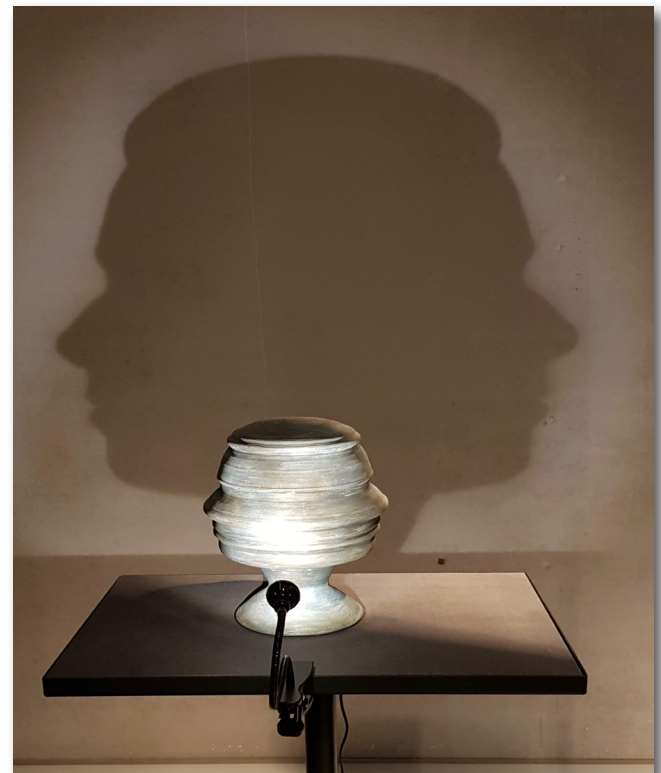
With the secularisation of western societies, there are fewer and fewer clearly defined rituals for how we say goodbye to death and how we say goodbye to loved ones who die. More and more often a personal interpretation of the funeral is chosen. For example, designers design alternatives for the straightforward coffin.

Mourning & Living On

In the past, a certain period of mourning was common, in which only sober, black clothing was worn. In the period of heavy mourning, stationery and handkerchiefs



Sarco on display in the foreground. In the background is the Euthanasia roller coaster by Julijonus Urbonas



The portrait urn - which allows a loved one's profile to be projected onto a wall while the urn holds the ashes



A paper mache coffin or embalm which is mixed with flower and plant seeds to allow a burial site to become a sign of renewal

NEWS FROM THE FAR NORTH

In late January I embarked on an ambitious roadtrip from Amsterdam to Helsinki. Along the way it was great to meet up with fellow right to die activists: namely Flemming Schollaart of Danish group 'En værdig død' (evd.dk) - a peaceful death (in English) and Berit Hasselmark of Rätten Till en Värdig Död (rtvd.nu) of Sweden.



At 'Café Exit' with Flemming Schollaart in Aarhus, Denmark

For most of us, the Scandinavian countries have a reputation of being liberal and progressive on most social issues. So it comes as a surprise that this is not also the case on the right to die issue.

While Denmark's duty of care laws appear to make any form of suicide assistance problematic, one can be more optimistic about

Sweden and Finland where there is no ban in law on assisting a suicide.

While Sweden might lack a law on assisted suicide, the recent November 2019 case where a husband assisted his terminally ill wife to die (and was subsequently convicted of manslaughter) makes sobering reading.

(see: <http://bit.ly/beritpodcast>)

Without a doubt, it is Finland that emerges as the country with the best prospects of lawful suicide assistance. In this regard, Finland has laws very similar to those of Switzerland. This is why Exit is now seriously exploring the possible use of Sarco, not only in Switzerland but also in Finland.

POLICE VISITS

In breaking news (at the time of press), Exit has learned that at least one member in the UK has received a visit from the local constabulary after purchasing Sodium Nitrite on eBay. When the uniformed officers appeared at her door asking the reason for her purchase, she replied (as you do) that she wanted to cure her own bacon. While the officers left satisfied with this explanation, the visit begs the questions about the surveillance that is being used to monitor this purchase. Indeed, sodium nitrite was likely the method used by the young woman Callie Lewis. Callie's suicide was recently featured on the BBC's Panorama program.

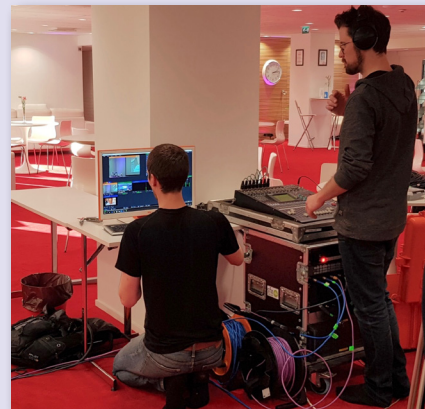
(see: <http://bit.ly/calliepanorama>)

MEXICO NEMBUTAL NEWS

Exit has recently become aware of a new source of sodium pentobarbital in Mexico. We are currently gathering evidence before publishing this news in a forthcoming update to the Peaceful Pill eHandbook. The March update contains a new section on the 3D-printed 'Korean Collar' and news from Lima. It is expected the April update will focus on Mexico.

BEHIND THE SCENES IN HELSINKI

It is 12 months since Exit attempted our first large-scale livestream in January last year, from the OBA Library in Amsterdam. Since that time, we have been able to iron out all manner of technical problems to allow Exit members and *Peaceful Pill eHandbook* subscribers from around the world, to all join the Livestream and participate in the real time Livestream chat.



With Corona Virus now upon us, I am more convinced than ever that livestreaming is the way of the future. I would especially like to thank Olof Films at www.Olof.fi for their generous technical

support on the Helsinki event. I hope Exit will be able to hold workshops via Livestream for our members in the middle of the year should the chaos of Corona Virus persist.

Philip Nitschke

(RE) DESIGN DEATH EXHIBITION

were bordered in black. Nowadays, many surviving relatives come up with their own mourning rituals to accommodate their sorrow and lack. In the Netherlands, traditional black no longer dominates. In many non-Western cultures, white is precisely the colour that symbolizes death.

Eternal Life

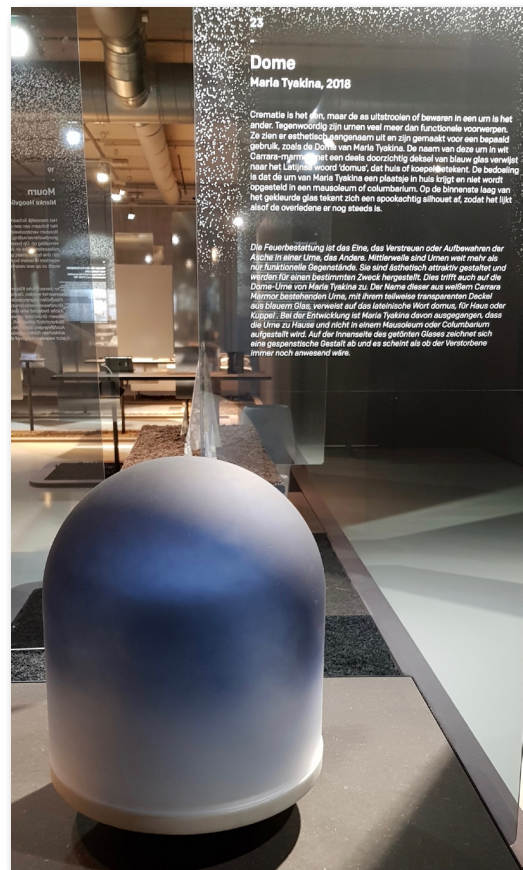
The final theme of the exhibition exposes the most extreme redesign of death: the elimination of death. Cube has asked ten young designers to think about questions concerning eternal life. Do you want to live forever? And what do you have for that? What is life anyway, what is consciousness? In a competition, the designers set to work on making a 'conversation piece' on this theme.



No (Re)Design Death exhibition would be complete without an exploration of cryonics



*Philip Nitschke at (Re)Design Death
1 March 2020*



*The evolution of the urn:
a beautiful translucent dome of glass & marble*



Biodegradable 'coffins' in various sizes for fetuses

NEW SCAMMER ALERT # TWITTER

February saw Exit launch a new Twitter handle with the aim of alerting the unsuspecting of the ongoing plethora of Nembutal scammers.

Because Twitter is a real time medium, it seemed common sense to the use the social media platform to highlight scams as soon as they come to light.

It is especially important for Exit to keep our eye of scammers as the sophistication of their scams increases. Indeed, one recent scam takes media footage of an Exit workshop and then edits the video to direct the unsuspecting to the scam website.

We know the Scammers' modus operandi is effective because every day Exit receives emails from people who have lost money (or who are about to lose money) to the



scammers. As we have said in the past and will say again, fore-warned is fore-armed.

You can follow Exit's Scams Tweets at [@NembutalScams](http://www.Twitter.com) or on the Exit homepage.

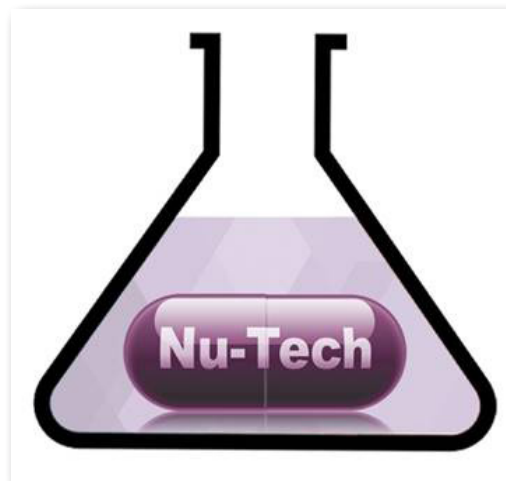
NUTECH 2020

NuTech will be held via Livestream on Sunday 7 June 2020. The venue was destined to be Dublin with in-room attendance also welcomed, but with the Corona Virus 'watch & wait', Exit is unsure at this point if attendance will be possible, or desirable.

What is certain is that NuTech will proceed via Livestream, as has been the case in both 2017 (Toronto, Canada) and 2018 (Cape Town, South Africa).

The Preliminary Agenda for NuTech 2020 includes:

- The inorganic salt DIY revolution
- Artificial Intelligence – its role in determining mental capacity
- Device implantation – is this the answer to the dementia dilemma?
- Internet encryption, the dark web and cryptocurrency: their role in DIY end of life methods



Keynote speakers are currently being confirmed and will be announced shortly. **NOTE** - Expressions of interest from inventors and researchers are also now open.

If you have an idea that progresses DIY Dying and would like to share this with NuTech proponents and members, you are invited to make contact at nutech@protonmail.com

Attendance is free for Exit Members. Registrations will open in early May 2020.

NEW IRISH PLAY

Exit Director, Tom Curran, and his late partner, Marie Fleming, are now the subject of a new stage play in Ireland. The play, 'Letting Go', is written by Irish playwright Cathy Anne Murphy and documents Marie and Tom's fight to have assisted suicide recognised as a human right within the framework of Ireland's Constitution.

As Exit members may recall, Marie (who had progressive MS) died in 2013. Marie's book *An Act of Love* is published by Hachette and is available on Amazon globally. A brilliant book and highly recommended. 'Letting Go' is due to go on tour in Ireland, with dates in Wicklow, Wexford, Dublin and Galway.



HELSINKI LIVESTREAM



On 6 February 2020, Exit held its first Livestream for the year from Helsinki in Finland. Philip was invited to Helsinki to participate in a new 6-part Finnish documentary series and feature documentary. The series will go to air on Scandinavian TV in the Autumn. The Livestream focused on the DeBreather, discussing all aspects of its use, the science behind the operation, as well as the type of person for whom the DeBreather might be most suitable.

The recording of the Livestream can be found on the final page of the *Peaceful Pill eHandbook*. Exit Members who do not have the *eHandbook* should email Exit at the address below for their own secure, log-in details.

PPEH UPDATES

The *Peaceful Pill eHandbook* is the only end of life choices guidebook to be continually updated. The first update for 2020 focused on the R2D DeBreather device. The DeBreather was exhibited at NuTech 2017 in Toronto. Since that time the inventor has had the device professionally manufactured and is now selling them globally. Full details (along with Philip Nitschke's analysis) of the DeBreather were featured in the January 2020 update to the *Peaceful Pill eHandbook*.

The online *Peaceful Pill eHandbook* is available at: www.peacefulpill.com. A 2-year subscription still costs US\$85. A PPeH subscription also provides access, on approval, to the Exit forums & all Livestreams.



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