

Live the music, that plays within you!

Exposé for the exposition on July 11 2016 at the  
Deutschen Krebsforschungszentrum:  
„Art against cancer “  
from Nicola Werner



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Original in German,  
translation by Mila Deitering



# Live the music, that plays within you!

Nicola Werner was born in 1961 in Hamburg.

She grew up in Schleswig-Holstein and lived in Kiel, Bonn, Heidelberg, Philadelphia, and Paris.

Nicola was married, mother of two grown up daughters and grandmother of a small grandchild.

As a school girl, she began painting with a passion. Her largest body of work began after her move to Paris in 2003.

Nicola wants to contribute with her exhibition to the education about the Human Papilloma Virus (HPV). She spent every day of the last months of her life working on this exhibit.

Tonje Thoresen, a photographer, documented Nicola's advanced disease.

Stephan Neuhalfen filmed a lengthy interview with Nicola on February 8th, 2016. All texts of the exhibition are taken from this interview.

She passed away on February 23rd, 2016 in Paris as consequence of the by HPV caused cancer

Nicola's last wish was to show her call to live life to be shown as a video during the funeral ceremony. The video is on her website.

**“Live the music, that plays within you!”**

# The Mission

I want to raise awareness of this disease amongst teenagers.

They need to know that if they have themselves vaccinated the Human Papilloma Virus (HPV) early enough, they can avoid this disease and don't need to fear it.

Young girls and their mothers need to be educated early on about the possibilities of prevention.

It is also just as important that doctors are fully aware of preventative measures and the dangers of the disease and that they convey these clearly.

My art shall support as a beautiful conveyor in this education.

The photos show a woman who has a very advanced cancer caused by the HPV virus.



Park Versailles 17. Dezember 2015  
© Moritz Werner

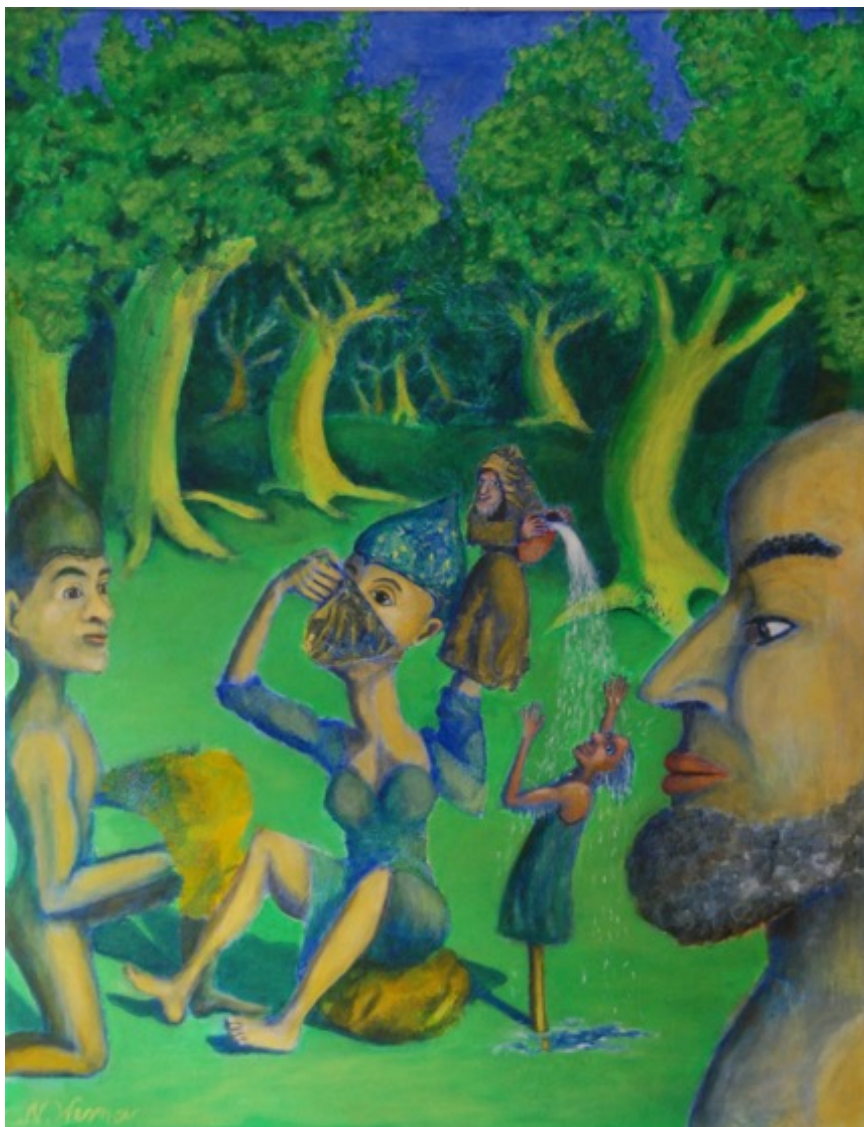
# The Clearing

2008

This painting was created after my uterus operation at the beginning of my disease.

The woman is holding a doll in her hand that is pouring the water of life onto a small puppet bringing it to life. The two men play their own roles.

This is what I perceive in the picture, but one can also see other things.



Acryl 50 x 65 cm

# The project

Unfortunately I came out as an artist rather late. Even three months ago this was not possible for me.

Finally, I was ready to exhibit my art and at the same time, I felt my energy subside more and more.

The photographer Tonje had taken pictures of me in December. Together we had the idea to visualize my disease for the exhibit.

With Stephan, who is a videographer, I documented my thoughts so that they wouldn't be lost.

With this exhibit, I would like to do my part in helping to educate about the Papillomavirus.

I would love to sell prints, postcards, etc. to donate the proceeds to support education efforts for HPV.

I put my body of work at the disposal of this task.



Park Versailles 17. Dezember 2015  
© Moritz Werner



# The mask salesman

2011

Sometimes my paintings only become clear to me bit by bit.

The young woman is lying naked in front of the mask salesman who dominates the scene. Her own mask is shattered.

Today she can rise up out of the picture, cover her nakedness with a cloth and leave the scene. A few weeks ago the woman did not have this in her power.

But I have overcome this hindrance and therefore this painting is currently very important for me.



# My paintings

In the last days, it has become evident that my paintings are perfect for this exhibit. They are about desires, fear and living deliberately.

They were not painted as decoration, but to be shown and to evoke something within the viewer.

I found many things within these paintings and my greatest wish is that everyone discovers something for themselves.



Park Versailles 17. Dezember 2015  
© Moritz Werner

# Carousel

2014

I sat for a long time working on this painting, it caused much inner turmoil.

The carousel is the symbol of marking time

It is extremely comfortable. The couple sits on the carousel horse, rides around in a circle and holds onto the dearest present. But one doesn't actually move.

Marking time doesn't pertain to me here, but it is something that bothers me a lot.

There are many phases in life where it is necessary to mark time because a certain process has to be completed first. And then things can progress!

I also have my late realization: now you can still prepare an exhibit, because before a particular thought would have hindered me from doing so.



# The hindrance

I have a fear that I dragged through my life that has nothing to do with death. An individual never commented in a positive way, rather disparagingly about my paintings.

It was often said to me, that my paintings weren't really anything special or they didn't show interest. So I also said to myself: "They aren't anything special"

It causes quite an imprint, if one encounters this behavior all throughout childhood, youth and the entire lifetime.

This was the case for me.

I had this hindrance within me that the paintings were not good enough to show, there are really not anything special and I stood in my own way.

Now I recognize: "That's rubbish. My picture are something special and I can exhibit them!"



Foret Marly le roi 19. Oktober 2015  
© Moritz Werner



# Once upon a time...

2012

For over three months this painting with a woman and the children stood in my studio and eventually after much back and forth I realized: this will be a group.

The children are on their own island, they are being read to and fully absorbed and part of the story still holding their toys in their hands.

I remember such moments from my own childhood and also with my own children. I am convinced that these moments still exist, despite all of the technical gadgets that are around today.

This is what this painting wanted to convey and I wanted to show it even though I didn't know it before. Perhaps it was a collaboration between the canvass and the artist.



# My art

I would like to emphasize what should be seen, what should be recognized. I give the painting autonomy, the painting has its own autonomy.

But I have the potency if things don't fit at all to cover things with white paint and to say: I don't want you on here.

I give the basic tension with form and color and give it space so that it can be seen.

I have never discarded a painting that I have begun, sometimes it has taken a bit longer, but nevertheless, something has always evolved.



# Judith

2008

The woman not only walks through the desert, she is being followed and is being held up. This is what I see and I want have drawn out.

It is up to the observer to behold and to discover.

I force myself to use weapons in my paintings and have many knives in them to symbolize the dangers of life.



Acryl 60 x 80cm



# Couple with apples

2007

This is not just a couple, they are also carrying their apples with them and she has a mask in her braid or on the side.

He is the player throwing the ball up in the air and she is holding him on the ground.



Acryl 60 x 70cm



## From the abstract to the concrete

I apply the color and let a structure develop. Afterwards, I turn the painting back and forth and wait to see what the painting has to say to me.

Sometimes I have to sit in front of the painting for three days and turn it back and forth. During this time I only paint with my eyes.

And again and again it tells me something new as I turn it over and over and I work this out. Or sometimes I need to bring in color and change things.

Sometimes it doesn't need long at all and I see immediately what it is. Little by little I work it out and at some point I then say: Done, enough, it's finished.

Oftentimes the structure is no longer apparent and I often like to leave something at edge of the painting so that it doesn't impact the entire painting.



Omaha Beach 8. November 2015  
© Moritz Werner

# Distracted

2014



Acryl 90 x 140cm

# The Opening

2011



Acryl 65 x 100cm



# Parents

2013



Acryl 50 x 50cm

# Trust

2008



Acryl 60 x 80cm

Öffentlicher  
Vortrag

**dkfz.**

DEUTSCHES  
KREBSFORSCHUNGSZENTRUM  
IN DER HELMHOLTZ-GEMEINSCHAFT

50 Jahre – Forschen für  
ein Leben ohne Krebs

## Aktuelles zur Krebsprävention



### **HARALD ZUR HAUSEN, Nobelpreisträger 2008** **Infektiöse Faktoren bei Darm- und Brustkrebs**

**Montag, 11. Juli 2016, 17.00 Uhr**  
DKFZ, Kommunikationszentrum, Hörsaal



*Der Krebsforscher Harald zur Hausen erhielt 2008 den Nobelpreis für Physiologie oder Medizin für den Nachweis, dass Humane Papillomviren Gebärmutterhalskrebs auslösen, was schließlich zur Entwicklung eines vorbeugenden Impfstoffs führte. Von 1983 bis 2003 war der Virologe Vorsitzender und Wissenschaftlicher Stiftungsvorstand des Deutschen Krebsforschungszentrums.*

keine Teilnahmegebühr; Kontakt: [events-vorstand@dkfz.de](mailto:events-vorstand@dkfz.de)

Im Foyer: Ausstellung der Pariser Künstlerin Nicola Werner und Stand des Krebsinformationsdienstes (KID)

Deutsches Krebsforschungszentrum (DKFZ), Im Neuenheimer Feld 280, 69120 Heidelberg, [www.dkfz.de](http://www.dkfz.de)

# With my granddaughter





# Joy and fearful notions

2011

There is always danger. An accident or something else can happen, but that doesn't mean that one has to fear life.

The children and the old man are dancing out of the joy of life.

The old one, because he has seen everything and the children because they live in their child's world. The middle age recognizes the skeleton of fear and sorrows and sees danger everywhere.

It would be good to live without fear, which I also cannot say for myself, but we can live life courageously!

These paintings show for me that it is always about life, death, and living deliberately.





# My disease

I have always lived a healthy life, paid attention to many things and did a lot of sports. I tried to find the right balance and naturally tried to avoid becoming ill.

And voila, I get cancer caused by the Papillomavirus.

I was diagnosed in 2008, was treated for many years with laser therapy and numerous smaller operations until 2013.

In 2015 the cancer was there in full force and had spread to my liver.

After this diagnosis, I started a chemotherapy in a 3-week interval, after 4 cycles it was stopped as it only had a partial effect.

Another form of chemotherapy was tried using pills that also only showed partial results.

At the end of October, I participated in a phase 1 study using immune therapy. Unfortunately, in mid-January it proved to be ineffective.

Another chemotherapy was offered and I declined further treatment.



# The afternoon

2006

In this blue painting, one can see the unawareness of people. It appears as if the people have no connection and have nothing to say to one another.

I portrayed it somewhat offensively, the somewhat wasted old man drinking champagne, the young woman with the red shoes, and the dancing couple, where it seems that she is elsewhere.

On the left side, there is a tambourine player or a spotlight, the only smiling character and he symbolizes death, beating the rhythm.

It came to me over time that it was in fact death that I was portraying in various paintings always in a corner of my paintings in some shape or form.



# Death

Many years ago, I lost my younger brother and a close friend. It was at this time that I began to deal with death.

This helps me now and I enjoy the days I have left.  
I can live well, as long as the pain is controlled and I don't have any other problems.

Naturally, I didn't know this when I painted these pictures, but even back then I was aware of the fact that death and dying is a part of life.

Death is not a grim reaper, one has to befriend death.



Port-en-Bessin 30. Dezember 2015  
© Moritz Werner

# Bang!

2011

I once painted a last minute picture, that Moritz really loves,  
But for me, it is total chaos. I can't identify with this painting.

The explosion and you see the resulting energy.

This is not what I want to convey with my paintings.

I want to work through and express feelings and emotions that I or others are dealing with.





# Art & Cancer

After the diagnosis, the chemotherapy and the intensive treatments I could no longer paint. It is difficult to explain, but I felt too lazy to sit down and let something evolve.

In the fall I tried painting again and realized that I had not lost the touch and had not become rusty.

The symbols came by themselves and I could paint our present for a wedding couple.



# The wedding couple

October 2015



Acryl 40 x 60cm

# Christmas

December 2015

Since 2010 Nicola Werner painted a Christmas card every year. It was distributed to approximately 500 friends and business partners.

She very much enjoyed to prepare herself in such a way for Christmas and to find every year a new subject

„I work a lot with the basics, so step by step all colors are there. The Christmas paintings contain all red and blue. And then I emphasize green in order to create the Christmas atmosphere .“

In 2016 we will use a Christmas card out of Nicolas work. From 2017 onwards we plan to have a young artist designing the card.



# The oyster and the crab

December 2015 – January 2016

A story about our common love of nature, the power of imagination and being a child.

By Annette Helmstädter and Nicola Werner, created from the end of December 2015 to the end of January 2016

It is planned to print the story as a book







# Birdman

24. December 2015

I was really under time pressure here, as the painting was supposed to be finished on Christmas Eve and I only began at 9 am that morning.

The painting is very light, everything is up in the air, even the flower pot.

It is not important that a horse looks like a horse. These flowers probably don't exist, but they are recognizable as flowers. Just as the birdman also doesn't exist.

In the early afternoon, I said: finished, hands off, let the paint dry, pack it up ... and I was very satisfied.



# Farewell

I am not I afraid. I can imagine that in my final moments I could be fearful or scared.

In earlier times I was more afraid of death. Today I fear for my family and hope that they will get along well without me.

Naturally, I would love to continue living with them. And then I think about all the great moments I have experienced and I am content.

I don't have the feeling that I am missing out on something if I have to lie on the red couch.

I get joy from listening to the experiences and plans that my visitors share with me. Very often I say to myself, you have experienced these things and won't be doing that anymore.

These thoughts are very prevalent, in my talks with Moritz as well, but I can only repeat I lived my life fully.



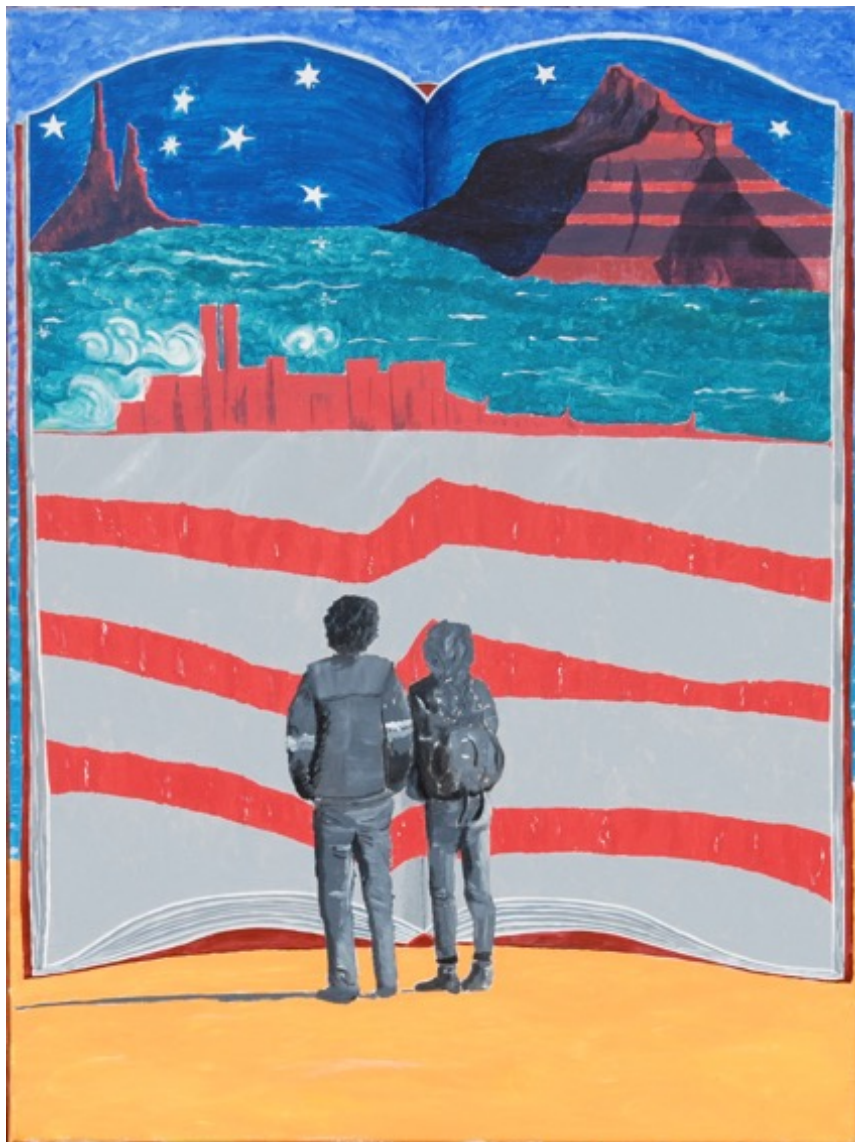
# We (Amerika)

2006

Moritz always wanted an American flag painted by me.

With Moritz, I look at the book of our shared life at the Fördestrand in Kiel in 1987.

When I painted this picture, the page symbolizing our time in the U.S. was already full and we were living in a suburb of Paris.



Acryl 60 x 80cm

# Quality of life

I much prefer to experience my final days in full awareness than to endure another chemotherapy.

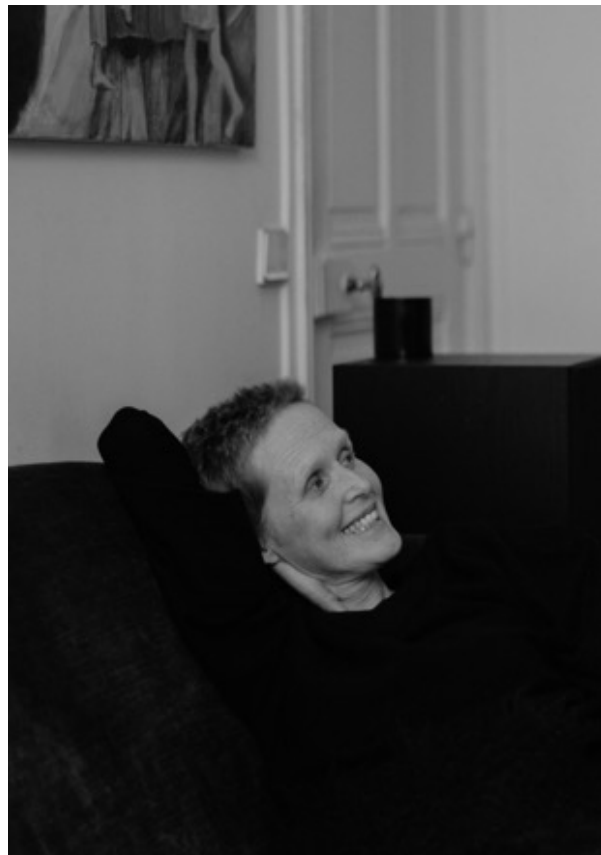
Naturally, I asked for good palliative care at home.

I enjoy every second with my daughters, my grandchild, my husband and my friends. I want to see them enjoying life.

Naturally, I also don't know when the time will come, but I plan my days in my own fashion and have the great luck to have my family in the background.

I wasn't incredibly sad when I found out that I had advanced cancer. I thought: ok, I'll deal with it, let's see what can be done.

It is this disease that has latched on to me, but death comes in many shapes and sizes.





# Uncompleted

8. February 2016

Blue is wonderful to work with. This time, it will become a very blue painting. Some paintings I left blue because the painting itself asked for it.

Here it could be a horse's head looking at me or if I turn it perhaps a large child's head reaching up to offer me something.

Or such small things can appear, like a small person sitting on a swing waving.

I absorb this, look at it for a moment and then look onward.

It could be a sailboat that conveys something threatening, but that could change.

If one glances only briefly, two children can be seen, a younger and an older one running after each other.



# Press notice DKFZ for 11.7.2016

## Art against cancer

Nr. 25a3 | 08.07.2016 | von Sel

Nicola Werner, an artist who died in the Spring of this year from cancer-related illness had a mission during the last years of her life – to inform the public that it is possible to protect yourself from this illness, which is caused by the human papillomavirus (HPV). A vaccine against this virus is available and can prevent at least 70% of all infections.

For Nicola Werner, this preventive vaccine against the cancer-causing papillomavirus came too late. In 2008, at the age of 47, she was diagnosed with a HPV-related malignant tumor. Despite all medical efforts, she died from her illness. Her husband kept his promise to use her paintings to make people aware of the option of preventive treatment against HPV-related disease. The DKFZ is now showing an exhibition of paintings by Nicola Werner alongside a photo documentation of her medical history.

On Monday July 11, Nicola Werner's paintings will be on show at the German Cancer Research Center (DKFZ). Her figurative paintings in vibrant colors tell mysterious stories of people whose relationships to each other appear enigmatic and mystical. Alongside her art, a photo documentary will be shown telling the story of her life and illness. The exhibition will subsequently move to Paris, where it will go on show at the Gustave Roussy Institute.

At 5.00 pm, Nobel prize winner for medicine 2008 Harald zur Hausen, who discovered the connection between human papillomavirus infections and cervical cancer, will give a lecture on potential additional cancer-causing viruses found in milk and bovine meat. At around 6 pm there will be a reception at the DKFZ Communication Center.

All visitors are welcome to come and enjoy some drinks and refreshments.

“Art against Cancer – An exhibition of paintings and photographs of Nicola Werner”  
Monday, July 11 2016. 4 pm until 8 pm

Deutsches Krebsforschungszentrum, Kommunikationszentrum  
Im Neuenheimer Feld 280  
69120 Heidelberg  
der Eintritt ist frei

# Introduction to the exposition at DKFZ 11. Juli 2016 from Moritz Werner

Dear Prof. zur Hausen,  
dear Prof. Boutros,  
dear ladies and gentlemen,

My daughters and I are very grateful for having today the opportunity to show the exposition of my wife Nicola who passed away in February at the DKFZ.

Dear Ms. Dr. Seltmann we thank you in particular for the excellent cooperation and the initiative for today's exposition.

Its exactly 14 months that Nicola was diagnosed at the NCT with a very serious gynecologic cancer.

She felt very well taken care of at the NCT and specially from Prof. Dr. Jäger. Her treatment was continued from fall with the same professionalism and personal touch in Paris at the Institute Gustave Roussy. Both hospitals worked very close together. The responsible doctor in Paris Ms. Judith Michels was very close to Nicola and in tight contact with the NCT.

Nicola was as of the day of the diagnosis thinking of how she could contribute that other women won't have the same fate in the future.

In December a little more than two months prior to her death she knew, that she wanted to use her art work to support the education on the HPV caused cancers.

She challenged herself daily, what her message is going to be, how this is going to be communicated and which paintings should be selected.

It was her objective via the message of her paintings, with photos of her last months and with her texts to create awareness on her disease. And to create with this approach the awareness against this deadly threat, to vaccinate and to take precaution.

She won with Tonje Thoresen a Parisian Photographer as partner for the project. Tonje took as of December Photos of Nicola. She wanted to document the disease and to capture the dignity and strength Nicola had in bearing her faith.

Two weeks prior to her death, she collected her remaining energy to record with our long standing friend Stephan Neuhalfen, who is a documentary cameraman, a video interview. In this interview, that took an entire day to be recorded, Nicola explained the paintings for the exposition and shared her views on the disease and on her life and on her art. During the interview her last unfinished painting was created. This blue painting, that is the last in the exposition. The interview is the source for the texts, that are in the exposition next to the paintings and photos.

The interview finishes with the call: „Live the music, that plays within you!“ This call for life knowing about her nearing death, was her central message.

On Christmas Eve, Nicola painted the Painting Birdman. It is of particular ease and it is the last one she finished and it was her Christmas present for the entire family. We selected it for the postcard that contains our contact data and the link to Nicolas webpage. The webpage opens with the video.

Dear Tonje, dear Stephan, with your support and your close friendship to Nicola the project was possible. I thank you very much.

Again I'm thanking wholeheartedly, that Nicolas documentation will be shown today in this house, that she had such a close relationship with and to this particular event the presentation of the Nobel price winner Mr. Prof. zur Hausen for the first time to the public.



# “Live the Music that plays within you!”

Original on [www.lebediemusik.paris](http://www.lebediemusik.paris)

What is important in my paintings for me, of course before I was sick is, that these paintings give me the message while I am working, naturally it is a deep wish inside of me, which manifests itself even more with this illness, that I see:

hey people! Live! Live your life!

Things are happening in the world! But that is the world in which we live.

Live “to the fullest”!

How is one meant to say?

“Live the music that plays within you!” That is also something that comes out of my paintings.

And this then, now that I know that it will not be for much longer. Maybe that is what gives me a driving force to say:

Yes, I want to show the paintings! Even if it does not come back to me. And someone says, “ah great artist!” That’s not the point. The point is to bring across this message:

live life independent of the dangers that might be there. Independent of the dangers of this illness that is there.

Make something of it!

And enjoy it! Don’t let life be tainted or something like that with strange ideas you might have. Instead enjoy it!

If you eat meat, if you eat vegetarian. It doesn’t matter! You eat what you want to eat! That are the little things. And then I want to see what is doable, and what is doable is what should be lived.

That was the liberating feeling that I had afterwards. It was... I decided it! And I feel good with it. My decision to say: no more, no more hospital, no more poison entering my body That can only help within limits.

Instead, what is there, what remains to live it as my forces permit me to do now. And with someone living, healthy, he has enormously other powers. And we let restrict ourselves, I have too, by many and sometimes only by our own thoughts that captivate us.

We are scared not to please not to fit in somewhere

When they told me: we propose you a chemo, the first that I received I had no fear at all. I said: I will do that! There was so much hope, so many possibilities. Exactly as with the continuation, because I knew: the further I will come You have cleared the path to be eventually accepted into the Immunotherapy. Because you must go through a certain process these days. It’s not that far yet. It is not an authorized medication, yet every health insurance would say: ‘but you have not received chemo yet. And that’s where I wanted to be to be able to do the immunotherapy. And I did that too, and I was not scared. I decided willingly that I go there, I will do that.

I got along well with the doctors. They did everything that they could do. But now, when it is clear, that I am not curable I don’t have to... I saw other people who took this path, those who receive chemo, chemo for years. And I saw what they looked like and I only thought that is not a life worth living, I don’t want that. I already thought that in Heidelberg. but that should be left to their own choice, this decision.

And my decision is: No, there I want to be self-determined. That is mine, that is what is still there. That I want as much as possible, even if I don’t paint a picture per day, even if my forces are sometimes very reduced But I savor it!

And I savor every day! I could of course do so if I were receiving chemo

When I am with my daughters, when we have intimate conversations because now I am here, now I can answer even if I do not have every answer, but I can still talk to them. And yes, that makes it worth it for me.

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