

As Seneca once said: »Why do we complain of Nature? She has shown herself kindly; life, if you know how to use it, is long.« But what if we could actually prolong our lives?

Stem cell research is inextricably linked to longevity and researchers all over the world use these cells to find treatments for some of today's most intractable diseases. These include neurodegenerative diseases such as Parkinson's, metabolic disorders like diabetes, as well as acute conditions such as heart attacks and strokes. But in our age-old pursuit of longevity, changing concepts revolving around mortality and death, also demand attention. For example, at the cellular level, death is necessary for regeneration from stem cells, serving as a natural reminder of the importance of mortality. And, over the longer-term, also at the level of organisms, death is a prerequisite for new life.

The event will begin with three lectures given by international experts on biomedical research, the philosophy of longevity and medical ethics. These will be followed by an interdisciplinary discussion about the possibilities and implicit ideologies of research into ageing, death and longevity and their implications for today's society.

**Please register by 15 July 2015**

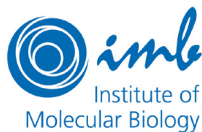
via Institute of Molecular Biology (IMB):  
events@imb.de

or Academy of Sciences and Literature:  
veranstaltungen@adwmainz.de

This event is a collaboration between the following institutions and research networks:



Akademie  
der Wissenschaften  
und der Literatur  
Mainz



e/ac



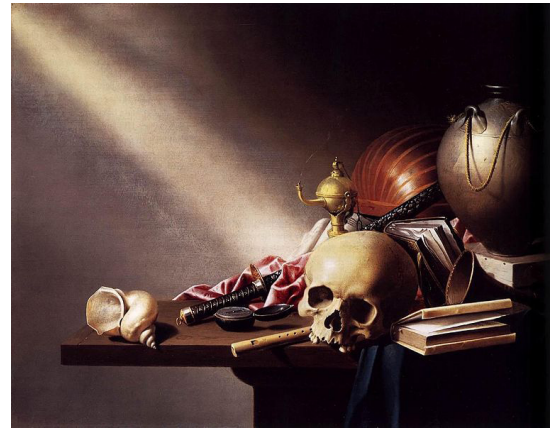
SCIENCES  
LIFE  
WRITING

06/16 1.0 BD

INVITATION TO AN

INTERDISCIPLINARY DISCUSSION

ON AGEING AND LONGEVITY



Harmen Steenwijck, Vanitas stilleven, 1640

# Should we live forever?

## Biological and Ethical Perspectives

Wednesday, 20 July 2016  
17:00 to 19:15 hrs

Institute of Molecular Biology (IMB)  
Ackermannweg 4  
55128 Mainz

www.imb.de www.adwmainz.de



## Speakers

**Prof. Peter H. Kramer** studied medicine in Freiburg, St. Louis (USA) and Lausanne (Switzerland). He finished his PhD in Freiburg and habilitated in 1978 at the University of Heidelberg where he was later appointed as a professor in 1985. An international expert on apoptosis and its role in diseases, he has been head of the Division of Immunogenetics at the German Cancer Research Center (DKFZ) since 1989. In 2010, he was appointed as one of the directors of the National Center for Tumor Diseases (NCT; Heidelberg).



**Prof. Christine Overall** is Emeritus Professor of Philosophy and holds a University Research Chair at Queen's University, Kingston, Canada. An elected Fellow of the Royal Society of Canada, she is the editor of four books and the author of six, including the award-winning *Aging, Death, and Human Longevity* (2003) and *Why Have Children? The Ethical Debate* (2012). Her next book is an edited anthology entitled *Pets and People: The Ethics of Our Relationships with Companion Animals* (Oxford forthcoming 2016).



**Prof. Christopher Thomas Scott** is Director of the Stanford University Program on Stem Cells in Society, senior research scholar at the Stanford Center for Biomedical Ethics, and a member of the Stanford Institute for Stem Cell Biology and Regenerative Medicine. He is a contributing editor of *Nature Biotechnology* and also serves on the editorial boards of several journals. Scott has been part of the ›Enhancing-Life-Project‹ (Chicago) since 2015.



## Organisers

**Prof. Mita Banerjee**, Professor at the Transnational American Studies Institute and Co-Speaker of the Research Training Group ›Life Sciences – Life Writing‹ (DFG)

**Prof. Christof Niehrs**, Founding and Scientific Director of the Institute of Molecular Biology (IMB) and member of the Akademie der Wissenschaften und der Literatur (ADW)

**Prof. Ruben Zimmermann**, Professor at the Faculty of Protestant Theology and member of the Steering Committee of the Research Center ›Ethics in Antiquity and Christianity‹ (e/ac)

## Programme

### 17:00 h Welcome

Christof Niehrs

### Introduction

›Yearning for Longevity and the Reality of Death‹

Ruben Zimmermann

### Lectures

›Decisions on Life and Death‹

Peter H. Kramer

›Human Finitude‹

Christine Overall

›The American Immortal: Silicon Valley Dreams to Medical Realities‹

Christopher Thomas Scott

### Moderated Discussion

Chair: Mita Banerjee

### 19:15 h End