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Gerben van Straaten, internationally acclaimed expert on sustainable urban development, dead at 59

Gerben van Straaten, international expert on sustainable urban development, visionary and founder of World of Walas, died suddenly of natural causes on Wednesday, April 28. He left our world too soon, and will be dearly missed by family, friends and colleagues around the world.

Born in the heart of Tukkerland, The Netherlands, Gerben was raised in a large and loving family, steeped deeply in family tradition and values, respect and care for the land and each other. He displayed an early academic talent that led to an Erasmus education specializing in Law and Philosophy, with a promising academic career. His desire to implement practical change pulled him towards cities and business though, and he soon established himself managing large and complex development projects in North America and The Netherlands. As CEO and founder of World of Walas, he was dedicated to revitalizing communities, reviving them to become thriving places for people to live, work, and play. He held a deeply philosophical approach combining academia, philosophy and practice. Above all, he was driven by a unshakable belief in the goodness and potential of humanity, and our ultimate ability to address the world's most pressing challenges.

Gerben's work in sustainable urban development made him a much sought-after expert, speaking at international conferences and engaging regularly with governments, organizations and expert networks for the shared common goal of creating a more just, peaceful and sustainable world. He supported numerous initiatives through board work, sponsorship, and patronages, and also quietly supported initiatives in education, environmental and animal protection and youth. Despite his numerous commitments and extraordinary work, he always found time to support friends, family and colleagues, and was truly happy to cheer them on. His faith in humanity was unshakable, and his capacity for compassion a true inspiration to all who knew and loved him. His loyal team at World of Walas is saddened by the death of their colleague and friend Gerben van Straaten, but will continue business activities, working in his spirit.

Note:

If you have any questions about this press release, please send them by email. World of Walas will then reply to you in writing.