

Press Release

23 April 2024

Bridget Riley **Circles and Discs (1961–2023)**

Exhibition in Rheinsberg, 27 April – 14 July 2024

Exhibition opening on 27 April 2024, 11 am

Press and
Public Relations

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Every year, the Akademie der Künste presents the work of one of the members of the Visual Arts Section, with a show at the Kurt Tucholsky Literature Museum in Rheinsberg Palace. This year, Bridget Riley, who left her mark on art history as one of the leading lights of the op art movement, is exhibiting *Circles and Discs (1961–2023)*. Focusing on a single motif, the circle in various forms, the exhibition provides an insight into the breadth of the artist's process of development, which has now spanned more than sixty years. The show centres on her *Working Drawings*, produced as preliminary studies for her paintings, and includes some large-format wall works, such as *Composition with Circles 5*, which was on display in 2005 in the Akademie building on Pariser Platz. In addition to the studies and paintings, there will be screenings of films that have not been shown before in Germany.

“The most restrictive form of all is a circle” (Bridget Riley). The geometric forms in her work are not abstract figures, nor do they feature in the paintings as concrete elements that can be moved around. They are motifs whose dynamic potential the artist systematically explores and develops using appropriate designs to give form and expression to her special theme, the natural agility of the act of seeing. In her early works, movement is engendered by her contrasting of black and white: compression and expansion, circles mutating into ovals, graduated shades of grey, axial rotation. Prior to 1967, Riley's work consistently made parallel use of other geometric motifs. For over three decades thereafter, she preferred striped and curved forms, applying pure tonal values, since these seem best suited to the elaboration of chromatic interaction. Since 2017, uniform areas of discs have once again formed the basis for rhythmic compositions in muted shades of green, violet and orange: her paintings and wall works comprise perceptual spaces whose gentle pulsing verges on the musical.

Bridget Riley, b. 1931 in London, has been a member of the Akademie der Künste since 2004. She studied in London at Goldsmiths and the Royal College of Art. In 1965 *The Responsive Eye* showed at MoMA in New York; in 1968 she became the first woman to win the Venice Biennale's International Prize for Painting at the 34th edition of the exhibition; in 1970/71 she had her first major retrospective show in Europe, which ran in Hanover, Bern, Düsseldorf, Turin and London; in 1974 she was awarded the CBE, Commander of the Order of the British Empire; in 2003 she won the Japan Art Association's Praemium Imperiale

for painting; other awards include the Goslar Kaiserring (2009) and the City of Siegen's Rubens Prize (2012); in 2022–23 *Drawings from the Artist's Studio* showed in Chicago, Los Angeles and New York.

The **Akademie der Künste's exhibition series in Rheinsberg** began in 2000 with Jim Dine and continued on an annual basis, from 2002 on, with a range of artists including Wieland Förster, Lothar Böhme, Rolf Szymanski, Karin Sander, Dorothee von Windheim, Hanns Schimansky, Dieter Appelt, Thomas Florschuetz, Richard Deacon, Nanne Meyer and, most recently, Marcel Odenbach.

The Kurt Tucholsky Literature Museum in Rheinsberg is included on the Red List of endangered cultural institutions in Germany. In its press release of 16 April 2024, the German Cultural Council declared that the museum is still at risk as an ongoing concern in terms of its management expertise. The Akademie der Künste is categorically in favour of maintaining the City of Rheinsberg's Kurt Tucholsky Literature Museum under qualified professional management.

A catalogue is being published in conjunction with the exhibition (Holzwarth Publications, Berlin).

For the first time, art workshops with students of the KUNSTWELTEN education programme are to take place in parallel with the exhibition.

Exhibition details

Bridget Riley

Circles and Discs (1961–2003)

27 April – 14 July 2024

Tue–Sun, 10 am – 12.30 pm and 1–5.30 pm; admission €5/4

Kurt Tucholsky Literature Museum, Rheinsberg Palace

16831 Rheinsberg, Tel. 033931 39007, www.tucholsky-museum.de

Opening: Saturday, 27 April 2024, 11 am

List of speakers:

Peter Böthig, former director of Kurt Tucholsky Literature Museum, Rheinsberg Palace

Robert Kudielka, member of the Akademie der Künste's Visual Arts Section

Angela Lammert, head of special interdisciplinary projects in the Akademie der

Künste's Visual Arts Section

In cooperation with the Kurt Tucholsky Literature Museum, Rheinsberg Palace

With generous support from the Bridget Riley Art Foundation and Galerie Max

Hetzler