

**Bridget Riley:**  
**Circles and Discs (1961-2023)**  
27 April–14 July 2024

**Opening**  
Sat, 27 April 2024, 11 am

**Speaker**  
**Peter Böhlig**  
Former head of the Kurt Tucholsky  
Literaturmuseum

**Angela Lammert**  
Head of Interdisciplinary Projects,  
Visual Arts Section, Akademie der  
Künste, Berlin

**Robert Kudielka**  
Member of the Visual Arts Section,  
Akademie der Künste, Berlin

#### Events

**Bridget Riley and Contemporary Music**  
with Michael Maierhof, Robert Kudielka  
and Malte Giesen  
Sun, 23 June 2024, 3 pm

**Wall Paintings and Their Realisation**  
with Max Hetzler and others  
t.b.a.

**SEEING AS PERFORMANCE**  
Art workshop with students,  
Mark Lammert and Marcel Kröner  
in Berlin and Rheinsberg  
adk.de/kunstwelten  
t.b.a.

#### Image credits

[1] *Early Colour Work – Circles*, 1970–72 (2008), pencil and gouache on paper, 86.5 x 117.4 cm

[2] *Black to White Discs*, 1962, synthetic emulsion on canvas, 177.8 x 177.8 cm

[3] *Untitled (Fragment 7)*, 1965, screenprint in black-and-white on Plexiglas, 50.9 x 99.2 cm

[4] *Measure for Measure 18*, 2017, acrylic on canvas, 93.6 x 93.6 cm

Images 1–3: Private collection, United Kingdom, Photos: Prudence Cuming Associates

Image 4: Courtesy of the Galerie Max Hetzler Berlin | Paris | London, private collection, Berlin,

Photo: Anna Arca

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With the kind support of The **Bridget Riley Art Foundation** and the **Galerie Max Hetzler**

The exhibition was realised in cooperation between the Akademie der Künste, Berlin and  
the Kurt Tucholsky Literaturmuseum Schloss Rheinsberg.

AKADEMIE DER KÜNSTE

**K**  
**T** KURT TUCHOLSKY  
Literaturmuseum  
Schloss Rheinsberg

Funded by



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**Opening Hours**  
Tue-Sun 10:00am–12:30pm  
and 1:00–5:30 pm

**Admission**  
€ 5/4

**Exhibition concept**  
Bridget Riley  
Robert Kudielka  
Angela Lammert

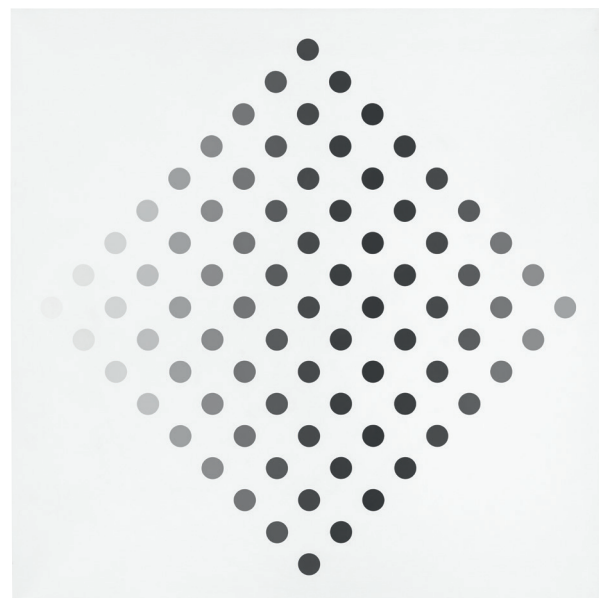
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Catherine Amé, Karoline Czech

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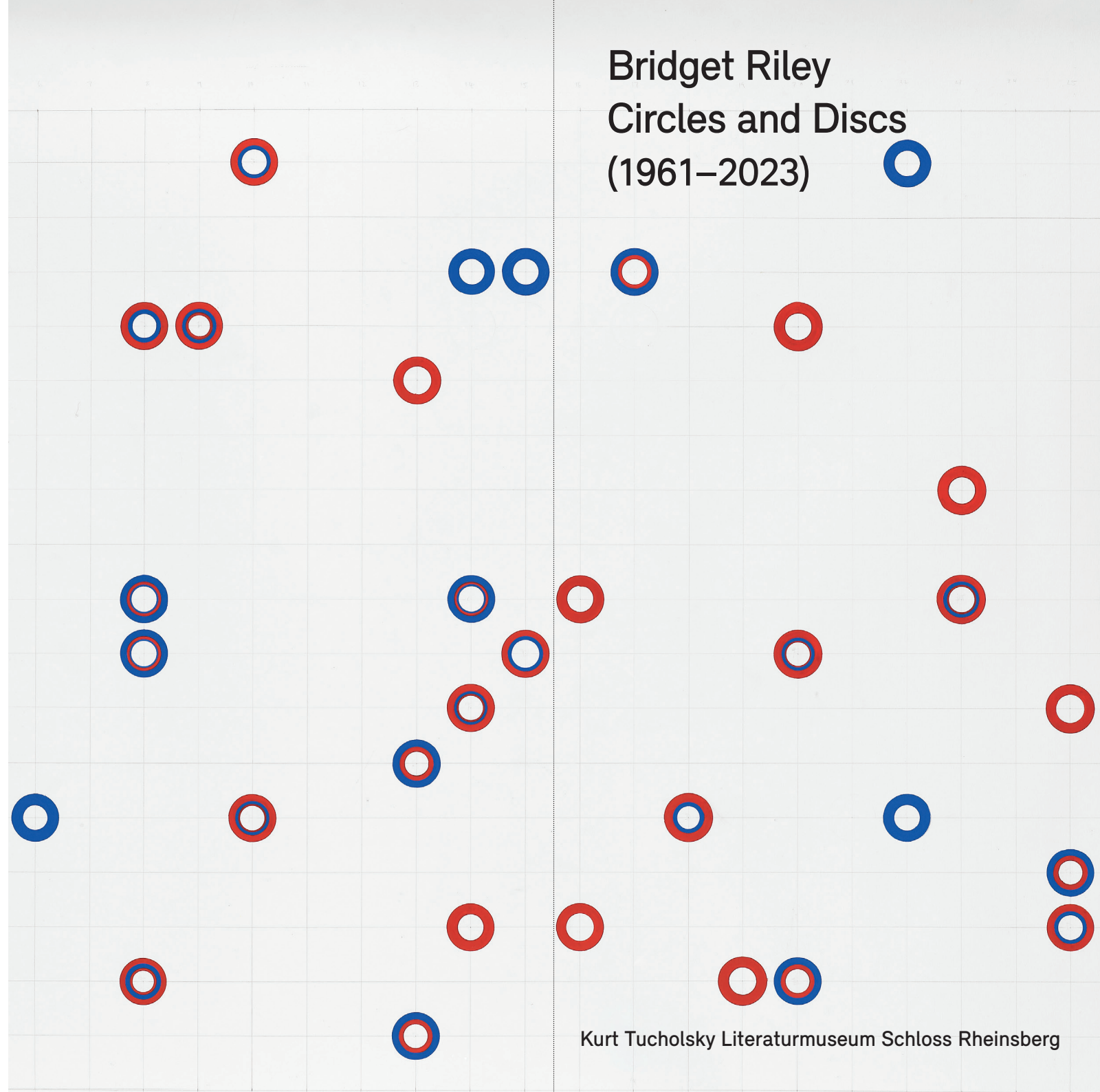
**A catalogue (in German) accompanies  
the exhibition.**  
Holzwarth Publications, Berlin;  
Text: Robert Kudielka, Angela Lammert



[2]

**Bridget Riley** (b. 1931 in London) has been a member of the Akademie der Künste, Berlin since **2004**. She studied at Goldsmiths' College and the Royal College of Art in London. **1965**, *The Responsive Eye*, MoMA, New York; **1968**, awarded the international prize for painting at the 34th Venice Biennale; **1970–71**, a large European retrospective toured Hanover, Bern, Düsseldorf, Turin, London, et al.; **1974**, official appointment to the CBE, Commander of the Order of the British Empire; **1978–80**, 2nd travelling retrospective, including Buffalo, Sydney, Tokyo; **1988**, Companion of Honour; **1992–93**, *Paintings 1982–1992*, Nuremberg, Bottrop, London; **2003**, Tate Gallery retrospective, and named Praemium Imperiale Painting Laureate, Japan Arts Association; **2006**, Honorary member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences; **2009**, Goslarer Kaiserring award, **2012**, the Rubens Prize of the City of Siegen; **2019**, *Messengers* wall work for the National Gallery, London, and a retrospective at the National Galleries of Scotland; **2022–23**, *Drawings from the Artist's Studio*: Chicago, Los Angeles, New York.

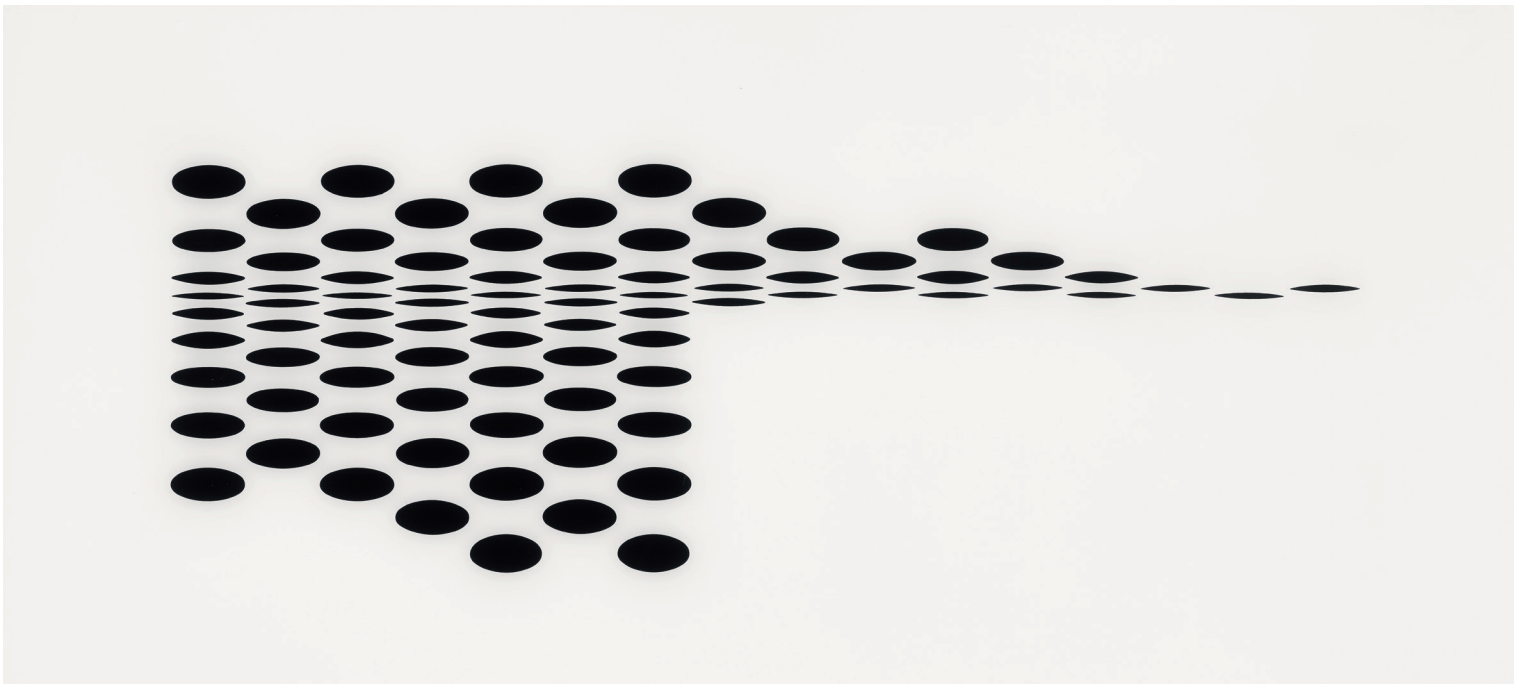
[1]



# Bridget Riley

## Circles and Discs (1961–2023)

Kurt Tucholsky Literaturmuseum Schloss Rheinsberg



[3]

**Circles and Discs**

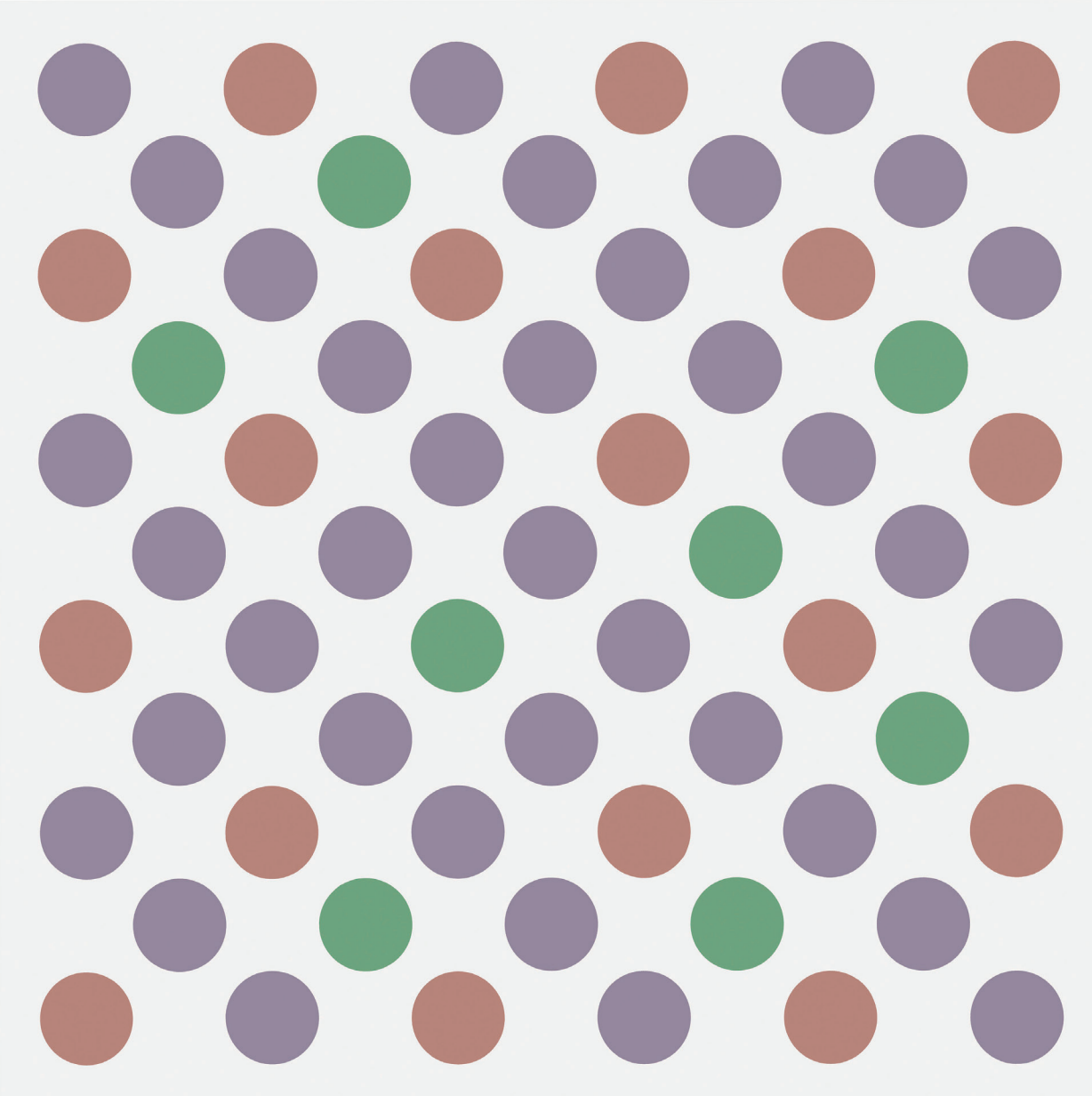
“The circle is the most restrictive of all forms” – says Bridget Riley, the painter who once entered art history as a protagonist of Op Art. Under the title *Circles and Discs*, for the first time, a single group of motifs has been selected that covers the entire span of the artist’s creative development over a period of more than sixty years. Concentrating on this theme provides insights into her working methods and her virtually musical approach to composition, as well as the chance to participate in Riley’s lifelong pictorial preoccupation with the joy and liveliness of seeing. Apart from working studies, some of which have never been seen before, the exhibition also includes preparatory work for large-scale wall works such as *Composition with Circles 5* (2005) in the Akademie building on Pariser Platz, which transforms architectural space into a dematerialised visual experience. The geometric forms in Bridget Riley’s work are neither abstract figures nor the “concrete” stock of her paintings, but motifs which she methodically explores and develops with regard to their dynamic potential to eventually employ them as agents in compositions that articulate and express her particular artistic concern, the natural mobility of sight.

The single motif of the exhibition, the circle and its modifications, is explored in different stages of Riley’s development as a painter. In the beginning, dynamic structures in black-and-white prevail: compression

and expansion, circles transformed into ovals, successive tonal sequences from black to white, and axial rotation. This early phase, often labelled as Op Art, culminates in the subtle orchestration of coloured greys before introducing open colour contrasts in 1968, exposing a limit of the motif.

Up to this point, Bridget Riley has continually pursued parallel motifs such as triangles, squares, curves, etc. However, the step towards pure colour inevitably led to a long-time preference for stripes and curves because these linear motifs seemed most suitable for unfolding colour interaction. Circles, on the other hand, seemed rather to impede this activity. “The circle always has a centre”, Riley comments. The plastic perception of a circle is unavoidably focused, even without an explicit centre point. Although, in retrospect, the first signs of how to resolve this dilemma can clearly be detected in her studies of 1970–72, it took the increasing familiarity with the spatial dynamism of colour that the open, undelineated disc eventually gained a major role in Riley’s pictorial scores. Since 2017, even fields of discs have formed the basis for rhythmic compositions in off-green, off-violet and off-orange shades that open up gently pulsating, quasi-musical circuits of sensations, both in her paintings and wall works.

**Robert Kudielka, Angela Lammert**



[4]