

# STADT GOSLAR

Information from the Office of Publicity and Public Relations

## “European Painting of World Influence”

### The Goslar Kaiser Ring goes to Bridget Riley

GOSLAR, Germany. The English artist Bridget Riley will be presented with the Kaiser Ring of the City of Goslar for the year 2009. This was announced by Goslar’s Lord Mayor Henning Binnewies on Friday evening at the traditional New Year’s Reception in the Goslar Imperial Palace. The artist, born in London in 1931, will receive the award on October 3rd in Goslar.

Bridget Louise Riley, who today resides in London und Southern France, is considered one of the leading representatives of Op Art (short for “Optical Art” = a direction in modern art which has dealt with the inherent laws of visual perception under the influence of optical illusions since about the middle of the 1950’s). According to the jury the award of the Kaiser Ring 2009 to Bridget Riley honours one of the great artistic personalities of Europe, whose collected works are therewith honoured and their relevance to the present and the future emphasised.

A further jury criteria remarks: “For nearly 50 years the works of Bridget Riley have been among the most impressive contributions to European painting with world influence, exemplified by, for example, the awarding of the Premio Imperiale in Tokyo 2003. Even earlier the catchwords such as “Optical Art” in the 1960’s or “Neo-geo” in the 1980’s were not sufficient to encompass the artistic approach of the artist; the vitality of her constructivistic works was much more broadly based. The expression „geometric abstraction“ most nearly describes the works. Then toward the end of the 1950’s her works show the experience gained from the earlier application of pointillism, the later still important elements of: „stringency and colour as vehicles to perception of nature and the world“.

#### Personal Background:

Bridget Riley attended Goldsmiths College (1949–52) and the Royal College of Art in London (1952–55). Since her first single artist exhibit in 1962 she has exhibited her works over a

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wide area. Beside participation in many group artist exhibits she was also represented in the Venice Biennial in 1968 (here she was the first woman to win the International Prize for Art) and also in the Venice Biennial 1986, the Documenta IV (1968) and the Documenta VI (1977). The largest number of retrospective exhibits of her works have been in the Abbot Hall Art Gallery, Kendal Cumbria (1998), in the Serpentine Gallery, London (1999), in the Kunstverein in Düsseldorf (1999), in the Dia Stiftung 2000 und in the Tate Britain 2003 after travelling as retrospective exhibits in 1970-71 and 1978-1980.

She holds honorary doctorates from the universities of Oxford (1993) and Cambridge (1995). Beginning in 1998 her works took on a new direction with circular and rhomboid shapes. In 1999 the rare award „Companion of Honour“ was bestowed on her by the Queen of England after she had rejected the feminine form of knighthood, „Dame“ for „Sir“, because of its incompatibility with her public role as an artist.

Further information as well as graphic material is available on the internet site of the Mönchehaus Museums ([www.moenchehaus.de](http://www.moenchehaus.de)), the City of Goslar ([www.goslar.de](http://www.goslar.de)) or the Gallery Karsten Schubert, London ([www.karstenschubert.com](http://www.karstenschubert.com)). We will be happy to answer questions under the telephone number (0049) 5321 704226. Information is also available from the Kaiser Ring Representative of the City of Goslar, Inge Langner, telephone (0049) 5321 26950.

The Goslar Kaiser Ring is one of the world's most esteemed awards for modern art. Before Bridget Riley the following artists, among others, have received the award: Henry Moore, Max Ernst, Alexander Calder, Joseph Beuys, Günther Uecker, Georg Baselitz, Christo, Gerhard Richter, Cindy Sherman, Sigmar Polke, Christian Boltanski, Jenny Holzer, Robert Longo, Jörg Immendorff, Matthew Barney and, last year, Andreas Gursky.

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