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Bridget Riley, Untitled [Oval Image], 1964

**ARTIST**

Bridget Riley (b.1931)

**TITLE**

Untitled [Oval Image]

**MEDIUM**

Screenprint in black on paper

**DATE**

1964

**SHEET SIZE**

30 x 14 in : 76.4 x 35.6 cm

**EDITION**

From the edition of 50

**INSCRIPTIONS**

Signed, numbered and dated by the artist

**PRINTER**

Kelpra Studio, London

**PUBLISHER**

Published by the Institute of Contemporary Arts, London

**LITERATURE**

*Bridget Riley - The Complete Prints 1962-2020*,  
The Bridget Riley Art Foundation, Thames &  
Hudson, London, 2020, no. BRS 4, pp.56-57  
(illus.)  
Schubert 3

**EXHIBITED**

Queensland Art Gallery, Australia, 1985  
Arts Council, London, 2001-03  
British Council, London, 2004-05  
University of Exeter, Exeter, 2006

**REFERENCE**

A25-01



Of the 7 black and white screenprints on paper created by Bridget Riley in the 1960s, *Oval Image* of 1964 is the hardest to find. Only the third print she ever made, it was also the first work printed by Kelpra Studio for the artist, a famous collaboration that endured for many years. It was initially referred to as *Print 3*.

Bridget Riley was among the 24 British artists selected by Richard Hamilton to make screenprints for the Institute of Contemporary Arts (ICA) London print portfolio. This renowned portfolio was sold to raise money for the ICA and launched the revival of the

medium among artists in England. An inscription is printed at the bottom left: 'ICA Print Screenprinted by Kelpra Studio', and it is precisely because of this inscription that the work is so scarce.

From an initial edition of 50, very few are thought to remain in existence. In the years that followed publication, the inclusion of the inscription caused many to think the work was some kind of reproduction, and it was treated accordingly. It has appeared at auction a mere three times in sixty years. Even the Tate does not hold a copy, although MoMA and Harvard Art Museums do, as well as the Arts Council.

## Bridget Riley

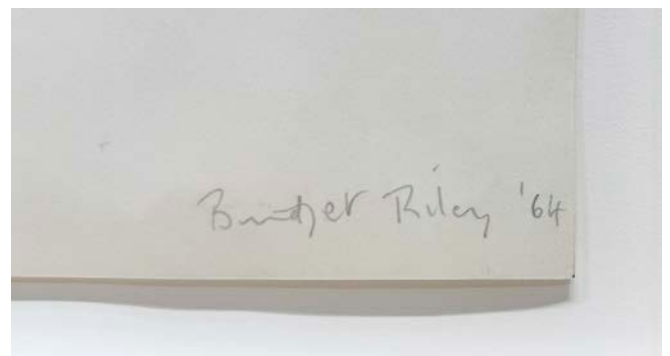
Bridget Riley created some of the most era-defining images in the history of art, her black and white optical art provided a visual summary for 'Swinging London'. By 1960 and approaching her late-twenties, Riley had settled into a dynamic style of hard-edged abstraction with, often, wild optical properties. She came to international attention in 1965 when her work was included in MoMA's famous exhibition *The Responsive Eye*, presenting her pictures with other artists of the Op Art movement, and illustrating her painting *Current* on the cover. She worked almost exclusively in a black, white and grey palette until 1967, when colour was allowed into her work and the first of the famous stripe paintings was produced. In the following year she represented Great Britain at the Venice Biennale for which she received the International Painting Prize.

Throughout her career, Riley has exhibited an unwavering commitment to experimentation and innovation. She has continuously pushed the boundaries of her practice, exploring various techniques and approaches to create fresh and exciting work. Her rigorous investigation of colour interaction, line and form has resulted in a diverse oeuvre that encompasses paintings, prints and murals.

Riley's significance extends beyond her technical prowess and aesthetic achievements. Her contributions to hard-edge abstraction have had a transformative impact on the entire field of contemporary art. By developing mastery of a visually dynamic style that relies on optical illusions, something first explored by many artists internationally during the 1950s, Riley challenged traditional notions of representation and perception. Her work opened new avenues of artistic exploration, inspiring countless artists and paving the way for subsequent generations of abstract and conceptual artists.

In Britain, Riley's influence has been particularly profound. Her early exhibitions at the Hayward and Tate Galleries in London catapulted her to prominence, making her a central figure in the British art scene. Abundant and frequent retrospectives of her work have been presented internationally at leading institutions from her mid-career period onwards.

Bridget Riley is considered to be one of the most important artists living and working in Britain.





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