

MICHAEL KIDNER WORKS ON PAPER

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Opening Reception July 21, 6 - 8pm

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"Unless you read a painting as a feeling then you don't get anything at all." - Michael Kidner

Flowers Gallery is pleased to announce an exhibition of works on paper by the late British artist Michael Kidner (1917-2009), on display at Flowers Gallery, New York for the first time. The exhibition surveys two important periods of development during his long career, including works from the 1960s and the 2000s.

Michael Kidner was described by American art historian and critic Irving Sandler as *"arguably the first Op Artist in Britain"*, following his investigations of the optical effects of light, color and systemic structure during the 1960s. Optics presented Kidner with a challenge in his pursuit of a pure form of imagery, seeking a phenomenological approach to the fluctuating effects of light and color within the space set by the canvas.

The present exhibition explores four key areas of Kidner's investigations of the image: *After Image*, *Stripe*, *Moiré* and *Wave*. The *After Image* series captured the vivid, pure impression of a retinal after-image - exploring the searing effects of oppositional colors in facing circular and angular forms. Kidner's *Stripe* drawings from the mid-1960s structured the visual field into rationally organized alternating bands of color, to create a non-prescriptive mode of expression. The introduction of an angled band, dissecting the parallel stripes, produced a moiré pattern with an enlivened sense of color movement. This form of perceptual interference represented a breakthrough for Kidner, as he said: *"I was now satisfied that the content of the picture was visibly connected to its structure"*. The patterns that emerged in his series of *Waves* during the latter half of the decade countered the perceived infinity of the stripe, with cycles emerging through the correlation of alternate undulating forms.



*Untitled, 1966, Oil pastel on paper
11 x 10 in*

By the beginning of the 21st Century, Kidner turned to the pentagon as his primary shape, creating complex organic patterns that appeared to regenerate, in endless variations, outside of a dominant logical structure. This development stemmed from his interest in Penrose tiling (a system of non-periodic tiling, named after the mathematician and physicist Roger Penrose), marking a lifelong artistic investigation of scientific and mathematical language to reveal the 'truth' of experience. The pentagon, in the context of this new work, was described by Stephen Bann as *"constitutionally unstable and liable to take you to the brink of visual anarchy"*, upsetting ideas of rational symmetry with dynamic fluctuations of visual order.

Mounted in this exhibition are Kidner's final works from 2009, which were displayed in tribute to the artist at the Royal Academy Summer Exhibition, London in 2010.

ABOUT MICHAEL KIDNER

Born in Northamptonshire, 1917, Michael Kidner studied History at Cambridge University. A pioneer of Optical Art, Kidner has devoted much of his career to developing work of a constructive nature. His distinguished career has included many honors, influential teaching posts, international group shows and one man exhibitions in Britain, Eastern Europe, Brazil, Austria and Scandinavia. His work was first displayed in New York in 1965, in *The Responsive Eye* at the Museum of Modern Art, a group exhibition which subsequently toured the United States; and in a solo show two years later at Betty Parsons Gallery, New York in 1967. A retrospective at the Serpentine Gallery, London in 1984 introduced a new generation of British artists to his work, and he was elected as a Royal Academician in 2004. His work has recently been acquired by the British Academy, UK, and the Museum of Contemporary Art, Buenos Aires, Argentina; and is represented in the public collections of Arts Council England, British Council, Government Art Collection, and Tate, UK; Museum of Modern Art, New York; Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation, Lisbon; and Muzeum Sztuki, Łódź, Poland.

A major exhibition is currently being planned at the Museum of Contemporary Art, Buenos Aires in 2017.

NOTESTO EDITORS

For more information and images, please contact Brent Beamon:
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Opening Hours: Tuesday - Saturday 10am - 6pm

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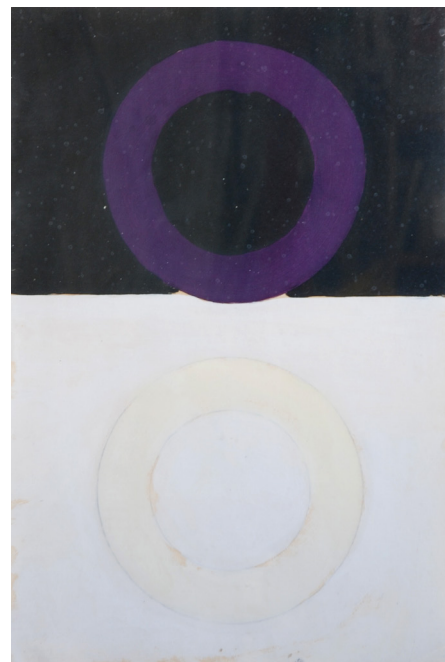
1. Stephen Bann, 2003, *Love is a Virus* from Outer Space Exhibition Catalogue, Flowers Gallery, London



Towards Moire. Looking for Third Colour, 1963
Oil on paper, 9.5 x 5.25 in



Particle Evolution: The End of the Tunnel at Cern. Stage 1, 2008
Coloured pencil on paper, 44 1/2 x 67 3/4 in



Untitled After Image, 1959
Oil on paper, 15 x 10 in