

4#4 | brigitte kowanz
28 April – 24 June 2023

For the solo exhibition 4#4 of the Austrian artist Brigitte Kowanz (1957–2022), the gallery in Berlin is transformed into a black light space where her phosphorescent and fluorescent works are presented within a spatial installation for the very first time.

In the early 1980s, Kowanz began experimenting with black light and reflective pigments. Since then, working with black light as a material and staging phosphorescent and fluorescent installations in black light spaces accompanied her artistic practice over decades. The exhibition presents exemplary early works as historical reference points centered around her rarely shown *Light Steps* (1990), a minimalist staircase made of black light tubes. In addition, more recent works complement the presentation, such as her *Flashback* series (1988/2021) in which she quoted and evolved her own earlier work.

Presented side by side, it becomes clear how Kowanz consistently reflected the influence of new light-generating media on society and art since the early 1980s. From the very beginning, this analytical engagement addressed aspects of virtualization as well as new forms of image and space. As a pioneer of a media-reflective approach, Kowanz developed destabilized, moving spaces. With light serving as a mediator of transgression and specification an integrative relation between work, space and recipient emerged.

For many of her famous works, Brigitte Kowanz preferred white light, as it bundles all colors. However, the use of black light not only questions visual habits, but also highlights the space and the connection between the works and architectural elements in a new way. Through the supposed reversal of light and darkness, or rather the creation of light through another light, Kowanz created spaces to truly experience objects and installations. In this context, her experimental approach to light as a primary artistic medium, as well as her exploration of the possibilities and limits of its manifestations, becomes particularly visible.

Kowanz was awarded the Großen Österreichischen Staatspreis (Grand Austrian State Prize) in 2009 and exhibited at the Austrian Pavilion at the 57th Venice Biennale (2017). She has held a professorship at the University of Applied Arts in Vienna from 1997–2021. Selected solo exhibitions took place in the Schlossmuseum Linz (2022) in the Museum Haus Konstruktiv, Zurich (2020), Taxispalais, Innsbruck (2011), and the Museum of Modern Art Foundation Ludwig, Vienna (2010).

Opening and extended Opening Hours

Friday 28 April 2023, 6 – 9 pm | Saturday 29 – Sunday 30 April 2023, 11 am – 7 pm

The exhibition opens parallel to the Gallery Weekend Berlin and takes place in close collaboration with the Estate of Brigitte Kowanz.

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