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Gisela von Bruchhausen *Steel Sculptures*

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The magical combination of steel and form—five decades from the complete works of the German sculptor

»I work with steel because I love its properties: its malleability, its resilience and the potential of point connection.« With these succinct and precise words, German steel sculptor Gisela von Bruchhausen outlines her choice of material.

In a free interplay of individual parts forming a whole, and through a confident handling of instability and disorder, the artist succeeds in releasing the force of gravity and transforming it into dynamic structures. By temporarily incorporating materials such as acrylic glass, slate, or found objects, and through partial painting in red, blue, and a muted white, the sculptor explores the interaction of forms, weights, and dimensions. Whether in outdoor spaces, on pedestals, on the ground, or against walls, her open constructions, which point in many directions, reach into space and play with light and visual habits. Her work resonates with quiet strength, poetry, and constructive dynamism.

This publication presents a representative selection from the body of work comprising around 550 steel sculptures, wall pieces, and collages spanning approximately five decades. It was created in close collaboration with the artist and her companion Robert Kudielka, a recognized expert on this oeuvre and English steel sculpture in particular. The overview ranges from Gisela von Bruchhausen's previously unseen ceramic early works from the 1970s to steel paintings created around 2020.

To provide a deeper understanding of the sculptural work, statements from the artist as well as selected essays are included. These essays have emerged since the 1980s in conjunction with a series of exhibitions and the release of this publication. A detailed biography intertwines life and art with memories and photographs within the context of the genesis of the artworks.

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The decision to not present the works in chronological order, but rather to divide the two volumes primarily into sculptures and wall works, follows the idea of making visible the phases of work and series in relation to their histories. This is closely tied to the different studios and working conditions the artist experienced. Through this arrangement, characteristic and work-immanent developments and connections, aspects of material choice, surface and color, considerations for placement in outdoor or indoor spaces, and more, become evident in visual dialogues beyond mere temporal sequences.

Steel Sculptures is a comprehensive compendium that captures, characterizes, and honors the various aspects of the oeuvre from both art historical and artistic perspectives. This publication spans the complex sculptural work of steel sculptor Gisela von Bruchhausen across times and spaces with precision and detail.

Gisela von Bruchhausen was born in Berlin in 1940. She studied sculpture at the Hochschule der Künste Berlin from 1978 to 1984 under Phillip King, David Evison, and Robert Kudielka. In 1982, she was the only female founding member of the group ODIIOUS. Her works have found their place not only in renowned sculpture parks but are also part of significant public and private collections.

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Press Images



01_ Kathedra, 1983. Steel, hot-dip galvanised, painted. 195 × 134 × 182 cm
© Gisela von Bruchhausen



02_ Aficionado, 1988. Steel, galvanised, painted. 239 × 135 × 118 cm
© Gisela von Bruchhausen



03_ Magnifizienz, 1989. Steel, galvanised, painted. 284 × 132 × 110 cm
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04_ Das Fenster im Freien, 1990. Steel, galvanised, painted. 370 × 530 × 290 cm
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05_ Northern Romantic, 1992. Steel, galvanised, painted. 340 × 240 × 190 cm
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06_ Eintänzer, 1995. Steel, galvanised, painted. 201 × 58 × 66 cm
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07_ Arc carré, 1996. Steel, galvanised, painted. 166 × 290 × 182 cm
© Gisela von Bruchhausen



08_ Staccato V, 2005. Steel, galvanised, painted. 130 × 110 × 23,5 cm
© Gisela von Bruchhausen



09_ Concentus I, 2008. MDF boxes, steel, galvanised, painted. 130 × 360 × 27 cm
© Gisela von Bruchhausen



10_ Quintett, 2011. Steel, galvanised, painted. 100 × 100 × 27 cm
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11_ Trias II, 2019. Steel, adhesive primer, painted. 115 × 258 × 22 cm
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12_ Gisela von Bruchhausen in the Werder (Havel) studio, 2012
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