

Wall signage:

Please take some headphones and tap your device here to begin audio guide.

Screen 1: Select language**Screen 2: Introduction****Overview of audio device:**

Hello and welcome to *Mappa Mundi*, a wide-ranging retrospective of the work of seminal British artist Frank Bowling. If at any stage during the exhibition you would like to know more about Frank Bowling's work, look for the same sign and audio icon that you used to tap this device with. Look for them positioned near the entrance of various rooms and corridors throughout the exhibition space.

Tapping your phone on these signs will trigger an audio segment to play. It will also give you the option to bookmark content related to paintings in that particular room or space. Bookmarkable content includes high resolution images of the paintings themselves, related videos, podcast interviews, augmented reality, text and more.

You can find this content at any time when you press the red text icon on the bottom of the play screen on your device.

Enjoy the exhibition.

Tap your device on any **NFC** panel throughout the exhibition to hear audio related to that room. Press pause if you would like to pause the guide at any stage.

If you are interested in finding out more about any section of this tour, please press the **bookmark** icon for viewing related content later.

If you have any questions about the exhibition, please ask one of our visitor engagement team, identifiable through their blue lanyards or click on the **speech button** on your device for live, one-to-one texting with one of our knowledgeable and friendly experts. All questions welcome!

Enjoy the exhibition.

Screen 3: Corridors and Rooms 1 + 2

Audio (IMMA content): IMMA is pleased to present *Mappa Mundi*, a wide-ranging retrospective of the work of seminal British artist Frank Bowling. Named for one of Bowling's celebrated 'map' paintings, *Mappa Mundi* encapsulates major developments in Bowling's work, which can be seen as a reflection of the evolution that took place in abstract and expressionist painting throughout the latter half of the 20th century. Spanning the last fifty years, *Mappa Mundi* highlights exceptional works from throughout Bowling's career.

Having graduated from the Royal College of Art, London, in the mid-1960s Bowling, along with contemporaries like David Hockney and Ron Kltaj, exhibited widely in London and the UK, garnering early acclaim for ambitious, large-scale works influenced by these contemporaries as well as Francis Bacon. Though previously not as widely celebrated as some friends and contemporaries, Bowling is now considered an essential figure, through his art, curation and writing, in the discourse around art, identity and post-colonialism.

This exhibition proceeds broadly chronologically, covering significant milestones in Bowling's artistic development, beginning with his move to New York In 1966. This move was a catalyst for a major shift in Bowling's way of approaching painting, moving away from relatively straightforward figurative representation into more abstract work concerned with questions of form and colour. This change in approach was Influenced by Bowling's exposure In New York to new debate and theories surrounding painting. Especially significant was his friendship with the Influential art critic Clement Greenberg. The size of Bowling's New York studio also allowed him to work on a larger, often monumental scale, seen in the works in the corridor.

In the 'map' paintings in the next two rooms and on the corridors, Bowling addresses issues of history and migration. Both his own as a Commonwealth immigrant to the UK and latterly the United States, and also broader mass movements

of people. These include colonial slaves brought through the '*Middle Passage*' from Africa to South America, to socioeconomic motivated migration.

Tap on the NFC panel in the next room to hear more.

Screen 4: Rooms 3 + 4

Audio (IMMA content): The paintings seen here concern themselves with broader and more abstract concepts than Bowling's main canon. Primarily focused on the visceral experience of nature, these works evoke a mythic - and perhaps apocalyptic - experience of the natural world. With distinct and jarring contrasts of colour and texture, these works belie the violence and confusion of creation, whether artistic or from nature.

A natural aesthetic continuation of the works in the preceding room, the two works *Towards Crab Island* continue the exploration into texture and form. They blur the lines between painting and another, less easily definable form of art object. These works are also a conceptual continuation, moving from depictions of natural, seismic formations into the changes human industry has wrought upon the landscape.

Tap on the NFC panel in the next room to hear more.

Screen 5: Rooms 5 + 6

Audio (IMMA content): Named for the artist's father, Richard Sheridan Bowling (Room 5) and Frank Bowling's wife, Rachel Scott Bowling (Room 6), the paintings in these two rooms are visually and thematically consistent with other work by Bowling from this period, while addressing more personal themes and relationships. Bowling, an emigrant at an early age from his home country, has often addressed personal questions of family, biography and belonging within a wider context of work concerned with shifting geographical and national boundaries. These invoke a sense of memory of Bowling's family and his home country of British Guiana.

Tap on the NFC panel in the next room to hear more.

Screen 6: Room 7

Audio (IMMA content): This room holds a series of works primarily influenced by bodies of water. The colour and application of paint evoke the play of light and shadow on moving water, the impression of which Bowling has recalled flooding through his studio windows in both London and New York. The works are also conceptually concerned with what these bodies of water, in Europe and South America, represent in a historical and political sense, and relate to Bowling's broader themes of geographic and human movement.

In conversation with IMMA's Head of Exhibitions, Rachael Thomas, Bowling commented; "My whole life has been dedicated to paint" and indeed any reading of conceptual or critical concerns in Bowling's work must be considered alongside the artist's clear love for the form and the process of painting.

Tap on the NFC panel in the next room to hear more.

Screen 7: Room 8

Audio (IMMA content): Included in *Mappa Mundi* are highlights from Bowling's personal archive. This presents a valuable insight into the artist's own personal history and work, but also into the fertile and dynamic art scenes in London and New York that he helped shape and was shaped by. The archive includes material on Bowling's writing, curating, and art practice, along with his significant correspondence with Clement Greenberg, amongst others.

This exhibition rightly identifies Bowling as a major figure in painting of the last 50 years. Alongside such milestones as being the first black artist elected to the Royal Academy (2005), the first black British artist to have work acquired by the Tate (Spreadout Ron Kitaj, 1981-86, acquired 1987), and being appointed an Officer of the British Empire (2008), Bowling continues to produce ambitious and complex work today.

Screen 8: End of tour

Audio: Thank you for attending the exhibition today. If you have any questions about the exhibition, please feel free to ask one of our visitor engagement team or click on the speech button for live, one-to-one texting with one of our knowledgeable and friendly experts.

Screen 9: Email address and phone no. details

Audio: To ensure that you receive all of your bookmarks, please enter your email address or phone number on the device and you will be sent a link.

Screen 10: Thank you for attending the exhibition today.

End

Screen 11: Texting/quartz-style interfaces.