

Frank Bowling, *Where I work*, The Guardian, February 2015



**Where I work**

Frank Bowling

Artist

Photography David Levene

**I**'m at my happiest in my studio. There is paint all over it - that's the nature of my work. The canvas is tacked to the wall and then I throw paint on in various ways - pouring, splashing, dripping, spilling.

It's not as paint-splattered as Francis Bacon's, though. Francis made me the most marvellous omelette I've ever had at his studio. It was my first omelette, and the best - he was known as a gourmet cook. Later that day he turned on me over a painting I'd done of him. He called me all sorts of things.

My art is very physical. I work on the wall and floor, so I'm standing up, stooping and bending, and because the paint is moving all the time - sometimes too fast - I have to move quickly. Working like this has caused me a lot of back problems. I'm 78 now, and my body doesn't match my eagerness to get on with the art.

These days, the doctors have

advised me not to work for more than two hours at a time because of my health. I am not anywhere near as fit as I used to be. It's rather depressing.

Of course, in my head, I'm working 24 hours a day. I've always been very, ambitious with my art, keen to get on and do it. I lie in bed, and sometimes I can't sleep because I'm painting on the wall with my imagination. I've been known to get so anxious that I'll dash to my studio in the middle of the night.

When I'm in my studio, two hours goes too quickly. I am completely absorbed. My wife, Rachel, will have to tell me it is time to go home, even though I feel I'm in the swing. When I'm swinging away there is usually jazz or classical music playing. There is a feeling of being up. I can't swear to happiness, but I feel good.

*Traingone, paintings by Frank Bowling, is at Spritmuseum, Stockholm, Sweden, until 6 April.*



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View the full gallery of Frank Bowling's studio: [theguardian.com/do-something-frank-bowling-studio](http://theguardian.com/do-something-frank-bowling-studio)