

## ARTS COUNCIL COLLECTION LAUNCHES FLASHBACK SERIES WITH BRIDGET RILEY EXHIBITION

Bridget Riley: Flashback  
A Hayward Touring Exhibition from Southbank Centre  
25 September – 13 December 2009  
Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool

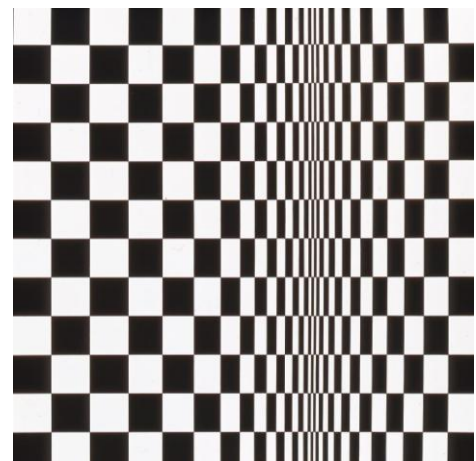
Flashback is a major new series of Hayward Touring exhibitions from the Arts Council Collection, Southbank Centre. Taking as its starting point the Collection's founding principle of supporting emerging artists through the purchase of their work, the series showcases world-renowned British artists whose works were acquired early on by the Collection. The monographic exhibitions combine early Collection works with new pieces sourced from the artists, giving a unique insight into the evolution of these key figures in British art.

The first exhibition in the Flashback series features Bridget Riley, one of the UK's most influential contemporary artists. The show will open at the Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool this September, and will then tour to Birmingham, Norwich and Southampton. Riley is known for her distinctive and optically vibrant paintings that generate sensations of movement, light and space. She has a longstanding relationship with the Collection and the Hayward Gallery, having had solo shows at the Hayward in 1971 and in 1992. Riley also co-curated the Gallery's 2002 Paul Klee exhibition, which attracted almost 130,000 visitors.

Flashback tracks her career from its beginnings in the early 1960s, to the ambitious and powerful works of recent years. Eight large scale paintings will be on show, with four coming from Riley's personal collection. All three of the Collection's holdings of Riley's paintings are included. These are complemented by 30 works on paper that illuminate the working methods she has employed over her five-decade-long career. Many of these drawings and sketches have never been seen before.

A seminal work in the show is Bridget Riley's *Movement in Squares*, which was purchased by the Arts Council Collection in 1962, the year after it was made. Consistently exhibited in museum retrospectives of her work, the work is credited by Riley as the beginning of her breakthrough into abstraction. Riley sees a direct correlation between her extensive studies in drawing from life and the development of this work, which allowed her to 'trust the eye at the end of my pencil'.

Caroline Douglas, Head of the Arts Council Collection, said: "We are delighted to launch the Flashback series with Bridget Riley, one of the most important artists working in Britain today, and an artist we have worked with throughout her career. Riley's international reputation leads her more often to exhibit outside this country, so it is a particular pleasure that we are able to bring her work to four outstanding regional museums."



An illustrated catalogue will accompany the exhibition with a new text by Bridget Riley that is a very personal account of her approach to making work. This is the first text written by Riley about her work in many years. Also included is an essay by Michael Bracewell and a unique list of all works by Bridget Riley held in public collections in the UK – demonstrating how Riley's work has been collected throughout the country for more than five decades.

The series is designed to highlight the artist's work in collections around the country, and each venue that will host the exhibition was selected because of their own collections of Bridget Riley's work. The show opens at the Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool (25 September – 13 December 2009) and tours to Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery (6 February – 23 May 2010), Norwich Castle Museum & Art Gallery (5 June – 5 September) and Southampton City Art Gallery (17 September – 5 December).

**Bridget Riley: Flashback** is accompanied by a catalogue that includes commissioned essays by Michael Bracewell and Bridget Riley. Price: 14.99 (tbc) ISBN: 978 1 85332 280 8

**The Arts Council Collection** was formed in 1946 by the Arts Council of Great Britain and has been managed by the Hayward Gallery, Southbank Centre since 1987. From the outset, the intention was to support artists living and working in Britain through the purchase and display of their work, and to tour exhibitions across the country to encourage public appreciation of modern and contemporary art. This makes it the widest circulated collection of its kind.

**Note to Editors:**

- The Arts Council Collection is the largest national loan collection of modern and contemporary British art and includes work by all of this country's most prominent artists. With over 7,500 works by 2000 artists it can be seen in public exhibitions and displays across the UK and abroad. For further information please visit [www.artscouncilcollection.org.uk](http://www.artscouncilcollection.org.uk)
- For over 35 years, the Hayward Gallery has played a key role in creating imaginative, high profile exhibitions in London and within the UK through Hayward Touring. The touring programme and the Arts Council Collection are managed by Hayward Gallery on behalf of Arts Council England, and add to the Hayward's distinctive national remit.
- Southbank Centre is the UK's largest arts centre, occupying a 21-acre site that sits in the midst of London's most vibrant cultural quarter on the South Bank of the Thames. The site has an extraordinary creative and architectural history stretching back to the 1951 *Festival of Britain*. Southbank Centre is home to the Royal Festival Hall, Queen Elizabeth Hall, Purcell Room and the Hayward Gallery as well as The Saison Poetry Library and the Arts Council Collection.

**Address:**

Walker Art Gallery  
William Brown Street  
Liverpool  
L3 8EL

**Opening Hours:** Open 10am-5pm daily.

**Tel:** 0151 478 4199

**Admission:** free

For more information about upcoming venues for this exhibition please check:  
[www.southbankcentre.co.uk/visual-arts/hayward-touring/current](http://www.southbankcentre.co.uk/visual-arts/hayward-touring/current)