

Listening Comprehension

FORM 11

THE HUMAN CAMERA

There is no one quite like Stephen Wiltshire. Born on 1974, Stephen was always different. As a child, he couldn't make friends. In fact, he talked to nobody, showed no interest in school subjects and wasn't able to sit still. Stephen was diagnosed as autistic*. He didn't manage to pass his exam but he found one thing he liked doing: drawing. Art became his way to communicate.

He started by drawing funny pictures of his teachers, but soon began to draw buildings. His eye for detail was perfect. He could see a building just once and remember everything about it. In 1987, aged twelve, he saw a train station in London called St Pancras. Hours later, in front of TV cameras, he managed to draw this complicated building, with the time on the station clock saying 11.20, the exact time when he was there. The drawings showed every detail perfectly.

Since that television programme made him famous in the UK, many great things have happened to Stephen. He has become a well-known artist, published four books of his drawings, taken helicopter rides above world's great cities – including London, Rome, Hong Kong and New York- and drawn amazing pictures of them, and opened his own art gallery, where he now works, in London.

His drawings are incredibly accurate – he always manages to draw everything in the right place – but also beautiful to look at. In 2006, he was given an MBE** by the Queen of England for services to art.

*autistic: having a mental condition that makes it hard for someone to understand other people and form relationship

**MBE: Member of the British Empire, an award given by the Queen for outstanding achievements