

The amazing detailed cityscapes by the artist Stephen Wiltshire

Drawing on his incredible powers of memory, this is artist Stephen Wiltshire's latest take on the London and New York skylines.



Relying purely on the picture in his mind Stephen observed and reproduced incredibly detailed aerial drawings of the iconic cities. Entitled Globe of New York and Globe of London, the internationally respected artist has also documented the rise of London's latest eyesore - the Shard.

As shown in these incredible drawings, the unfinished skyscraper from the roof of St Guy's Hospital by the banks of the River Thames. Drawing the soon to be 1,017 foot tall building from memory, Stephen also completed other drawings of future visions of the London skyline.

Listening intently to his Ipod throughout the artistic process, Stephen uses only Stadler graphic pens when he commits his picture perfect memory to 300gsm museum quality paper.

Stephen started drawing at the age of five, when he started drawing animals, people and street scenes.

"It is interesting to draw cities like London, New York and LA as their skylines change throughout the years," he said. "When I am drawing I am thinking about the information and the details so I can memorise it and then draw it back."

Stephen's panoramic work can take anywhere from five to twelve days to complete, though smaller pieces can be completed in a day. Observing every detail, he memorises the information before creating each drawing.

For his pieces Globe of New York and Globe of London, Stephen drew upon his memories from various aerial trips over the cities. "The aerial view can be difficult. The information is difficult to draw because there is so much information with lots of windows, park areas and buildings." "I like London landmarks like the Houses of Parliament, St Paul's and Tower Bridge." "In New York the sky scrapers like the Empire State Building, the Chrysler and Central Park are interesting to me." "In my life time I have seen so many changes to the London and New York skyline and it is very exciting."

In the past Stephen, 36, has famously produced cityscapes of Tokyo, Rome and Hong Kong that have drawn gasps from the public.

"Stephen sketches his layout in pencil first and then scales it within the border, first adding in landmarks before filling out in more intricate detail," said Annette Wiltshire, who is Stephen's sister. "He works methodically in short sharp bursts during the day."

For over 25 years, Stephen Wiltshire has been synonymous with finely-detailed, vigorous pen and ink drawings of the world's great cities.

"Cities have always been his passion, and he is drawn to cosmopolitan lifestyles." said Annette.

Diagnosed as autistic at an early age, Stephen's talent for drawing emerged as a way of expressing himself. Using his drawing's to aid in his learning and encouraged by his family, Stephen created a series of 26 pictures to help him speak, all of which corresponded to a letter in the alphabet.

Going through up to 12 pens during his sketches which can take up to a week to complete, Stephen also draws heavily on music which he carries everywhere.

He listens to 70s, 80s, 90s, blues, soul, funk, Motown, pop, Back Street Boys, All Saints, New Kids on the Block. He always listens to music while he works," says Annette.

Stephen's work is increasingly in demand all over the world.

In 2005, he was commissioned to undertake vast panoramic drawings of nine world cities starting with a 10 metre long canvas representation of the Tokyo skyline.

Stephen subsequently took on commissions from Hong Kong - where he produced a 10 metre long drawing of Victoria Harbour after just a 20 minute helicopter ride and did the same in his spiritual home - New York.

"The New York one was extra special and unique," explained Annette.

"Due to his personal love of New York, it contained far more detail and the perspective of the panorama was much more in-depth, which gave it a more realistic, 3-D view of the city."

Already commanding an amazing collection, his ambition to document more skylines remains.

"I want to do the Shard once it is finished and see the view from there as the London skyline will be much more interesting," he said. "In the future I would love to go to Dallas, Texas - I have never been there before - and the skyline and the street scenes would be interesting to draw."

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