Transcript – Composition in colour

When we were doing reviews later on I asked him to choose a drawing that he particularly liked, and he chose this drawing. And he said this was when they went to Granny Green Steps, where they were looking up towards the Castle, and then down the big castle road. And he said, when I first looked at this view I just couldn’t begin to understand how I could draw it, and then I started drawing and then I knew how to work it out. I worked out my understanding through the drawing. And that has stayed with me very strongly. And what I love about this particular drawing and the composition of it is that it's almost like you can see how he has tried to work out the perspective of the road going down and away from him, and I don’t think it matters that it doesn’t strictly work - it doesn’t necessarily feel that it is going away from you. But there is just such an expressive way of rendering his understanding of that, and you feel he is really working out the space, and the way that the space is quite complex, and how he has interpreted the street here - and maybe it is slightly tilting but I think it doesn’t matter.

Moving into Colour

When he then moved into paint, like some of the others, it got a little bit muddled as he was learning to handle the colours. But he, unusually, I think it suited his way of working very well, and he very quickly understood that to limit your palette was an advantage in your composition. And this is in Bryan’s Place, looking down the alleyway, and I think this is a beautiful interpretation in layout of composition of really quite a difficult view spatially, where he has simplified areas, he has used a very painterly texture to render form here, and a wonderful sense of the plane on this part here, and then also these lovely delicate attention to detail, and he knew he had a very clear sense of his achievement in this, which I think children do have. And, of course, once you get a real taste of achieving something for yourself you want to do it again, and he just went on to excel in both understanding his composition and how he used colour.

Sometimes he combines a very bold use of line with very rich texture, sometimes it is a little bit more literal and analytical like this drawing, but again I think he has been successful in his use of colour.

And then in this beautiful painting he has reduced his palette right down very successfully, and it really gives a lovely spatial sense of the composition as well; you have got this wonderful strong, strong foreground, and then you really feel the mass and movement of the way these buildings are receding in the space here.

[End of Recording]