Neurodivergent Times

Volume I, Issue I
5th April 2025



Monthly Magazine on Neurodivergence

" A Publication from Holding Hope Centre for Speech & Hearing"



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📢 Call for Articles 📢

Neurodivergent Times Magazine!

We are excited to announce Neurodivergent Times – a magazine dedicated to amplifying voices, sharing experiences, and addressing the challenges faced by the neurodivergent

We invite

- Schools
- Advocates
- Parents
- Healthcare Professionals
- Neurodivergent Individuals

to contribute articles on any issue, perspective, or solution related to neurodiversity. Your insights can educate, inspire, and create meaningful change!

📧 Send your submissions to: goswamineha9348@gmail.com

Let's work together to build awareness, acceptance, and support for the neurodivergent community.
Your words can make a difference!

NEURODIVERGENT TIMES

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Neurodivergent Times

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2. We act as curators and compilers of existing knowledge, personal experiences, and community perspectives—not as original researchers or medical professionals.

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Contents

06. Editorial:
Neurodivergent Times – Breaking Barriers, Building Bridges

07. Dr. Spondita Goswami
Parental Non-Acceptance of Neurodivergence Children: Consequences, Future Ramifications, and Solutions

10. Dr. Sudeshna Goswami
Oral Motor Skills from a Speech Therapy Perspective

11. Dr. Sudeshna Goswami
Wooden Learning Game Boards in Special Education

12. Dr. Sudeshna Goswami
Sensory Integration in the Vestibular System

15. Debashis Borpuzari
Stephen Wiltshire: Triumph Through Art and Autism

17. Stephen Wiltshire
Big Ben on a Rainy Evening



EDITORIAL

Neurodivergent Times – Breaking Barriers, Building Bridges

INAUGURAL ISSUE

Today marks a significant milestone as we proudly introduce Neurodivergent Times, a platform dedicated to creating awareness, nurturing empathy, and fostering understanding of the different aspects of neurodiversity. Our mission is simple: to illuminate paths of possibility for parents, educators, health care professionals, and all those walking alongside the neurodivergent community.

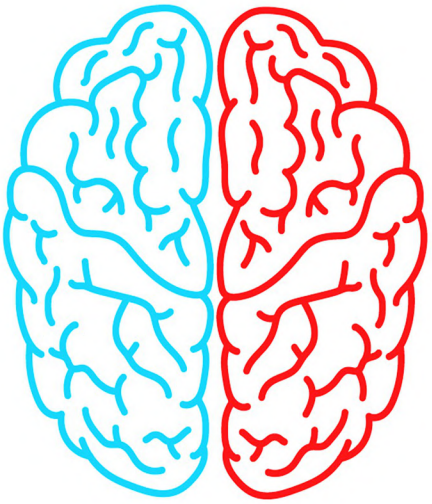
Neurodiversity is not a challenge to overcome but a spectrum of unique potentials waiting to be welcome. For parents, navigating this journey can be both rewarding and challenging. We recognize the sacrifices, strength, and boundless love that families pour into supporting their children. It is with deep respect that we launch Neurodivergent Times, knowing the transformative power of community and shared wisdom.

The pages of this magazine are not crafted to deliver academic instruction, but rather to serve as a ray of hope and awareness for the general public, especially for parents. Our articles aim to share insights into fields like Speech-Language Pathology (SLP), Occupational Therapy (OT), special education, physical therapy, child psychology, and alternative therapies like Yoga, Music, Dance, and Art. Inspirational stories will take centre stage, highlighting victories that inspire us all to aim for what may seem unattainable. These efforts are a call to action for all individuals—parents, educators, healthcare professionals, and communities—to come together with understanding and empathy.

We also seek to rethink perspectives, breaking down barriers of judgment and misconception. Through this publication, we aim to uplift voices that shine a light on the brilliance and creativity that neurodivergent individuals bring to our world. It is a movement of awareness, understanding, and inclusivity. With every word written, we extend our commitment to building bridges of empathy and breaking barriers of misunderstanding.

As we embark on this journey, we invite you to be a part of this effort—to read, contribute, share, and grow. Let us honour the strength of parents and families, celebrate the diversity of minds, and nurture a culture of acceptance that prepares the way for extraordinary possibilities.

Welcome to Neurodivergent Times. Together, let's shape a future of awareness, connection, and hope.



- The Editorial Team

Parental Non-Acceptance of Neurodivergence in Children:

Consequences, Future Consequences, and Solutions



The birth of a child is often accompanied by joy, hope, and expectations. However, when parents receive a diagnosis of neurodivergence in their child, their response can vary widely. While some parents accept and adapt to their child's condition, others struggle with denial, or non-acceptance. Parental non-acceptance of a child's neurodivergence can have severe and lasting consequences on the child's emotional, social, and cognitive development. This article explores how non-acceptance affects children, the future effect of this attitude, and possible solutions supported by research findings.



Understanding Parental Non-Acceptance

Parental non-acceptance occurs when parents refuse to acknowledge their child's neurodivergence. This response can be attributed to multiple factors, including societal stigma, cultural beliefs, personal expectations, and psychological distress. According to Kübler-Ross's model of grief (1969), parents often undergo emotional stages such as denial, anger, bargaining, depression, and acceptance when confronted with their child's neurodivergence. However, some parents remain stuck in denial, preventing them from taking necessary steps to support their child's development.

A study by Kearney & Griffin (2001) suggests that parents who struggle to accept their child's neurodivergence often perceive it as a personal failure, leading to avoidance behaviours. These behaviours may include refusing professional assessments, avoiding specialized interventions, or isolating the child from social interactions

Adverse Effects on the Child

Parental non-acceptance can manifest in several harmful ways, negatively impacting the child's overall development. Research highlights the following major consequences:

1. Emotional and Psychological Impact:

o Differently abled children experience rejection or emotional neglect from their parents often develop low self-esteem, anxiety, and depression.

o A study published in the Journal of Developmental and BehaviouralPaediatrics found that neuro divergent, neurotypical children who lacked parental support were more likely to suffer from emotional distress and behavioural issues.

2. Hindered Cognitive and Educational Development:

o Non-accepting parents may refuse early intervention programs that could enhance the child's cognitive and academic growth.

3. Struggles with Social Integration:

o When parents do not acknowledge their child's neuro-divergence, they may prevent them from participating in social activities, fearing judgment from others.

o This isolation can result in poor social skills, difficulty forming relationships, and increased susceptibility to bullying.

4. Delayed or Denied Access to Therapy and Health-care:

o Many disorder, such as Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) Cerebral Palsy, require early intervention for optimal development. If parents are in denial, they may delay or refuse medical and therapeutic treatments.

o Delayed intervention can exacerbate the child's difficulties, leading to more severe challenges in adulthood

Future Ramifications of Parental Non-Acceptance

If non-acceptance continues, the effects can extend well into the child's future, affecting multiple aspects of their life:

1. Long-Term Psychological Issues:

o Children who grow up feeling rejected or unsupported may struggle with chronic anxiety, depression, or post-traumatic stress disorder.

o These mental health issues can impact their ability to maintain stable relationships and employment in adulthood.

2. Educational and Career Limitations:

o Lack of parental encouragement and resources often results in poor academic performance, limiting career opportunities for individuals with disabilities

o Studies have shown that children with disabilities who lack parental support are less likely to complete higher education or vocational training.

3. Negative Family Dynamics:

o The absence of parental acceptance can create tension within families, sometimes leading to sibling conflict or strained marital relationships.

Solutions and Recommendations

Addressing parental non-acceptance requires a multi-faceted approach that involves education, counselling, community support, and policy changes. The following strategies can help:

1. Early Parental Education and Awareness:

o Providing parents with accurate information about early identification, early detection, and early intervention can dispel myths and reduce stigma.

o Support programs such as Parents as Teachers (PAT) help educate parents on developmental disabilities and available resources.

2. Counselling and Psychological Support:

o Parents should have access to grief counselling and support groups where they can share experiences and learn coping strategies.

o Therapy can help parents move through the stages of grief and reach acceptance more effectively.

3. Promoting Strength-Based Approaches:

o Encouraging parents to focus on their child's abilities rather than limitations fosters a more positive perspective.

o Should highlight the child's strengths and potential achievements to build parental confidence.

4. Community Support and Inclusion:

o Schools and local organizations should promote inclusive environments where parents of children with special needs feel welcomed and supported.

o Social campaigns can work to destigmatize disabilities and encourage parental acceptance.





Parental acceptance plays a crucial role in the well-being and development of children with special needs. Non-acceptance can have long-term negative consequences, affecting the child's emotional, educational, and social outcomes. By implementing awareness programs, providing psychological support, and fostering inclusive communities, we can encourage parents to accept their child's condition and take proactive steps toward their well-being.

Oral Motor Skills from a Speech Therapy Perspective



Oral motor skills refer to the strength, coordination, and movement of the muscles in the mouth, lips, tongue, and jaw. These skills play a crucial role in speech production, feeding, swallowing, and facial expressions. Deficiencies in oral motor skills can result in speech delays, articulation disorders, and feeding difficulties. Speech-language pathologists (SLPs) , Early interventionists assess and provide interventions to improve oral motor skills, enhancing both communication and overall oral function.

Speech Therapy Approaches for Oral Motor Skill Development

SLPs use various strategies to strengthen oral muscles and improve motor coordination:

1. **Oral Motor Exercises:**
   - o Blowing bubbles or whistles to strengthen breath support.
   - o Lip and tongue resistance exercises to improve strength.
   - o Chewing different textures to enhance jaw control.
2. **Sensory Stimulation:**
   - o Using textured spoons or vibrating tools to improve oral awareness.
   - o Encouraging varied food textures to develop oral sensitivity.
3. **Articulation Therapy:**
   - o Practicing specific speech sounds using exaggerated movements.
   - o Using mirrors and visual feedback to improve tongue and lip placement.
4. **Feeding Therapy:**
   - o Introducing modified food textures and temperatures.
   - o Teaching proper chewing and swallowing techniques.
5. **Breath Control Exercises:**
   - o Activities like blowing candles or using straws to strengthen respiratory control for speech.

Oral motor skills are fundamental to speech, language and feeding development. Early identification and intervention by speech-language pathologists, paediatric interventionist can significantly improve a child's ability to communicate effectively and maintain proper oral function.

Wooden Learning Game Boards in Special Education



Wooden learning game boards have gained popularity as effective educational tools. These boards, designed to support cognitive, motor, and sensory development, provide tactile and visual stimulation that helps children with diverse learning needs. In special education, where individualized learning approaches are essential, wooden learning game boards serve as interactive, durable, and engaging tools that enhance the learning experience.

Benefits of Wooden Learning Game Boards in Special Education

1. **Multi-Sensory Learning**

Children with special needs often require multi-sensory input to enhance learning. Wooden boards provide a combination of visual, tactile, and kinaesthetic experiences, making concepts easier to grasp. For example, a wooden alphabet puzzle allows children to touch, feel, and place letters, reinforcing letter recognition and fine motor skills simultaneously.

2. **Motor Skill Development**

Wooden learning boards help develop both fine and gross motor skills. Activities such as sorting shapes, moving sliders, or placing puzzle pieces require hand-eye coordination, finger dexterity, and muscle control. For children with developmental delays, these activities help strengthen motor functions necessary for writing, dressing, and other daily tasks.

3. **Social and Emotional Development**

Group-based board games promote turn-taking, patience, and teamwork, which are essential social skills. Many children with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) or attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) struggle with social interactions. Wooden learning games create structured, enjoyable opportunities for cooperative play, helping children engage with peers in a positive manner.

Types of Wooden Learning Game Boards

1 Alphabet and Number Boards: Help with letter and number recognition, sequencing.

2 Shape and Colour Sorting Boards: Enhance colour and shape identification, spatial awareness, and categorization skills.

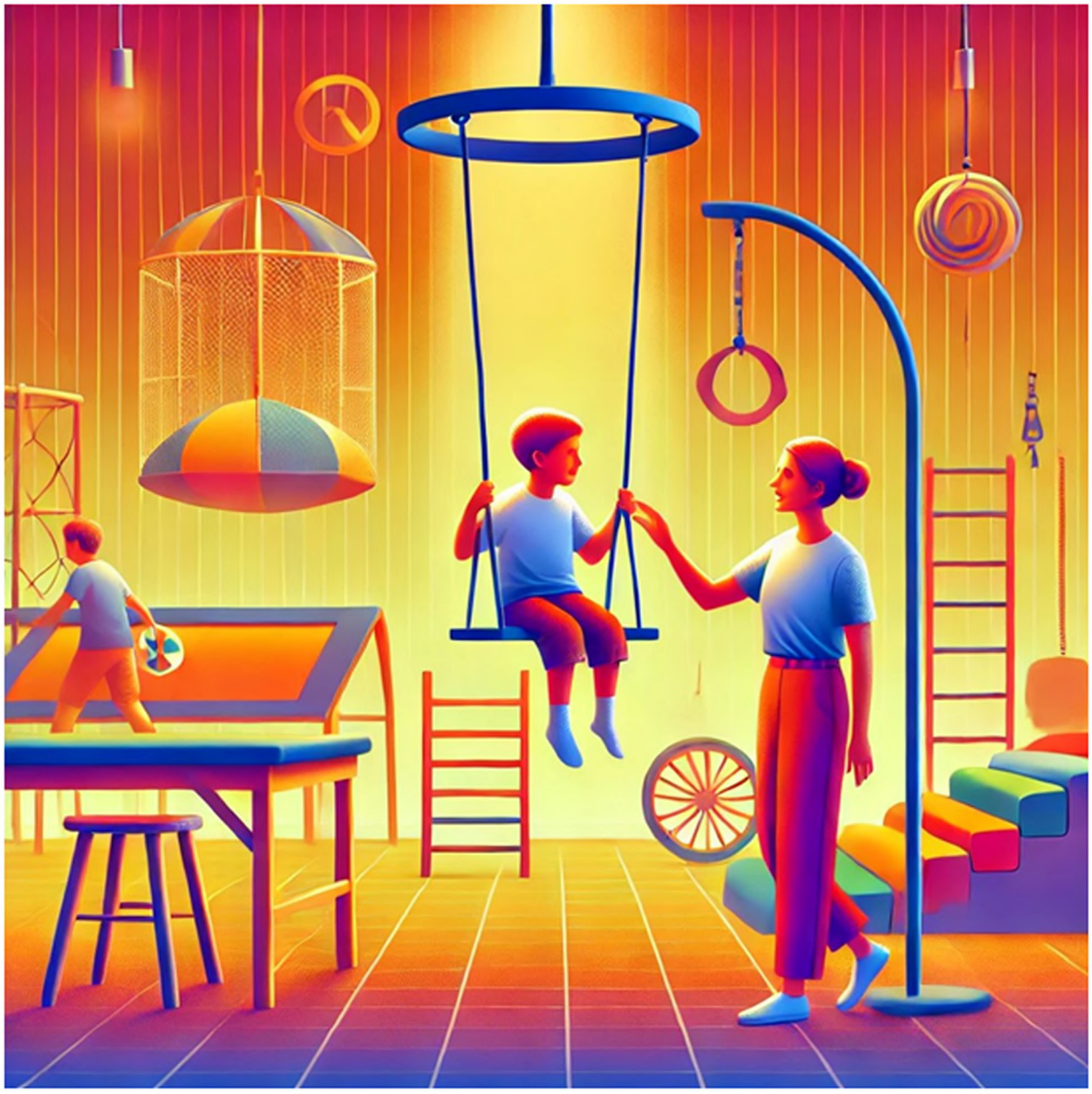
3 Matching and Memory Boards: Improve attention, memory recall, and cognitive processing.

4 Tactile Sensory Boards: Provide different textures and surfaces to stimulate sensory exploration for children with sensory processing disorders.

5 Lacing and Threading Boards: Strengthen fine motor skills and hand-eye coordination.

Wooden learning game boards serve as versatile and effective educational tools in special education, promoting cognitive, motor, social, and sensory development. Their tactile nature, durability, and ability to support individualized learning make them invaluable in special education classrooms and therapy sessions. By incorporating these engaging resources, educators and therapists can create a more inclusive and supportive learning environment for children with diverse needs.

Sensory Integration in the Vestibular System



Sensory integration is a crucial neurological process that allows individuals to receive, interpret, and respond appropriately to sensory stimuli. Among the various sensory systems, the vestibular system plays a fundamental role in maintaining balance, spatial orientation, and coordination. The vestibular system, located in the inner ear, provides the brain with information about movement, head position, and body posture. When sensory integration in the vestibular system is disrupted, it can lead to difficulties in motor skills, attention, and overall daily functioning. This article explores the importance of sensory integration in the vestibular area, its effects on individuals, and therapeutic interventions to enhance vestibular processing.

Understanding the Vestibular System

The vestibular system is comprised of the semi-circular canals and otolith organs in the inner ear. These structures detect rotational and linear movements, respectively, and send signals to the brain to help regulate balance and spatial awareness. The vestibular system interacts with other sensory systems, such as proprioception and vision, to create a stable perception of the environment and coordinate movements efficiently.
Proper vestibular function is essential for:
• Balance and Coordination: Ensuring smooth movement and postural control.

• Eye Movements and Visual Stability: Supporting steady vision while moving (vestibule-ocular reflex).
• Spatial Orientation: Helping individuals navigate through their surroundings.
• Postural Control: Maintaining upright posture and adjusting body movements accordingly.
Vestibular Sensory Integration Challenges
Some individuals, particularly children with sensory processing disorders (SPD), autism spectrum disorder (ASD), or developmental coordination disorders (DCD), may experience difficulties integrating vestibular input. These challenges may manifest as:

1. Hypersensitivity to Vestibular Input (Over-Responsiveness)
• Fear of heights or movement (e.g., avoiding swings or climbing).
• Motion sickness or dizziness from minimal movement.
• Discomfort or anxiety in activities requiring balance, such as walking on uneven surfaces.

2. Hyposensitivity to Vestibular Input (Under-Responsiveness)
• Seeking excessive movement (e.g., spinning, jumping, rocking) to stimulate the vestibular system.
• Poor balance and frequent falls.
• Difficulty detecting changes in head position, leading to clumsiness.

3. Poor Vestibular Discrimination
• Difficulty understanding the direction or speed of movement.
• Challenges with depth perception and spatial awareness.
• Problems coordinating bilateral movements, such as skipping or catching a ball.

Impact of Vestibular Dysfunction on Daily Life

Vestibular dysfunction affects various aspects of life, including:

• Motor Skills: Poor coordination in activities like running, cycling, or handwriting.
• Attention and Focus: Difficulty maintaining attention in class due to poor postural stability.
• Social Participation: Avoidance of playground activities, sports, or social interactions due to fear of movement.
• Emotional Regulation: Anxiety or frustration due to challenges in movement and coordination.

Therapeutic Approaches for Vestibular Sensory Integration



Occupational Therapists (OT), Physical Therapist (PT), paediatric rehabilitation professionals certified in Sensory Integration Therapy use it to improve vestibular processing.. Effective interventions include:

1. ***Vestibular Activities and Play-Based Therapy***

• Swinging and Spinning: Controlled exposure to swings, hammocks, and spinning activities helps regulate vestibular input.
• Balance Training: Activities like standing on balance boards, walking on beams, and yoga improve coordination.
• Jumping and Bouncing: Using trampolines or therapy balls to stimulate vestibular responses.

2. ***Vestibular-Visual Integration Exercises***

• Tracking Exercises: Following moving objects with the eyes enhances visual-vestibular coordination.
• Head-Turning Drills: Practicing controlled head movements improves motion tolerance.
• Obstacle Courses: Navigating obstacles strengthens spatial awareness and motor planning.

3. ***Structured Sensory Diets***

A sensory diet includes personalized activities to provide the right amount of vestibular stimulation throughout the day. Examples:
• Frequent movement breaks in school or at home.
• Incorporating climbing and rolling activities into daily routines.
• Using weighted vests or sensory cushions to improve postural control.

The vestibular system plays a vital role in sensory integration, impacting balance, coordination, and overall well-being. Disruptions in vestibular processing can lead to challenges in motor skills, attention, and social participation. Through targeted sensory integration therapy, vestibular exercises, and structured interventions, individuals can improve their vestibular processing, leading to enhanced movement, focus, and confidence. Early identification and intervention are key to supporting individuals with vestibular sensory challenges, ensuring they can navigate their environment effectively and participate fully in daily activities.

Stephen Wiltshire:
Triumph Through Art and Autism



Stephen Wiltshire, a British architectural artist, is a living testament to the power of perseverance, creativity, and the human spirit. **Born on April 24, 1974**, in **London to Caribbean parents**, Stephen's journey from a non-verbal autistic child to an internationally celebrated artist is nothing short of extraordinary. His story is one of overcoming challenges, embracing unique abilities, and inspiring countless others.

Stephen's early years were marked by significant challenges. At the age of three, he was diagnosed with autism, a condition that affects communication, social interaction, and behavior. Around the same time, he faced the devastating loss of his father in a motorcycle accident. These events left young Stephen isolated, non-verbal, and living in his own world.

However, his unique talent began to emerge during his time at Queensmill School in London, a school for children with special needs. Teachers noticed that Stephen had a remarkable ability to communicate through drawing. His early sketches included animals, cars, and eventually, buildings. Recognizing his potential, his teachers encouraged him to speak by temporarily withholding his art supplies, prompting him to utter his first word: "paper." By the age of nine, Stephen had learned to speak fully, but his primary language remained his art.

Stephen's artistic journey took a significant turn when he began sketching London landmarks at the age of seven. His extraordinary ability to draw detailed cityscapes from memory became evident. One of his teachers, recognizing his talent, accompanied him on drawing excursions and submitted his work to children's art competitions. These efforts brought Stephen's work to the attention of the media, and at the age of eight, he received his first commission: a drawing of Salisbury Cathedral for the **British Prime Minister.**

Stephen's talent as a "savant" artist—someone with exceptional abilities in a specific area—set him apart. He could observe a cityscape for a brief moment and recreate it with astonishing accuracy and detail. This ability earned him widespread recognition and admiration.

Stephen's career blossomed as he continued to hone his craft. He attended the City and Guilds of London Art School, where he further developed his skills. Over the years, he has created breathtaking panoramic drawings of cities such as New York, Tokyo, and London, often based on a single helicopter ride. His nineteen-foot-long drawing of New York City, created after a twenty-minute observation, is a testament to his photographic memory and artistic genius.

In 2006, Stephen was awarded the title of Member of the Order of the British Empire (MBE) for his services to art. The same year, he opened a permanent gallery in the Royal Opera Arcade in London, where his work continues to inspire visitors from around the world.

Stephen's journey has not been without its struggles. Autism presented significant barriers in his early life, including difficulties with communication and social interaction. However, his art became a bridge to the world, allowing him to express himself and connect with others. His story highlights the importance of recognizing and nurturing the unique abilities of individuals with autism.

Stephen's success is also a testament to the support he received from his family, teachers, and mentors. Their encouragement and belief in his potential played a crucial role in his development and achievements.



Today, Stephen Wiltshire is celebrated not only for his artistic talent but also for his resilience and determination. His work has been featured in exhibitions, books, and documentaries, inspiring people of all ages and backgrounds. He has become a role model for individuals with autism, demonstrating that challenges can be transformed into opportunities for growth and success.

Stephen's art captures the beauty and complexity of urban landscapes, offering viewers a unique perspective on the world. His ability to find joy and purpose through his craft serves as a powerful reminder of the transformative power of creativity.

Stephen Wiltshire's life is a story of triumph over adversity, a celebration of individuality, and a testament to the boundless potential of the human spirit. Through his art, he has not only enriched the world but also broken down barriers and challenged perceptions about autism. His journey continues to inspire and remind us that with passion, perseverance, and support, anything is possible.

Big Ben on a rainy evening (2008)

