Date: (In purple)

Author/Interview subject: Sav Akyuz (Illustrator)

Interviewed by: Janice Forsyth

Other speakers: Girl; Boy

JF: Hello there, a very, very warm welcome indeed to Authors Live, thank you so much for joining us, we're in for a terrific session today. I'm Janice Forsyth, I'm not alone, with me are some excellent pupils from the brilliant Dunfermline High School in Fife, they're very excited, I am too, because today we're going to meet a brilliant artist, illustrator Sav Akyuz, who's got lots of skills and he uses them in all sorts of ways in his career. Everything from picture books to storyboarding. We'd love to hear from you wherever you are watching, so if you've got a Twitter feed, do get on that and use the hashtag BBCAuthorsLive. You can ask Sav anything, I mean, maybe the whole idea of storytelling, visual storytelling, how you tell a story through drawings, and also storyboarding, you might not know anything about that. And even more importantly, perhaps if you're into art, how you can maybe, like Sav, make your career out of art, which would be really, really cool. So, lots coming up – right now though, wherever you are, and everybody here, please give a massive warm welcome to the brilliant Sav Akyuz. [Applause].

SA: Thanks very much, thanks very much, and thanks for coming down to have a chat with me today and thanks to everybody at home for tuning in. So, I'm here today to talk a little bit about the things that I do for my job, and I've got two different things that I do, one is illustrate children's books, which might be easier for everybody to understand, you've probably all seen, read lots of children's books. But the other thing that I do is that I'm a storyboard artist, and that means I draw things before they're film, okay. So, I work specifically in TV commercials, but there are guys that work in TV drama and people that work in feature films, like Star Wars and Harry Potter. And so, what our job is is that we have to turn the words on the page, which is called the script, that somebody has written, somebody has written the story, somebody has written some actions, and we

have to help turn those words into pictures. And we usually work alongside the director and the director is the person who's responsible for turning the words into a world and moving images. And it's a really cool way for everybody involved in the production to work out how to tell that story, how to turn those words into moving images, and it's a bit like illustrating children's books because illustrating children's books, you turn words into illustrations, okay. So, in a way you're the director of the children's book, whereas you work alongside a director in the world of moving images.

It's a really, really cool, interesting job, because you've always got a challenge on how to tell that part of the story in the most efficient and the most interesting, the most engaging way, because you've got to keep the audience engaged, and there are so many different ways to tell a different part of the story. One of the most difficult things that you're faced with is what is the meaning of that shot, what is the meaning of that composition, because if you draw somebody in a close-up, it means one thing, and if you draw somebody in a wide shot, it means something else. I'm going to give you a few demonstrations of all of that stuff now. And then I'm going to talk a bit about the children's books and what it takes to create characters and how you put things together for a children's book, and then I'm going to show you a really cool way of creating artwork that you might not have seen, especially in the world of children's books.

So like I said, in the world of storyboards, you'll receive a script, and it's usually half a page, maybe a page long, and it describes a story over 30 seconds or 60 seconds, so there's only a short amount of time, which is why it's really important to really focus on what you have to say at that moment in the story, because every second counts, okay. And I'll give you a bit of an example of what I mean. So, for example, I might sit with a director who's doing a car commercial, okay, we'll start with something really simple. Car commercial is all about making the car look really, really good. There are certain ways to shoot cars that they look really at their best, and the director will sort of steer me in a way that he wants to shoot that particular moment, and then I'll help him draw it out to see if it's going to work, okay. So, for example, the line in the script might say, car drives along a country road, so the director's then got a choice of where's he going to put the camera, okay, where's the best place to put the camera to make the car look the best. He could shoot it from up in the sky, so looking right down on it and we see the roof of the car – it's not really the most interesting way to shoot it. He could shoot it from behind which is quite cool, he could shoot it from the front, but then he's got to decide is he going to shoot it directly from the front, is he going to shoot it a bit from the side, is he going to be right down on the ground, is he going to be up above. So, then I'll help him make these decisions by just saying

to him, well, look, if we draw it from down below at the front, a little bit to the side, it might start to look a bit like this. So, I'll do a really quick sketch, it'll take me a few seconds to just do a really, really quick sketch to say, this is how it's roughly going to look, we've got some trees in the background, okay, everything's going really fast, and we've got our car there in the foreground, okay. And he'll say, yeah, that's pretty good, why don't you go away and work that up a bit and let's see how it looks in the next stage of the drawing, so I can see it a bit clearer and make a decision. So, then I will knock that down and I'll trace over the top and I'll do another pass which looks a bit like that. Which is a bit of a clearer drawing.

Now, in the meantime, something that always happens in commercials is that people change their minds about where they want to film, so it's then turned from a country lane into a desert landscape with mountains in the background, so I'll have to then draw, quickly add a few mountains in the background and he'll say, yeah, that looks pretty good. So, then he'll say, go ahead and draw that up, and then I'll draw another pass like that. In the meantime, he's said, can you make the mountains a bit smaller to make the car look bigger, so I've done that. And then he or she will say, just finish off that drawing for me and we can send that off, and I'll add a few bits, and then we've got a storyboard for a car shot.

Now, what they'll then do is they'll take that away, everybody will decide if they like it, if they're happy with it they'll sign that off, and then they'll use that on the day on the shoot when they've got a whole crew of people, could be 20, 30, 40, 50, maybe even 100 people standing around waiting to decide what they're going to shoot next. And what they do is that they refer to the drawing and then everybody knows what they have to do to get that shot set up, okay. And that's the function of storyboards in commercials and in movies. Everybody looks at them and everybody knows what they're going to do, because standing around twiddling their thumbs having conversations about what to shoot next is wasting time and there isn't a lot of time on a shoot to have those blank moments, you know. So that's like how we do a car shot.

And then I thought I'll show you something, I'll draw it live, okay. About what I was talking about earlier about the meaning of shots, okay. So, the thing about being a storyboard artist is that it's not just about being able to draw well. You need to understand film language, visual language and what things mean, when you move a camera, if a camera is high, if a camera is low, if a camera is close or if a camera is far away, okay. So, I'll just do a couple of sketches to show you what I mean. Okay, so we can start off – oh, not that guy – we can start off drawing somebody's face, right. So, let's draw a guy who looks a bit shocked or confused, he's not very comfortable basically, okay. We'll give him some hair,

okay. So that's our first shot. We've got someone who looks like they're a little bit out of their comfort zone. Now, the important thing is what goes next, because that will tell us a story. So, if we put – I tell you what we'll do, let's make it even more extreme, okay, and have him really, really shocked. Okay, so he's like – okay? So, then the shot that comes next is going to tell us the story and what the meaning of that first shot is. So, if the next shot is, I don't know, a banana, okay, then we've got a guy who's shocked at the sight of a banana, maybe he's scared of bananas, okay. If the next shot after this guy – and I tell you what we'll do – if the next shot after that guy is – I'm going to draw it really roughly, really rough, like the first drawing I did for that director – if the next shot is a studio audience of teenagers, then we start to understand why this guy is maybe a bit shocked and a bit out of his comfort zone, okay. Then we might have a camera at the back here and all sorts of other people with important jobs in the background, okay. So that's our second shot, it's a wide shot showing the studio audience, showing the world that this close-up guy is in, and it starts to explain why he might have that expression on his face. So, these are really rough drawings, these will then get given to a director or producer, they'll get taken away and they'll discuss it and say, well, can we film that many children, have we got a wide enough space to film. And when that gets approved, then they'll give it back to me to then start to draw it up. And it could get as detailed as, you know, draw some of the faces, a bit bored, or draw some of the faces which are a bit excited, okay. So, you could really get into detail.

So that's the world of moving images, but it really relates also and has really helped me in my world as a children's book illustrator with coming up with compositions for written words in books, okay, because they're stories but the shots are composed in a different way, especially when you're composing for a much younger audience. Things have got to be a lot clearer and a lot simpler. So, I've recently had a book published called Bear Moves which is a dance book about this bear who enjoys dancing. So that's the front cover, so immediately we've got a very, very strong, graphic image of a dancing bear in front of a huge disco ball. So immediately that communicates what the story is about and people know what they're going to get into, it's going to be a fun book, it's got a dancing bear, disco ball, what more do you want? Right? Then we have to meet our character, so a nice, big, bold, clear image of our main character, our hero, and that's who we're going to follow through the story. And then we start to progress through different dance moves, different costumes, different contexts. And everything, as you can see, is laid out in a much flatter, much clearer way, because young children have to be able to read that image really, really quickly, really simply and they need to understand, that they need to get it. And their visual language isn't as developed as ours, because as we grow up, the more

things we read, the more things we see, the more things we experience, develops our visual language a lot more, we can understand the depth in a composition, we can understand the way things put together a lot more, but a child obviously, it's more like blocks, okay. Start to take away backgrounds, really focus on what's happening, okay – skip that one, it's a bit naughty – here again we've got strong colours, bold compositions, really in your face. And it, sort of, goes along with the story as well, because the images in the story have to work together. We've got a fun, action-packed story about this dancing bear; we need fun, action-packed illustrations, okay. Again, we've got a more complicated dance move on the left, so I decided to just not have much of a background; the one on the right was a bit more of a bold, graphic shape so we could have a background. So, it's all about adding when you need to add and taking things away when you can take them away, to focus the eye on the composition, okay, create atmosphere, create mood, sometimes giving it a background, giving it a set context really helps tell the story of that moment.

So, one of the challenges of creating a children's book is designing the character, and that just involves lots and lots of trial and error, lots and lots of drawing. Here is the first ever images I sketched when I was trying to decide what the bear looked like. I just had a pad and a felt-tip pen, I knew it had to be a bold line so I just used the felt-tip so I didn't try and get too detailed too quickly. And I'd draw all different sorts of shapes and looks, big noses, small noses, big eyes, small eyes, it's all part of the process, you've got to try everything, and the important thing is to not be scared about just experimenting, because all this stuff, it's just problem-solving. Okay. Some more images, trying to get the look of the character, trying to bring him to life, trying to get his cheekiness. And on the right-hand side there I actually started to storyboard some of the scenes in the book, that's just the natural way that I work. And this was a drawing I did probably about five years ago without even knowing we were going to do a dance book of the bear dancing, so his character was always there in my head.

I remember when I was a bit younger, I went to film school, and after film school I wanted to direct, I wanted to be a director, and this is how I sort of learned film language. I remember I had a meeting with a guy and I showed him some work that I'd done and I piled up all of this work onto this showreel it's called, 10 or 15 minutes' worth of short films and whatever, and he said to me, it only takes one frame, it only takes one frame out of all of these thousands and thousands of frames to convince somebody to take a chance on you as a director. And it's the same with wanting to draw for a living, it only takes one image to convince people that you can draw or you can do that particular job. I was talking to an illustrator friend of mine a few weeks ago who's really, really massively popular, and he

was struggling for years to show people his work and convince people that he was really good, and he told me a very surprising story that it was taking him ages and shopping it around. And then he went to a meeting and they were flipping, flicking through his portfolio and they were going page after page after page and then they came across this tiny, tiny drawing on this big A3 piece of paper, a penguin, and they saw that and the publisher said, we want that character, we want you to create a story on that character. They ignored everything else and this tiny, tiny, tiny little penguin is what they focused on, and that's what they wanted. So, it only takes one frame, it only takes one image to convince people that you can do it.

And then working in the real world as somebody who draws, of course it's a really interesting and fun job. If you guys like drawing, which I'm sure a few of you do, there's no better way to spend your day really. I mean, as a child you probably drew loads, lots of children draw all the time, so in a way you're just carrying that on and having a lot of fun drawing every single day. And like I said, it's one thing to be good at drawing, being able to draw different things, being able to draw human anatomy, people in different positions, you know, running, kicking a ball, whatever, playing a piano, but like I said, in the world of storyboards, you need to understand film language and how these shots all go together, what each composition means.

I'll give you an example of how a typical day would go. You'd start a job, you'd receive a script, you'd receive a treatment which is what the director's written to give an overall idea about how they're going to approach realising the script, bringing the script to life. So, they're going to talk about the music, they're going to talk about the lighting, they're going to talk about costumes, they're going to talk about hair and make-up, the casting, what everybody's going to look like in the film and how they're going to act. And then the director and I will have a conversation, we'll go through the script, like I said, he or she will tell me what shots they want to go with which line of the script and how they're going to tell the story. And then generally I'll take all of that information, I'll do a few scribbles, I'll make a few notes, and I'll take all of that and go away for a bit and I'll disappear for a couple of hours and I'll do a first pass, and I'll scribble out some ideas that I think are working, that are in line with what he or she has told me. And then I'll present them back in that really rough state that I showed you earlier with the car shots, I'll come back and I'll show them this version, and they'll say, yeah, that's pretty good, let's go with that. Okay. And then I'll work it up and I'll work it up, and I'll spend maybe a day drawing 20-25 drawings and send them back to the director and the producer, hopefully they'll approve them, they might have a few comments on what could be changed, what could be tweaked. They might

present them then to their client, the people who've created the car and say, this is what we're thinking, they might have a few suggestions and different angles, they might say like I said earlier, we don't want a country lane background, we want it to be an epic desert landscape or we want it to be volcanoes or we want it to be mountains or we want a waterfall or we want whatever. Then I'll have to just, you know, make a few changes. And we'll generally spend a day or two I think drawing and talking and drawing and talking till we get it refined to a place where everybody's happy. And then I'll move on to the next one.

And the reason why I like working in TV commercials is because of the new challenges you face every couple of days. So, on Monday I might be drawing cars, by Wednesday I might be drawing dogs, by Friday I might be drawing footballers, so there's always something different. When you work in feature films, for example if you work on something like Star Wars, you might spend weeks and weeks and weeks, maybe months and months and months on one action sequence, so the scenes where they're flying through space and they're having a big battle and the big ships are getting blown up and the small ships are getting blown up and the small ships are avoiding getting blown up and all sorts of crazy things are happening, all of that has to get drawn out first, so everybody in the production can plan out what they're going to shoot, what they're going to create, because a lot of these shots are created by computer graphics these days. So, there's no point going to a computer graphics artist and saying, create me a shot of a starship blowing up, because there are so many different ways you can do it. The director might turn around and say, this is how we want you to do it, we've already drawn it and this is how it has to look, and this is actually all we can afford, we can't afford to show more than this or this part of the story doesn't require anything more to be shown than this, then that artist knows to take that away and create that image the way the director wants it. But on feature films, like I said, you end up spending lots and lots and lots of time on one sequence because there's just so much going on. I prefer a new challenge every other day which is why I prefer to work in commercials.

So, when I work in storyboards, you've probably noticed, I work in black and white, I work super-fast, I don't really spend too much time on a drawing. This is a really good level of finish for me that I'm happy with at the top there, so I go from what's at the bottom, a really quick sketch, and finish up with what's at the top. And the reason why in my opinion and in my experience, we don't finish storyboard frames off in a really, really polished fashion, is because it gives the director a bit of room for manoeuvre. The difficult thing about TV commercials is there are a lot of people that are involved in the decision-making process, and if you get locked in too early into a specific decision, for example the size of that

shot, it'll mean it could be something else, it could be the size of the close-up on our guy here. It could be that one at the bottom there. We get locked into that close-up, but then on the day you realise you can't actually film that close for whatever reason or you might want to go closer. The fact that you've left the drawing a little bit loose gives people a bit of room to manoeuvre on the day, and I think that's important, because it's a creative process and everybody enjoys a bit of flexibility when it comes to the creative process.

So, the difficult thing for me transitioning from storyboards into children's illustration, which only happened a few years ago, was going from really quick black and white sketches to full colour illustrations like these, things like that, things like that, things like that. I hadn't done anything like this for a long, long time, so it's took me ages and ages and ages to develop a style and feel comfortable in doing it. One of the things that was really tricky was what medium am I going to use, how am I going to create these images, am I going to do it with watercolour, am I going to do it with acrylic paint, am I going to do it with, I don't know, charcoal, pastels, crayons. I mean, you guys know there are so many different ways to create images, so many different mediums, so I had to very quickly decide what I was going to do. And in a way, my hand was forced because I'd been drawing digitally for so long, I didn't really have a traditional set-up at home, so I had to use my digital tools, and it sort of forced me into this direction. But one thing that I wanted to do was to retain a bit of a natural element about it, to make it look like a certain style of artwork, and what I really liked and what really attracted me at the time and I thought was natural for the character was graffiti and stencil art, okay, so let me take you back to this first image. While I was drawing with all these big black bold lines, I thought to myself, well, actually, it looks a bit like a stencil, okay, why don't I create a stencil and see if I can use that technique to create some of the images in the book. So, I did that and I thought I might show you guys how that all works, because it's a really interesting way to create artwork, and it's a lot of fun.

So, I created this stencil here, which is our Bear, our hero, okay. And as you guys know, you've probably done this before, you can run a crayon sideways or you can get a paintbrush, load it up and rub it inside all the gaps, you move it away and then you're left with the image, okay. You might not have seen a stencil as complicated as this and you may not have seen this sort of demonstration live, but it's really cool. So, what I'm going to do now is show you how I've used this stencil to create artwork, okay. So, we'll load it up here, just going to do a quick test spray down in the corner, okay. You probably know what's coming next, we're just going to spray in the gaps, [spraying sound] we'll give it a nice, even coat of spray, [spraying sound] and then we'll give it a bit of a

border, okay. So right now, it's really wet, this is where it could all go wrong, so we're going to give it a few seconds to dry and then we'll pull it off, so maybe you guys can help me with a quick five count, countdown from five and then we'll pull it off, shall we do that? Okay, alright, let's do it, [audience joins in] five, four, three, two, one. We'll pull it away [applause] and we've got the final artwork. Thanks very much for listening.

JF: Sav Akyuz, boys and girls, let's have a huge round of applause. [Applause].

SA: Thank you very much.

JF: Wow, fascinating stuff, because I know you could tell us tons more about what you do as well. How fond are you of Bear, does he feel like a real bear to you in your life? [Laughs].

SA: He feels like a really naughty child which is why I love him, yeah, he's got so much character and he's so cheeky, always up to mischief, exactly how I like him.

JF: Because I think it must be so interesting to do those two distinctly different things where you're creating that character bear and it was very funny, some of those scenes that you showed us in the picture book, they're very funny, particularly in his underwear, so clearly we're having a laugh, little kids are having a laugh, older kids are having a laugh at that too. But is it fun for you too actually, that whole…as you say, it's an ongoing process, you try out lots of stuff and then you think, yeah, this is my bear? So, tell us a wee bit about the process of doing that and is it fun for you?

SA: It's so much fun, and I think that comes through in the illustrations, and I have to be honest, I do try and work in a bum or pants as often as possible because…

JF: [Laughs]. We saw that, didn't we, yeah.

SA: Yeah, so there are a lot of shots from, you know, the rear which are quite funny and the kids respond quite hilariously actually when they see them. But yeah, it's a great process and I work really closely with the writer and we come up with ideas that work visually, and that's the important thing, because sometimes Ben the writer will write something which is great but it doesn't translate visually, it's not going to end up as a strong image, and I'll feed that back to him and I'll say to him, Ben, maybe try something else because we need something that's going to work as an image, you know? But yeah, it's tons of fun, always trying new things out, and we've had so many ideas that didn't make it into…

JF: I wondered about that, yeah.

SA: …the final book, yeah, we've got a stack of ideas at home that maybe hopefully will come to light one day.

JF: And it's so interesting I think that whole idea of visual storytelling, I don't know if you ever use that terminology at all, but I think it's maybe something we take for granted, because you think storytelling with words or pictures in movies, but it's interesting how important the visuals are, pictures are in terms of progressing a story.

SA: Absolutely, and a lot of filmmakers and film theorists will say, you know, the purest form of cinema is just images only, you know, the images and the story have to work visually without the words. And that's what we try and do. And also, I think personally the same thing in picture books as well, because young children who are one and a half, two years old who are first getting into picture books, they go up from board books to picture books, they've got to be able to read those images. Those images have to be able to communicate to them, and if they can tell a sort of a story at the same time, then that's the best way to do it.

JF: And as you said also the contrast we saw there with the black and white early drawings for the film storyboards, they clearly, I mean, it must be quite challenging in a way because literally you can go for any colours you want with the children's books, so that must be fun and exciting, but at the same time that must take a wee while to figure that out.

SA: Absolutely, and I tell you what, it was a huge challenge for me because I'd been doing storyboards for years, so really quick black and white sketches, maybe I'd spend five seconds on a sketch or 15 seconds on a sketch sometimes, certainly not more than a few minutes, and then suddenly I've got to spend a day or two days on a colour illustration which I hadn't done since I was 14, 15, 16 years old doing GCSEs. So, it was a massive challenge, massive learning curve, yeah, and colour is its own challenge and colour takes years and years and years to master and I'm nowhere near…

JF: What made you go for purple with Bear? [Laughs].

SA: It was a complete accident, it was a complete accident, I had an image there which was the first ever image that I drew of Bear before he was Bear, it was just a bear that I drew because I'd been drawing lots of bears at the time for a TV ad, and I couldn't find it at the time so I was a bit gutted about that. But it was the look that he had that created the story, and I was talking to somebody earlier about creating characters from a writers' description, and I said, well, actually, interestingly Bear started off as an image first and then turned into words,

because that image, the look in his eye, that cheeky look that he had told the whole story, we knew who he was straight away and we just had to put him in a world in a different context on each page and he just did the work himself.

JF: That's so interesting, because I think we can all see from that, you want to hang out with Bear, don't you, he looks as if he would be quite good fun, as long as he puts some clothes on occasionally.

SA: [Laughs].

JF: Right, we're going to hear from some questions from our audience, so come on up, our three questioners, come and join us, give them a round of applause, go on. [Applause]. Hi, can I just go here? So, we have Marie first of all and I'll hand you the microphone to ask your question.

Girl: Hi.

SA: Hi.

Girl: What part of your job do you enjoy the most?

SA: Believe it or not, it's the actual drawing and challenging myself every day to get better and better and better at drawing, like figure drawing for example is like a lifelong challenge. So, I just enjoy that challenge of creating an image and looking at it and thinking, actually, you know, I've improved from yesterday. Equally it can be frustrating when you draw a really bad picture and you don't ever want to see it again or you don't want anyone else to see.

JF: Thank you, pass it to Ayleen, what's your question?

Girl: What are your tips for young people wanting to make art their career?

SA: Well, if you want to make art your career, it means you're passionate about it, and the tip that I would give you is to just not give up, because it's really difficult to convince people sometimes how creative and how talented you are and can be and to put your work in front of other peoples' work because ultimately you need to be chosen instead of somebody else. And it might not always go your way, you might not be chosen at the time you want to be chosen, but you just have to stick at it, and if you're passionate about it, actually that will come quite easily because that's what you want to do, that'll come from the heart.

JF: And I'm wondering, Ayleen, are you interested in art, is it something that you quite fancy?

Girl: I quite like art, yeah.

JF: Yeah. As I say, interesting that Sav does different things, like for telly, commercials, movies, but also picture books, is there anything that you are quite excited by that you fancy doing?

Girl: No, I'm still trying to like figure out style that I want to do, so…

JF: Yeah. Great, lovely, thank you very much. I'm going to pass the mic over, thank you very much indeed, to Daniel, what's your question?

Boy: Do you prefer drawing on your tablet or on paper?

SA: That's a really good question actually. The reason I draw on my tablet is because it's convenient and I think for work it's a really efficient way of working. But I must say that I do prefer drawing on paper when it comes to the initial ideas, the initial stages of character design like I showed you with the bear earlier on. I think drawing on paper is a really good permanent and fast way of getting ideas down. The trouble you can have with digital is that you can just close the file and press Do Not Save and then you've sort of lost it, whereas if it's in a sketchbook, it's there forever, yeah, unless you throw it away.

JF: Has that ever happened to you, you've lost everything?

SA: Yeah, I never save anything.

JF: Right.

SA: Yeah, I've got this…I'm sketching all the time…

JF: You never save anything?

SA: I only save work, like yeah, I very rarely…

JF: [Laughs].

SA: …the stuff…the digital equivalent of my sketchbook is in this unsaved file that gets deleted every day, I draw and…

JF: Wow. Life on the edge.

SA: …you know, I sort of, I don't know, I just solve the problem that I want to solve and then…

JF: On with the next thing.

SA: …I've done it and I just delete it.

JF: Are you interested in art, Daniel?

Boy: Yeah, I am.

SA: What kind of stuff do you like to draw?

Boy: Kind of like comic book stuff.

SA: That's exactly how I got started.

JF: Yeah, great. Lovely, thank you very much, let's hear it for our brilliant questioners, [applause] you can leave the mic there, thank you very much, thank you. Thank you, I've got a couple of questions in, Sav, from across the country, so – put my specs on – Casey in Carrick Academy S1, hi, hello, Casey in Carrick Academy who is asking, Sav, what's your favourite thing to draw?

SA: My favourite thing to draw is the human face, I draw it all the time, all the time whenever I'm sketching or for work, but the first thing I always draw when I've got a blank piece of paper is I'll draw a head and I'll put some features on it and draw a face, I always find myself drawing that more than anything else.

JF: Do you draw the same kind of face over and over or…initially…?

SA: No, I try to draw different…

JF: Yeah [laughs].

SA: …faces from different angles and it's quite challenging, but it's definitely my favourite thing.

JF: That's so funny, isn't it, with all the digital stuff and it's back to basics, the human face.

SA: Yeah, yeah, just start off with a, you know, a circle or an oval shape or an egg shape like I did with the character that I drew earlier, add some eyes, add the nose and just start building from there.

JF: So, keep sketching…

SA: That's it, yeah.

JF: …is the basic thing. This is from Katie and Kayla in Tulloch Primary, thank you very much for watching and for your question – well, this might vary, how long, Sav, does it take you to draw your images?

SA: So, when I'm drawing storyboards, I can spend anything from a few seconds to a few minutes, maybe five or ten minutes for a more complicated architectural frame. But I don't tend to spend too long on storyboards. For full colour

illustrations, that could be a day, two days, maybe even more if it's quite challenging, yeah.

JF: So, I'm just imagining, do you sometimes sit at home and an advert comes on that you've done a storyboard for, that's mine…

SA: [Laughs].

JF: …I did that.

SA: I do, what happens, I don't really get to watch a lot of TV, but this is exactly what happens, I'll be watching TV, something will come on and I think, that looks vaguely familiar…

JF: [Laughs].

SA: …have I seen this before, and then 15 seconds go by and I think, maybe I drew this, and then 25 seconds go by and it's kind of finished in five seconds and that's when I realise that actually I drew that advert and then I missed the whole thing.

JF: I love that.

SA: Happens every time.

JF: I love that. But also, just finally, I mean, clearly there are lots of picture books for kids, more and more it seems every year, and constant moving image, telly, ads, film – sounds like there could be lots of job opportunities for people if they are interested in art to maybe just be thinking about this as a possibility?

SA: Yeah, there are loads and loads of jobs for people who can draw and people who can create images, it doesn't have to be drawing, it can be collage, it can be digital collage, physical…it can be anything, because people always need to visualise something before it's created, whether that's an object like a glass for example or moving images for a screen, people need to visualise it, they need to see what it's going to look like before they invest the time and the money in to actually making it. So, there are lots and lots of different jobs and lots and lots of different departments and areas.

JF: Oh, sounds amazing, I wish I could have got into that early on because I used to love drawing but didn't know about any of that stuff, they didn't have television back when I was your age. I'm only joking…

SA: [Laughs].

JF: …right, thank you very much indeed, Sav…

SA: Thank you.

JF: …that was absolutely brilliant…

SA: Thank you very much.

JF: …I mean, those of you from Dunfermline High School fancy getting stuck into the stencils and spray paint, yeah, and wherever you're watching, I hope so too, but right now, could you please join me in giving a massive loud cheering applause for the brilliant Sav Akyuz. [Applause].

SA: Thank you, thank you, and thank you guys as well…

[Music playing].