

**Tom Wood**

Audio Guide transcript

This was Tom Wood's second portrait of fellow Yorkshire man Alan Bennett who's one of the best loved playwrights and actor raconteurs of our day. The artist is a former portrait award prize winner whose imaginative portrait of Prince Charles, on loan to the gallery also demonstrates the effective blend of realism and symbolism which he brings to his work. Here he talks about his approach to this portrait.

'I don't do a lot of research when I paint somebody because in a sense I want to trust my first responses. So what I'm trying to do as much as anything is to talk about what it feels like in a way to meet that person. And one of the things I do is to set up a series of questions. So the objects in the painting – the paper bag and the plug and the cup also – will provoke maybe a set of associations. I think what it talks about mainly is probably his reflective kind of nature. There's a very gentle quality to him and I think there's quite an astute quality as well, somebody who's looking beyond the surface as it were. I wanted something of that – a certain quietness that would come out in the painting....'