

Golden Age Problems - script for first night 21 June

[Starts by standing on stage facing entrance. Looks around audience, making eye contact with a few people]

Welcome!

The space that you're standing in now isn't just some commercial unit in a new development sitting and waiting to get more expensive. It has other latent energies and undertones of possibility.

I know, I know. When I first visited, I thought "well this looks like an estate agents". But let me tell you that is only superficial. What's the difference between an art gallery, an estate agents or a furniture showroom? Well, not much when you first look at them. Those are just ideas floating about waiting for us to breathe some life into them and make them matter.

But, first, before I begin, I need to explain that tonight I'm only able to give you a small hint of what's to come. Tonight is the preview for next week. Next week, on Saturday 28 June 2014 we'll have a more in depth investigation into what you see around you. We've only really just finished this show... Who knows, maybe we're still working on it!

[motions over to photograph]

Everything that you see here... [pauses as if thinking] ... you need to think of them as sketches. Of course this picture here isn't a sketch at all. It's a photograph first off. A photograph of the Royalty Theatre amateur dramatics venue [check with Terry regarding nomenclature] in Newcastle. But you see, I think it's a great way of starting out because it's so mysterious and a bit forbidding at the same time as intriguing and a bit sweet.

[turns to look intently at the picture]

Well, that's how I see it anyhow... **[holds gaze for several seconds]**

[looks back at audience]

What I'm trying to get at is that these are ideas trapped inside images and objects that are still developing, ideas that are decompressing, as if you're opening a ZIP file and can see the progress of decompression, that all of those numbers mean something to you, make you think of something, make you feel something. That you're downloading a film you're really looking forward to watching – *Captain America: The Winter Soldier* or a Mike Leigh film or something – and as you are watching the download progress, you're feeling all the things that you would when you watched it, but sped up to 700 kilobytes a second or something like that... like in movies when there's a spaceship that goes faster than light where everything blurs and the characters go whooshing through the cosmos.

But I won't get into the mathematics and science of it all and bore you with numbers and ratios. The important thing is that you know there are different intensities of feeling what we see and hear in this space. Some of those feelings are caused by things we already know, some of those causes might be a surprise.

[looks worried all of a sudden]

Maybe there's no feeling either. Of course that's a possibility... **[pauses]**

Well, I can't worry about that, I don't think that there's much I can do about it anyways... things are a bit too rushed for that right now.

Anyways, this is only a kind of trailer for next week and I don't want to waste too much of your time or give away too much of what's going to happen, so let's get on with it!

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[Walks, almost skipping in excitement, from the stage and stands next to the baby mobile]

[pauses for a second as he regains composure next to the mobile]

Okay, what do we have here you ask?

Now, it might look like a pretty odd thing that we've made. And I'm not too sure what half of this stuff is or what it all means. I think this is the first time I've properly looked at it to be perfectly honest. But what I do know is that the idea started with a hanging mobile for a baby's crib. Babies of course can't focus their eyes properly until after a few months. So to help them, well intentioned parents dangle all of these objects and things over their newborn children. I suppose that the parents think it distracts the kids, keeps them focused as well as learning to see and comprehend? It's a way of entertaining and training, I suppose.

[Walking slowly around the mobile, the host reaches out and strokes some of the objects dangling from the mobile, thoughtfully and purposefully, almost uncomfortably. There is a discernible space of time here to allow that feeling to develop]

This strange constellation of stuff... like a model of the solar system, objects, numbers, colours like incomprehensible planets... just parental blur-planets hovering above these bleary eyed kids...

[Puts face in palms, declines face and lightly rubs eyes as if tired and wanting to get away from the situation at hand. Slowly takes hands away from face, regains composure and gives an over-cheerful smile to the audience]

I'll get into it all next week... Yes, I'll really explain what's happening here. As I said I don't want to ruin next week, the 28th of June 2014, 7pm give or take.

[Abruptly turns and walks towards Risk Assessment Image Kiosk, stops in front of it and squares up]

Okay, I'm getting distracted and wasting time.

[again, regains a more authoritative posture as if posing for the viewer]

Life is complex. It can't be summed up in a sound bite or a story. Songs, poems – even epic ones – cannot describe the infinite shades of experience that keep unfolding from day to day to day to day etcetera. You know where I'm going with that one...

[winks and gives a smile]

But anyhow, over the past few years we've had more than a few ideas. Just look at this. Maybe it's a bit of a mess, or maybe you can find some sort of order in all of it... It looks like a big mess to me.

Look at the picture behind it, like a cross dissolve. That is a picture of a pig snout. It's in fact a recreation of a paranormal pig snout that would squeal off the wall. Fact or fiction? Who knows...

[chuckles]

Now this is really going to have to wait until next week. But what I can tell you is that it is going to be musical.

[Ben music fade in – just a drone or low tone]

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There are many ideas floating around here, coming to the surface, bubbling up. Many memories and feelings... some that are nice and others that are difficult to deal with...

So now you know, all these things are really compressions of a number of different descriptions and reactions... but imagine if this was all really to come to life! Hm, who knows what would happen then? To be honest, I find that a bit unsettling!

[walks to the back of the space and steps onto the stage]

Right. Up until now I think I've been really vague about what's going on here. I'm very sorry about that. But as I said before, I can't really tell you too much more or I'll ruin the twist.

But by now I think it's obvious that all of these things – these objects, pictures, ideas, sketches and connections and other stuff – well, they're all placed, hung, framed or held by these structures. A floating hallway; these idea-objects hanging from the ceiling; this stage. They're all stages really. This one is far more identifiable than the others. From this stage many things can happen. We watch what's going on from the stage, but we also use it to emit things, feelings, moods and ideas.

I'm a frame or a stage too... That's so strange... **[looks distracted and spaces out]**

[Benedict music builds]

[host straightens up and looks serious again]

But this is all besides the point, really. Just words and offhand thoughts. What lies in these images and objects, these things, are ideas, we look into them and our thoughts unpack them. But in this case maybe thoughts are not enough, or what my idea of thoughts are is not enough. For this I think that the greatest tool is music. It addresses things, creates an energy around them, spurs us on, drives the imagination and makes emotional reactions surface. It creates ideas, feelings, even places and spaces... it creates continuums and disrupts them equally.

So maybe let's leave this space for another one... one of sound and music. To guide us through and onwards is a special guest and expert in journeys from the prequel through to the sequel and maybe even back again. Please join us next week 24th of June 2014 at 7pm-ish for the conclusion.

[raises one arm towards Benedict as music fades in]

[Benedict full set 20–30 mins]