

## SCRIPTS (9-11) 2024

### Script 1

P = Presenter L = Lucy

P: The world of art hit the front pages this week with the news that a London hospital has appointed an arts curator on a salary of £42,000 a year. The curator's job will be to arrange art exhibitions and other events at University College Hospital to 'improve patients' experience in hospital'. The new appointment follows the installation last month of a £70,000 stone sculpture outside the hospital's main entrance. The unveiling of the sculpture was greeted with disbelief by the popular press and some patients' groups, who described it as 'a load of rubbish' and 'a complete waste of money', and the appointment of the new curator has fuelled the debate. According to a statement from the management of the hospital, an artistic environment is a positive factor in attracting and keeping staff, as well as helping in quicker recovery rates for the patients. I spoke to Lucy Haddon, an independent art consultant and a curator herself, for an expert opinion on this controversy.

P: We're standing outside University College Hospital with the controversial stone sculpture just in front of us. Lucy, could I ask you first of all your opinion of the sculpture? Is it a masterpiece or is it, as some have said, a load of rubbish?

L: Well, erm, it has a, it has a certain organic charm, um, and it, er, it fits, I think it looks quite nice, but I don't think that anybody would say it's a masterpiece.

P: Worth £70,000?

L: Well, it certainly sounds like a lot of money, but I don't think it's overly expensive for a work of this kind. But I'd just like to say, I read in one of the papers this morning, that the hospital should have spent the money on more staff and so on. That they shouldn't be wasting money on paying for an arts curator and so on, but the money actually comes from charitable donations.

P: Why is it that more and more public institutions, hospitals for example, private companies, and local governments are spending money on art projects?

L: Well, there's no doubt that many environments could be improved, made more attractive, more interesting with well-chosen works of art as a point of interest, and people often feel more positive, they feel proud of where they live or where they work, and I think that art can also help to bring people together. In fact, in all the companies I've worked for, whenever we unveil a work of art, people always get

together and talk about it, so I think there are many reasons, why public art projects can be very exciting for everyone.

P: But only if they like what they see, I suppose?

L: Well, yes, obviously, and I think it also depends on why a company invests in an art project. There was one company, a paint factory, which wanted art for their office buildings, where I acted as a consultant to help them in selecting and buying the work, and then we worked together to decide the best way to exhibit the work in the offices, but the place was absolutely awful, coffee stains on the carpets. And the smell of paint, the smell was so strong, so overpowering. I got the commission because they wanted to smarten the place up, you know, but a couple of prints on the walls or a nice sculpture or whatever simply wasn't going to make the slightest difference, I mean, really, who was going to think, for a second, that because they had an extremely valuable painting on the walls, that they were a decent, respectable company. Which they clearly weren't. It turned out that they were breaking every regulation in the book. They should really have spent the money on smartening the whole place up.

## **Script 2**

G: Did I tell you I went round to see Nick and Carol the other day?

L: No, you didn't. How are they? I haven't seen them for ages.

G: Oh, they're fine. They said to say 'hello' to you. You know they've moved recently, don't you?

L: Oh really? No, I didn't, actually. The last time I heard from them they were still in that place near the centre.

G: Oh, OK. Well, yeah, they've moved, um ... I think it was last month. To be honest, they seem much happier now.

L: Oh, that's good. So what's their new place like? Is it nice?

G: Yeah, it is. It's OK. It's quite a lot bigger than their old place. The front room is huge - it's about twice the size of this room - and the whole place is pretty spacious.

L: That must be nice for them now the kids are growing up.

G: I know. They said the old place was getting a bit cramped for them all. They wanted separate rooms for the kids. They didn't want them sharing forever! That's the main reason they moved out.

L: So what kind of place is it? I mean, is it a house or an apartment?

G: Oh, it's an apartment. It's on the third floor of an old block. It's a little bit rundown and they'll need to do quite a bit of work on it, but they've actually bought it, so they can do what they want to it.

L: Lucky them! All those weekends spent painting and decorating to look forward to!

G: I know! I don't envy them! It has got real potential, though. It's got a great kitchen - it's a similar size to yours, maybe a bit bigger - and it's got these lovely old wooden floors throughout. And huge windows, so they get a lot of sunlight coming in, which is great. Then there's a little balcony where you can sit and eat in the summer and a shared garden out the back where the kids can play, and everything.

L: Oh, it sounds lovely. I must go round and see them sometime soon.

G: Yeah, I'm sure they'd like that. The only problem is, though, it's not as central as their old place was. It's quite a lot further out, so it takes quite a long time to get there.

L: Oh, OK.