

# Welcome to Happy Redoubt by Juneau Projects

## Transcript

**0:00** Audio

[*Music*]

**0:08** Robot Voice

Welcome to Happy Redoubt.

**0:10** Audio

[*Music*]

**0:22** Philip Duckworth

The premise of the exhibition is that there's been some kind of global disaster. We came up with an idea of a technological disaster affected the sort of infrastructure of technology. So, it meant that people were generally kind of intact. But the technology that we normally rely on everyday was no longer functioning in the usual way.

**0:49** Ben Sadler

So, visitors to the exhibition will find a marketplace set out for them to take part in. The marketplace is based upon trade, basically, and mainly the trade of skills and information. So bartering skills you might have in exchange for receiving currency that you can then use within the marketplace to buy things that other people might have made, or things that have been left by the robot overlords who run the marketplace.

**1:19** Deborah Bull

We were very keen to think differently about how we might use the space as rather than a straightforward exhibition or straightforward way of engaging with the public. We thought it would be interesting to have some artists come and have a residency in these spaces over a period of time and create work through that residency. So, we approached Emma Underhill, at UP Projects who I've worked with before, in fact, and I know that UP Projects have a great deal of experience of working in partnership, and crucially of challenging public perception of what art

can be, and what art in public spaces can be. So, we talked to Emma about that ambition of finding a different way to use the spaces to challenge us, to challenge the college, to challenge the public. And she came up with the idea of approaching Juneau Projects, so it was really out of that initial collaboration without projects, with the collaboration with Juneau Projects has arisen.

### **2:10 Ben Sadler**

Before the crash, the whole world was a web controlled by the cloud technology and those who had extensive knowledge of it dominated the world.

### **2:19 Emma Underhill**

We were invited to look at the model of an artist in residence and see how that could work within the academic community at Kings. So, we were looking at how a project could work with both the academics and students, and also provide a kind of public interface. So, Juneau Projects seemed to be perfect artists to do that.

### **2:48 Philip Duckworth**

The economy of the marketplace is based on trade and on earning currency, the currency comes in the form of necklaces. So as people earn more currency as they go around, they'll be walking around the show with more and more necklaces on. The way people earn the necklaces is through a variety of jobs and tasks that they can do. One of the main ways of earning currency is to paint up some more currency itself. So they come as blank wooden pendants, and the visitors in the show, can paint two of those by painting to they own one piece of currency through some of the other activities that are here in the show, things that have been developed by staff and students here at Kings. And those things also have currency attached to them. So for instance, there's a tree, which is a kind of energy sculpture idea. And you write a short line of verse, almost like a short piece of poetry, you put that on the tree, and you can earn a currency necklace that way.

### **3:56 Ben Sadler**

There is the dead tech museum, which is a shrine to bits of technology, that no longer function, and each piece of technology has been given a description, alluding to its perceived use, before the disaster.

#### **4:11 Farhana Ghaffar**

We wanted to really play with kind of how memory changes over time; how kind of things are lost. So we wanted to kind of distort the descriptions and make them kind of accurate, but kind of slightly false in a way so they kind of - they'd be relating the actual description of the objects, but told in such a way that it just sounds a little bit funny. So CCTV, for example, stood for, I think, closed circuit for theological vision, instead of TV vision. So, we have that kind of humorous, mischievous, mischievous kind of tone to it as well.

#### **4:52 Ben Sadler**

Following that room, there is the room recording the wallpaper room, which features a number of stalls one is the story I'm Emily Butterworth of the disaster that happened that you can contribute to. There's also a dead tech sale still, so you can trade your tokens for pieces of technology. There's also jewellery and necklace and statues store where you can buy objects with some of the currency that you've been. Following that there's the main ballroom, one of the main things in there is the I ask information exchange, which functions like a kind of handwritten version of Wikipedia. So you leave a question, and someone will answer that question for you. And at certain points, the human Google will be there to answer your questions in person, as well as exchanging information in that room. You can also take part in robot racing, which is a fun game for all the family involving six mini robots that race around the track, and you can bet on them for fun between yourselves. Or if you have some currency, you can put your currency and double your currency up if you win. The final end to the exhibition, there's one robot who's slightly different to all the other robots, who tells you a lot more about what happened in the disaster, and a bit more about the world - it's a sort of solitary robot at the end of the exhibition that you can interact with as well.

#### **6:23 Alison Duthie**

A big part of this is the collaboration with the academics. So really, the academics have been looking at presenting their research practice from the perspective of a post-apocalyptic marketplace or a post digital world. And immediately, that opens up all sorts of ideas and creative thinking. And there's been genuine engagement with the artists on this. And we feel that it's very much a way to move forward in how we work through projects at the cultural institute.

#### **6:54 Anna Ramsay**

Throughout the exhibition, there is also a series of events and workshops, including one by Dr Steven Jones, who is running a performance, which is a ritual for forgetting, the idea is that people come in and they take part in this ritual, and they use it to then forget technology to free themselves from the confines of technology that we might be experiencing today.

#### **7:22 Dr Stephen Jones**

Really, my past research has been around vision, and the loss of vision blindness. So in some respects, there are parallels. And so there is this aspect of loss here, which does parallel the sorts of things that we've really incorporated into the ceremony. And that this hour, we can finally forget this language of our regrets.

#### **7:45 Anna Ramsay**

We're also working with Dr Emily Butterworth on the discussion event, which is called Rumour Mill Conversations. And it brings together people to talk about how information gets turned into myths. And it looks at how things that we talked about today might become myths in the future and how gossip was generated. And also looking at that from this idea of being in the future and not having any technology available to us.

#### **8:14 Dr Emily Butterworth**

At the end of the event, we did an activity based on Chinese whispers. So in which some of the signs and portents that we've been discussing were created, I created them into a very short narrative, and started the chain off. And this narrative was kind of passed around the chain of participants who were all asked to change something. So unlike the ordinary game of Chinese whispers, where you try to reproduce exactly what you've heard, here, I was asking people to add something to kind of recreate the work of rumour and gossip in passing a story on extending it, elaborating it, changing it beyond all recognition, in fact, which is what happened in the event.

#### **8:57 Philip Duckworth**

Before the apocalypse. There were three birds. They all went to the pub. Afterwards, one decided to get kebab. *[Laughter]*

**9:17 Ben Sadler**

There's quite a wide range of events. There's an animation workshop using red, green and blue lights, that stroke between the three colours. And you can make very simple three frame animations using pink, blue and yellow pens.

**9:31 Philip Duckworth**

I think one of the nice things about this activity is that it seems very easy for people to understand straight away. They don't need too much explanation. They can see the examples and see how they can have a go at it themselves.

**9:44 Audience Member**

I came two weeks ago; I think it was to the robot racing and we've come back to do the animation today. And it's been great fun for the kids especially and the adults.

**9:56 Audio**

*[Music]*

**10:14 Ben Sadler**

Cardboard wars was a chance for people to make a cup of costume and weapon and tests their cardboard engineering skills against each other. There's been a really big turnout of people, lots of people have made amazing armour, amazing shields, amazing weapons. And after everyone finished making the costumes, we had a kind of Battle Royale style tournament where people tested their strength of their weapons against each other kind of conquer style. And so we had an ultimate winner who was kind of ultimate cardboard fighter.

**10:47 Audience Member**

I just think it's amazing what you can do with some tape, some cardboard and some scissors.

**10:53 Audience Member**

They quite often spend time at home making cardboard shields and weapons anyway, but I like the idea of it, taking it up to another level.

**11:06 Ben Sadler**

It's been a final event of *Welcome to Happy Redoubt*. It's kind of culmination of all the various projects, events, workshops that have happened over the last six weeks. And it's had a focus really on the kind of robots that run in the marketplace. So today's a sort of big thank you to the robots for all of their help and provision they've provided to all of the survivors that have come here over the six weeks, there's been a lot of different activities, all kinds of robot related. So, in the room here, we've had Dickson leading robotic dancing sessions,

**11:38 Dickson Mbi**

I was asked to come and teach robotic movements, which is a part of a dance style, which I do called popping is really thinking like a robot and visualising what you do.

**11:52 Ben Sadler**

In the other rooms, we've had lots of robot related kind of craft activities. We've had "roborigami", which is origami meets robotics to create moving foxes, that kind of chair of like birds. So that was exciting as well. And then last seen robots, basically, you know, anything robot related, we've had it today. The experience here at the Indigo Rooms has been a really good one. It's although it's quite kind of bleak world that we've set it in, it's been a really positive experience. It's been great having just different viewpoints coming in and looking at this idea that we're interested in. And yeah, the whole experience of meeting people working with them, it just kind of sort of makes it all worthwhile, really. It's sad it's coming to an end but it's been a great kind of six weeks and a great kind of six months really working with everybody on the fortune.

**12:46 Audio**

[Music]