
The Art of the Public Lecture

Chris Quigg

Fermilab

Albuquerque APS Meeting · April 22, 2002

£20 BANK of ENGLAND

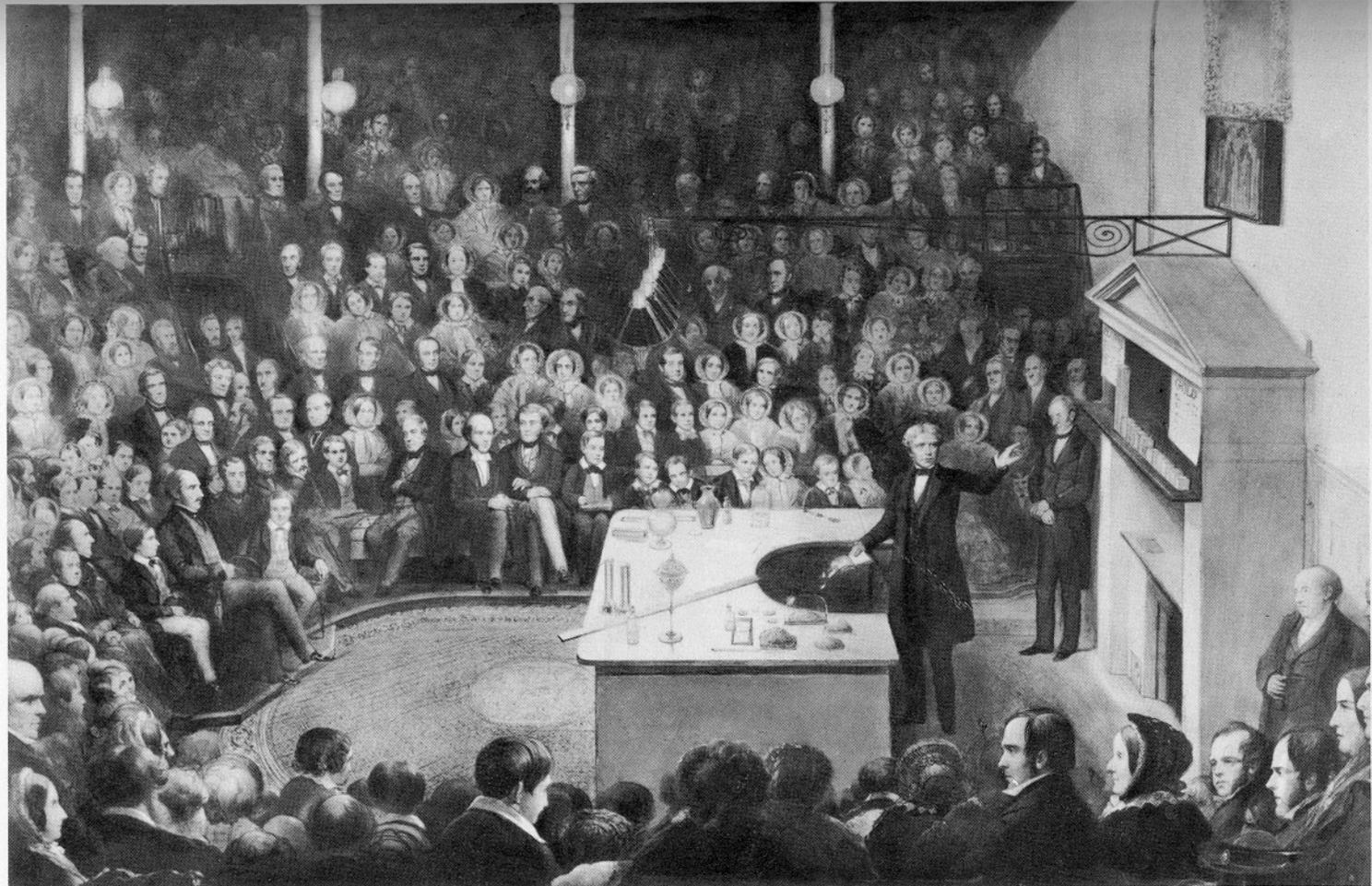
£20

TWENTY
POUNDS



ROYAL INSTITUTION CHRISTMAS LECTURES INITIATED IN 1826
THE MAGNETO-ELECTRIC SPARK APPARATUS

Michael Faraday 1791-1867



25 Faraday lecturing before the Prince Consort and the Prince of Wales

Start at the *End*

Why are you doing this?

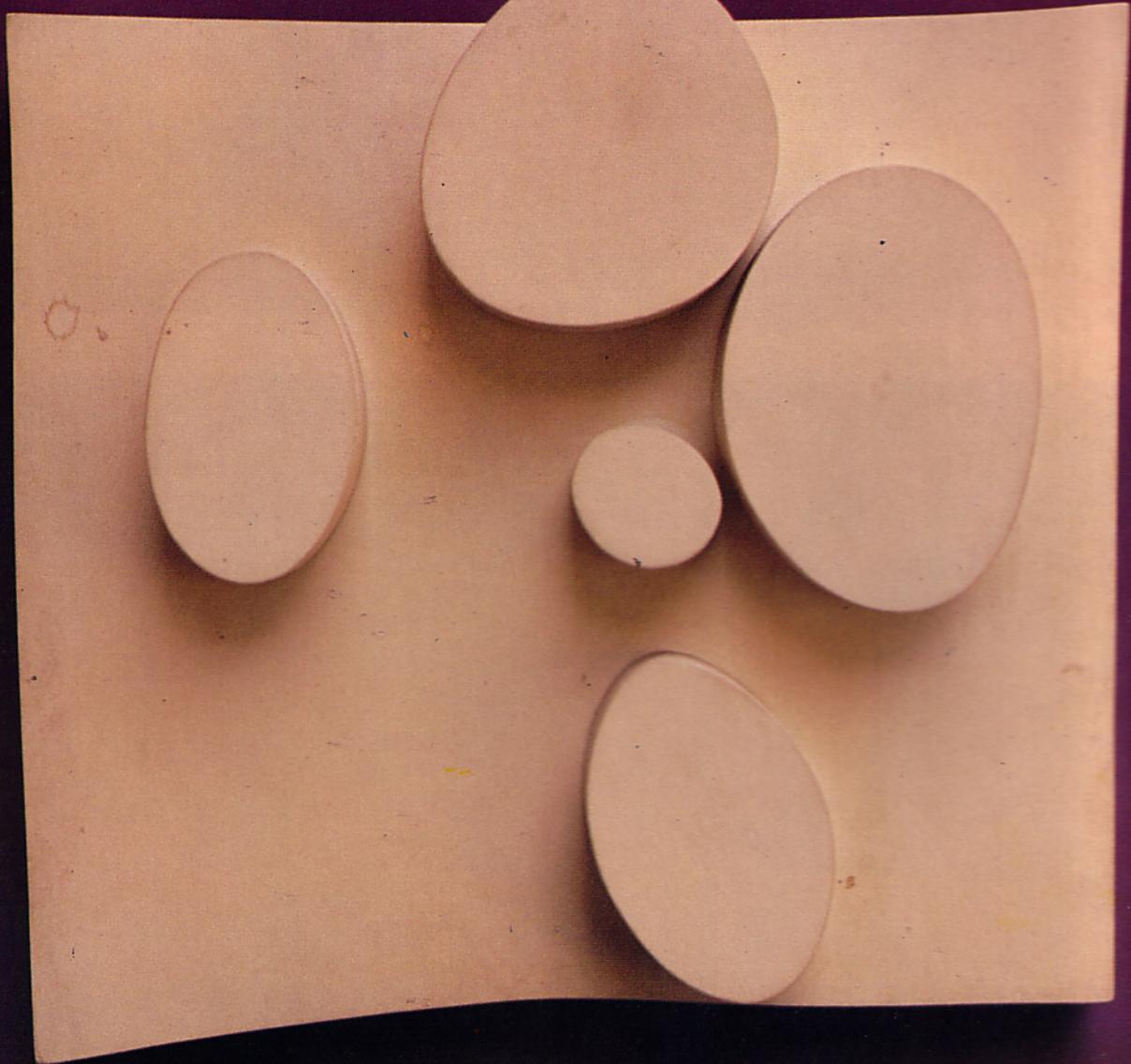
Start at the *End*

What is your punch line?

Frame your subject









Conversation

Performance

Acting is merely the art of
keeping a large group of
people from coughing.

Sir Ralph Richardson

Attract an audience

Prepare the scene

Eliminate barriers

Engage
your audience

The minute particular

Particular



General



Particular

How little can I say?

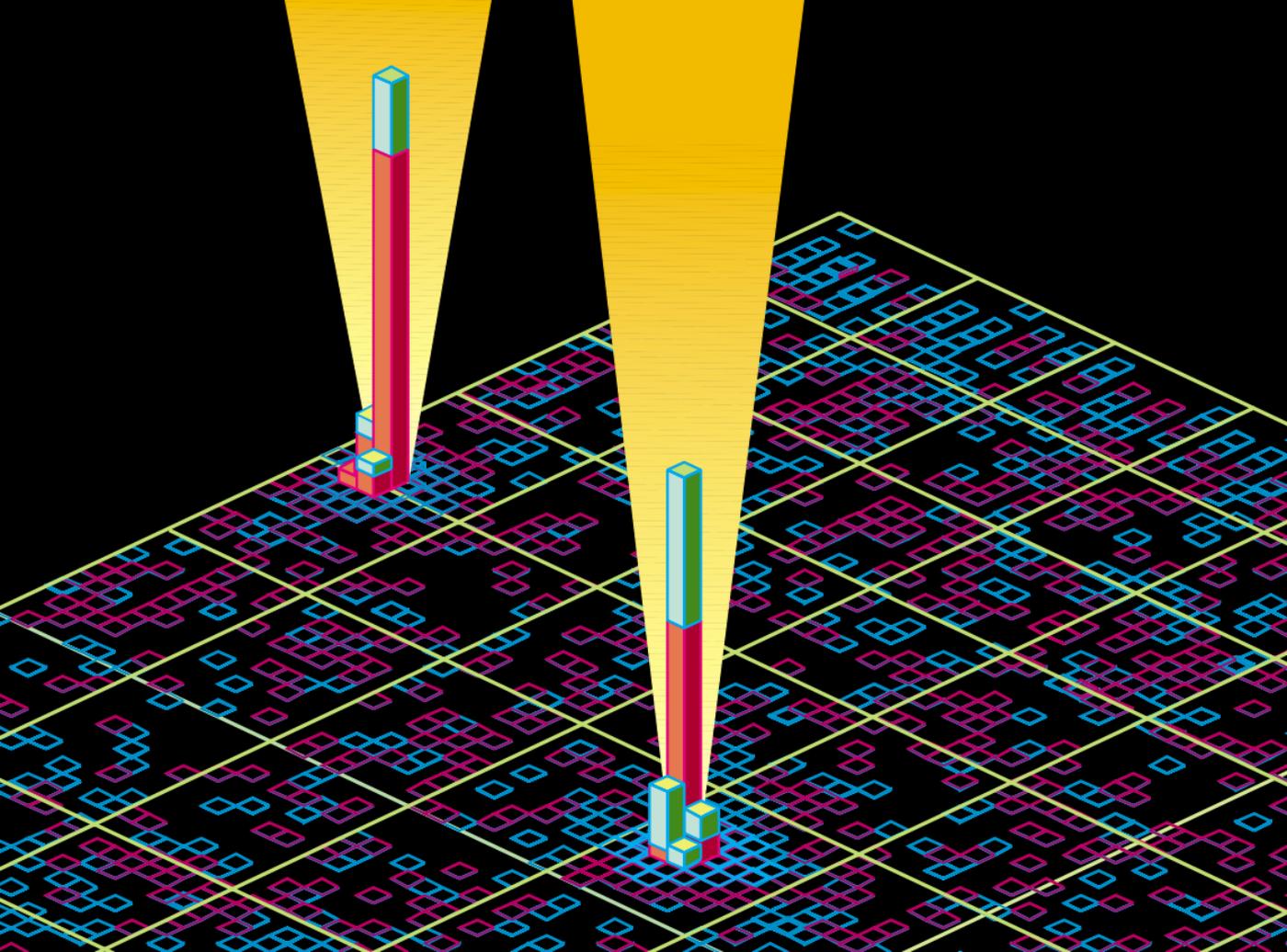
What should I leave out?

Never tell a lie!

Specimens

Artifacts

Souvenirs



Media

Images

Edward Tufte advocates a high-resolution presentation on paper, in the hands of your audience.

His books are classics:

The Visual Display of Quantitative Information

Envisioning Information

Visual Explanations

Study them!

www.edwardtufte.com

High Resolution

Clear

Rich in Content

Tension

Resolution

Surprise

Drama

Comic relief

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Penumbra

Synthetic Spring

Neptune

Big Technology

I'm With You

Cooled

Faith (Yourself)

Travel

Perpetual Symmetry

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AP
RECORDS



Experiments

Demonstrations

Tension

Resolution

Character(s)!

**Engage (with)
your audience**

Show yourself

Show your passion

Time: Meet your
audience's expectations

Plan an end for your talk

What now?

- Listen to a public science lecture.
Start with a preposterous one tonight.
- Go to a public lecture about politics or poetry or cooking . . .
- Organize a public lecture.
- Give a public lecture.
- Learn from the best.