

Texty

RHIZOME | Wed Jul 7th, 2004 8 a.m.



In Neal Stephenson's 'The Diamond Age, or A Young Lady's Illustrated Primer' the lives of three girls are shaped by an interactive book presented by 'ractors' - Nell becomes the leader of an all-girl army, Elizabeth runs away to a hacker group and Fiona joins Dramatis Personae, the possible grandchild of Textterritory v.2.3. Grace has come home early to prepare for her first date with Jerome. They have been 'texting out their territory' since meeting in a club two weeks before. Akin to Stephenson's ractors, the audience members text their responses and thoughts to the stage, helping Grace decide what to wear and, as the piece develops, to consider her possible relationship with her texting friend. Commissioned by the UK's Future Physical, a programme to enable exploration in the creative use of digital technologies in relation to the physical, Textterritory is one recipient of this year's 2004 Art Digital Era award. Combining texting, dance and music, and a planned web version, the piece may be the first message in the future of performance, where the audience, as a group and as individuals, shape the movement before them. - Bronwyn Mahoney