

TEXTERRITORY 2.3



A PROJECT BY SHERON WRAY

TEXTERRITORY



The Opportunity

A sponsorship opportunity to be involved alongside NESTA (National Endowment for Science Technology and the Arts) in an innovative new project that brings together art and technology in a content that is both experiential and moving.

Texterritory is an exciting cross-media project being developed by choreographer Sheron Wray and digital artist Fleeta Siegel. Future Physical has commissioned the research and development of this work. It combines contemporary dance with SMS technology to create a unique and exhilarating environment of audience participation through the use of text messaging.

This is a unique opportunity for a telecommunications brand to celebrate the technological possibilities surrounding the world of text messaging while anticipating the role that SMS will play in the future. Textploitation! have designed the interface to make Texterritory possible within any environment that has mobile phone coverage.

Texterritory will tour major UK venues- such as the Royal Opera House in London and the Junction in Cambridge- and also internationally.

The sole sponsor will be associated to this event on all branding and supporting communication. A full time PR person will be appointed to maximize word of mouth exposure and print, online and broadcast opportunities.

The Synopsis



Grace, legal secretary arrives home early, 5:45 in fact, to prepare for her first real date with Jerome. She's just bought a new pair of shoes to go with one of those outfits. At the moment she drops her keys on the kitchen table, an SMS arrives from J- he has been delayed, but will be there soon! From optimism to despair, from knowing to kneeling in prayer, Grace's dilemmas and insecurities unfold as she figures out what to do with this unexpected time on her hands. Together with the influence of the audience, she decides exactly what to wear, who she might call if he does not show up as well as trying to re-assemble a photo-fit of what Jerome really looks like. After all, they had only met in a dimly lit club two weeks ago! Since then, all they have been doing is "texting out their territory".

The multi-media, non-linear narrative breaks the established line between the audience and the performing artists. It is told through texting, dance, music, spoken word and animation.



Background

Sheron Wray – Dance Architect

She continues to work as a choreographer, dancer, teacher and lecturer in dance. Working with a range of international collaborators Derek Bermel, Amani Nephthali, Julian Joseph, and most recently Wynton Marsalis. Since 1988 she has worked with London Contemporary Dance theatre and Rambert Dance Company as a performer, currently she is the Artistic Director of JazzXchange music and Dance Company. Last year she was awarded the prestigious NESTA fellowship (National Endowment for Science technology and the Arts) to investigate new uses of technology in the performance context with a specific emphasis to engage the audience's direct participation.

Fleeta Siegel –Digital Artist

Since 1999 Fleeta has been teaching and creating new media at various London institutions: WAC Performing Arts and Media College, London Print Studio, SpacePlace Studios, Univeristy of Westminster- on a range of subjects including Computer Game Design, Web Design, CD-ROM authoring, Photoshop, Quick Time Virtual Reality and wireless applications. Fleeta has also collaborated with a number of artists using technology in interactive environments.

'Mobile phones are not usually welcomed in theatres, for obvious reasons. But I want to use them to empower the audience, to give them a role, a chance to alter the shape of the performance- and to affirm their reason for being there.'



The Performance

Upon entering the venue, the audience members register their mobile number into our database- managed by Textploitation! At set times, our computer will display instructions on the stage on how to answer certain questions via their handsets. The audience members will be given a certain amount of time to read and answer the question, as well as time to read the answers as they are gathered. As the questions are answered, animations on stage will perform certain movements to indicate to Grace which decision has been made. After a set period of time, the winning choice is displayed for all to see and Grace can then continue with the the story. In effect, the audience inadvertently becomes a performer.

The musical elements of the performance will be created by DJ Amplified. Future exploration into the use of still and moving images is also anticipated once the technology becomes robust enough for LIVE events.



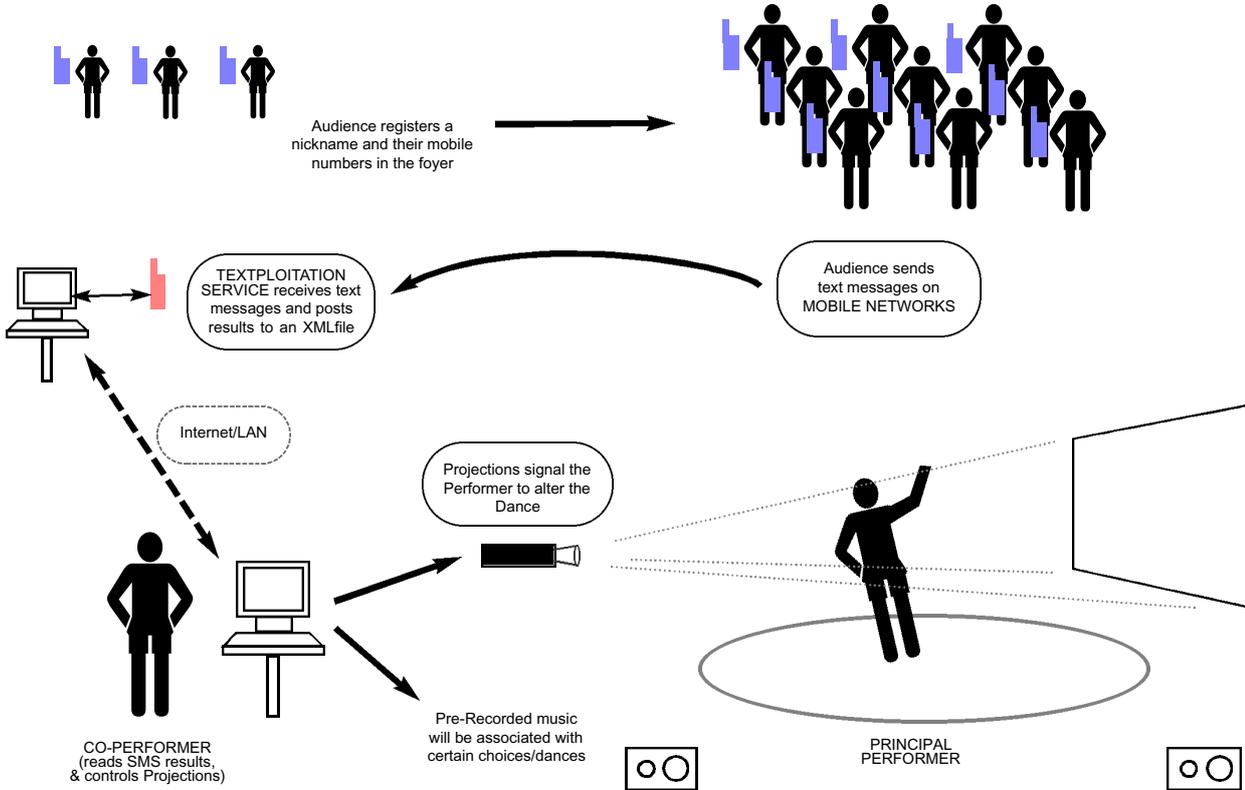
Aims of Texterritory

Texterritory questions the audience's role within a responsive performance space. Will the audience identify as a group? The audience will be empowered to affect change and see it manifested immediately. Does an audience feel comfortable with this new-found power? Would it prefer to remain an anonymous mass? What is the scope for decision making within the performance?

Creating an audience dynamic that will bring about an original outcome in terms of their experience. The work is informed by their decision-making. The audience become the co-authors, co-directors and co-technicians of the performance.

Future formats of the performance will have web-based interactivity that will extend the audience participation and add further complexity and involvement on the responsive 'environment'. The website will monitor the level of participation by the audience members and an analysis of this data will inform the development of the LIVE performance events.

THE CONTEXT - DURING PERFORMANCE



Quotes



Wynton Marsalis on Sheron Wray:

"Astonishingly invigorating and mesmerizing...
I was proud to be a part of the performance."

What the press had to say following a recent performance with Wynton Marsalis at he Barbican Centre on the 27th January:

"Fiery athleticism,... It was just what the hitherto straightlaced audience needed"
-Evening Standard

"Languorous, mischievous and exultant visual parallel"
-The Guardian

"Most Impressive"
-The Times

"A Jazz ballet danced with engaging enthusiasm under the direction of Sheron Wray"
-The Daily Telegraph



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