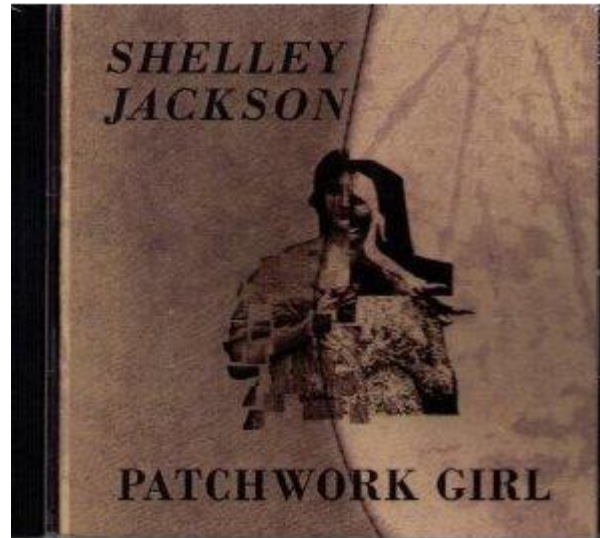


PATCHWORK GIRL

by Shelley Jackson

Presentation by Kenneth Roman & Peter Hammersley



KEY WORDS / PHRASES:

- Hypertext Fiction
- Pastiche
- Lexia
- Electronic Space
- Post-Modern After-ing
- Non-Linear Exploration
- Is it a piece of literature?
- Births (several)



JENNIFER EGAN

- Born 1963 in the Philippines
- Parents ran a small bookstore for several years in Berkeley
- BA in Art from Stanford, MFA in Creative Writing from Brown
- Village Voice “Writer on the Verge” and Pushcart Prize Winner
- Her works have spanned different Literature forms: hypertext, short story collections, a novel and even a tattooed

BOOK(?)

- Published by Eastgate Systems in 1995
- Written using the Storyspace program
- Started as a drawing of a naked woman with dotted line scars during a hypertext lecture
- Inspired by the novels:
 - *Frankenstein* (Mary Shelley, 1818)
 - *Patchwork Girl of Oz* (L. Frank Baum, 1913)
 - Greek Mythology

RECEPTION:

PRAISE:

- "Brilliantly conceived and beautifully written." -- George P. Landow, author of *Hypertext 3.0*
- "A cult hit." -- Village Voice
- "Wonderfully rich and complex." -- N. Katherine Hayles, UCLA

PROBLEMS:

- Some people prefer linear text and narration over hypertext

PLOT

- Victor Frankenstein's companion creature is secretly finished by Mary Shelley herself
- Mary and the “Patchwork Girl” lay together and become apart of each other
- Patchwork girl escapes to the New World while dealing with her degenerating body

FORM AND STRUCTURE

The screenshot displays a web browser window with two main panes. The left pane, titled 'Storiespace Map: Patchwork Girl', shows a hierarchical diagram of the text's structure. The root node is 'her', which branches into 'phrenology', 'hercut2', 'hercut3', and 'hercut4'. 'phrenology' leads to 'body of text'. 'hercut2' leads to 'journal'. 'hercut3' leads to 'story'. 'hercut4' leads to 'graveyard'. A 'hercut' node is also shown below 'hercut2' and 'hercut3'. The right pane, titled 'title page', shows the title 'PATCHWORK GIRL' in red, followed by 'OR, A MODERN MONSTER' and 'BY MARY/SHELLEY, & HERSELF'. Below the author's name is a list of sources: 'a graveyard, a journal, a quilt, a story, & broken accents'. A small '(sources)' note is at the bottom. A vertical list of terms is visible between the panes: mementos, dotted line, hop, interrupting D, hard to track, this, multilines, names, this, hazy whole, double agent, rest of my life, dispersed, this, blood, metaphor me, cuts, think me, a slot, a notch. At the bottom of the browser window, there are two images: on the left, a black and white illustration of a young girl with a patchwork body; on the right, a profile of a man's head with various words like 'hiding', 'fog', 'quotes', 'embryo', 'they', 'hopsotch', 'angel', 'judith', 'sleep', 'blood', 'swarm', 'lips', 'abc' overlaid on his brain.

FORM AND STRUCTURE CON'T.

- 1st Person Narrators
 - A graveyard
 - A journey
 - A quilt
 - A story
 - & Broken Accents

- Hypertext:
 - Storyspace Map
 - Links/Hidden Links
 - Lexias
 - Pictures
 - Tables

CHARACTERS

The screenshot displays a web browser window titled "Patchwork Girl" with a menu bar (File, Edit, Storyspace, Navigate, Bookmark, Windows, Help). The main content area is a collage of windows:

- head**:

My skull is like an ancient vase scratched from the dust with toothpicks and paintbrushes and reassembled on a desk: there are fragments enough to make a vase, but how many vases shattered for this one? An archeologist made a pot, that's all we know.

Sometimes when it's quiet I hear in my ears the roaring of a crowd.
- trunk**:

My trunk belonged to a dancer, Angela, a woman of low birth but high sights, and a mimic ear for the accents of the upper class. Cunning, she had her own advancement always in view, except when she danced and her body tossed with an abandonment that was her greatest attraction. She knew this but did not understand it: offstage her efforts to control her posture, her movements were fervent ("I shake my hindquarters like a little dog, and arch my back like a cock crowing over his chickens," she complained to a fellow dancer), for she saw rightly that the language of the body also has its accents, low and high.

My body is both insinuating and naive: moments of knowingness—of art manipulative and interested—punctuate my abandonment, and knowingness opens into chaos.
- organs**:

This Urn guards
a Heart, a Liver,
Lungs, Stomach,
Guts, and Veins.
- right leg**:

My right leg belonged to Jennifer, who buried herself in layers of petticoats, flounces and furbelows. It took hours to lace her up in the morning. Gossips called her vain. In fact, she was hiding. Something growled in her dreams, shook her sleeping frame; she woke up in wet and snarled sheets with bits of feathers stuck to her cheek. It was only bound in laces and tight bodices that she dared go down to breakfast; unbound, she might tear all to shreds. She conversed over weak tea and stuck the tines of a fork through twenty layers of petticoats into her restless thigh; I bear the mark. She lived a mild, exemplary, and unweid life, and woke up every morning exultant and sweating, having won her loved ones another day safe from the beast.

As for me, the beast dreams placid dreams: Jennifer needs her rest.
- Images**: Several windows show black and white photographs of a woman's body parts: "left arm", "rarmview", "rlegview", and "llegview".

At the bottom left, a "Storyspace..." window is partially visible.

CHARACTERS CON'T.

- Patchwork Girl
- Mary Shelley
- Shelley Jackson
- Percy Shelley
- Elsie
- Ojo/ Margolette's/magician/shaggy man/dorothy
- Body Part “donors”
- Chancy
- Madam Q

ISSUES / THEMES

- Feminism
 - Queer Identity
 - Concept of Beauty
- Chimera
 - Monster/Cyborg/Creature/deamon/supreme freak
- Self – Identity
- Thoughts as limbs of composition
- Degeneration, Dismemberment, Fragmentation

SOURCES

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