

some notes on [N A X S M A S H](#)

[Christina McPhee](#)

Naxsmash: a feminist net art project 2001-2006

'Behind' the screen imagine personae of women, from Greek myth, including Andromeda, Persephone, Penelope and Arachne.

They stand in, as metonyms, for women who have been chained, imprisoned, abandoned, silenced, mutilated.

The blood/body prints of Ana Mendieta and the "passages" of Louise Bourgeois influence the design of naxsmash.net,

a thought-place haunted by young women who speak through texts by my daughter Molly McPhee, and some dead

poets, among them Paul Celan, Calvino, Kafka, Julien Green and Gerard Manley Hopkins. Naxsmash traces a place

built from a breath inside a screen—as if, the woman, cyborg is breathing through pixels. Her voice comes to you in

fragments, vox cyborg. You find her immanent traces past the edges of a standard web page. Nascent +/- destructive,

a sense of place mediates, from behind the screen, an experience of the uncanny 'real'. A subliminal psyche echoes

notes from the underground. Inside naxsmash.net are hallucinatory terrains, each a Piranesian microcinema zone.

Naxsmash is a project of leaving behind the fragments of memory, of forgetting what we already know, of

trying to remember and not being able to remember. Using electronic media and the net as a space for a psychic topology

of violence, trauma and desire saved my life; and at the same time, created an 'impersonal' and 'disembodied' medium

for making works that attempt to reproduce the nightmare conditions of repression of speech and humiliation of the body

and spirit. Naxsmash is the process work that comes from this desire.

In the brain, the amygdala is the "house of fear", almond-shaped, container of crude flashes. It codes violent memory into

small film-still doses, activated by random triggers, like freeze frames, poorly seen, but powerful in effect. Post-traumatic stress

afflicts those who witness terror and sustain abuse. Forget, just for a moment, by a willing suspension of disbelief, that there is no place

behind the screen. Allow yourself the fantasy of atopic space...where topologies, though drawn with the vectors of Cartesian geometries,

are at best provisional. Access is through an improvisation, or performance, on the part of the traveller through a smashed space.

Naxsmash is a project that cuts across or sustains a slash inside, and through, the experience of the screen.

[Christina McPhee /naxsmash group productions 2000-2006](#)