

Media Languages

<http://aso.gov.au/titles/tv/noah-saskia-tomorrow/clip3/>

This clip shows Saskia (Hannah Greenwood) arriving at the home of her friend Renee (Emily Wheaton) to tell her the news that she has found Max Hammer, an 'Internet geek' who stole her music. She says that he's 'gorgeous' and wants to work with her. Renee tries unsuccessfully to tell Saskia that Max is not a real person. An animation of the globe indicates a shift of scene from Melbourne to a suburban street in England where the creator of Max Hammer, Noah (Jack Blumenau), lives. Noah's house and family are shown through his own eyes. The camera then shows Noah himself, who puts his finger to his mouth with a conspiratorial 'shhh' to the camera. Images of Saskia and Noah then transform into their computer alter egos.

Educational value points

- The clip begins to raise questions about identity construction, a theme that is explored in the series through the characters of Noah and Saskia and their avatars Max Hammer and Indy. Avatars are animated characters constructed by some Internet users to exist and interact in constructed 'worlds' in cyberspace. Alter egos enable their creators to create alternative identities for themselves, and both Noah and Saskia have created alter egos that embody who they would like to be, rather than who they think they are.
- The clip includes examples of narrative 'hooks', used by writers and directors to provoke and sustain the viewer's interest in character and plot. Renee is sceptical of Saskia's conviction that she can 'see through people', and her scepticism draws attention to later complexities in the story. Noah, who the audience only knows from Saskia's description of him as 'gorgeous', is withheld from view for most of his scene. Rather, the audience sees what he sees and forms an image of him from the reaction of family members. When he is revealed, the audience is invited to be collaborators in his deception.
- The initiator and producer of the series, Patricia Edgar, intended *Noah and Saskia* to be a children's program that focused on the inner world of young adolescents. The series explores what young people think and what shapes their thinking, rather than what happens to them. Setting much of the action on the Internet, where alternative identities can be created, provides opportunities for characters to express their inner lives in multiple ways and for the series to explore concerns of adolescents such as self-image, relating to the opposite sex and finding out who they are and what values are important to them.

- The clip demonstrates an innovative approach to filmmaking in both style and content, which has won the series many awards. The filmmaker uses a unique combination of live action, animation and visual effects. The actors interact with each other and, in some episodes, with live action versions of Indy and Max Hammer in 'real-life' settings. The animated versions of Indy and Max interact with each other in animated settings. The settings shift between the worlds of Saskia and Noah's imagination, their actual worlds at opposite sides of the globe and the virtual world of Webweave.
- The clip begins to explore what is real and what is self-delusion when Renee challenges Saskia to acknowledge that Max is an invention. In the series the audience is invited to make up their own minds as to what is real since they have more information than Noah and Saskia, who interact through their fantasy identities. It is only at the end of the series that the central characters are prepared to present their real identities to one another.
- *Noah and Saskia* is a 13-part comedy drama series made in 2004 for nine- to fourteen-year-olds as a co-production by ABC TV (Australia) and CBBC (UK). It won the 2005 US International Film and Video Festival Gold Camera Award and was the 2005 ATOM Award winner of the Best Children's Television Series. An initiative of the Australian Children's Television Foundation (ACTF), it was directed by Pino Amenta and written by Chris Anastassiades and Sam Carroll. This episode was written by Chris Anastassiades. His credits include *Wog Boy* (with Nick Giannopoulos), *Yolgnu Boy* and *Hating Alison Ashley*, and he was a key writer for the ACTF series *Round the Twist*.
- Chat rooms, such as the one in which Noah and Saskia meet, are accessed through the Internet and are part of a range of technologies familiar to and popular with the target audience. The popular press frequently warns of the potential dangers of chat rooms and Internet dating, especially for young people. The series presents a more balanced perspective, showing both the dangers of living through fantasy and the way that a virtual world allows individuals to explore aspects of their own personalities.