

AS MARIAS



A Sci-fi Drama about friendship across parallel dimensions



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LOGLINE

Sci-Fi | Paranormal | Coming-of-Age.


A group of 4 young girls are lured into esoteric experiments which unleash a series of paranormal phenomena, that result in the mysteriously disappearance of one of them in their quiet suburban world.





Twin Peaks (1990 – 1991)
Director: David Lynch

SYNOPSIS



Set in the 90s, in a fishing village where nothing ever happens, and everybody knows everyone. Four young girls, all named “Maria something”, bored and fanatic for esoteric experiments, question life when one of them suddenly vanishes, as well as her entire existence seems to be mysteriously erased from the internet.

When their missing friend starts communicating with them through dreams, the three girls form a cult to practice occultism, and Astral Projection, but end up crossing parallel worlds, unleashing a series of paranormal phenomena which leads to fear and anger in the conservative and religious suburban village. Her disappearance is only the beginning...





The Craft (1996)
Directed by Andrew Fleming

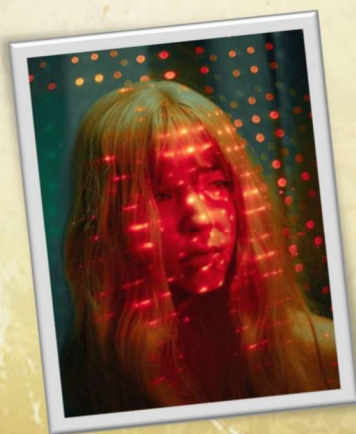
THE WORLD

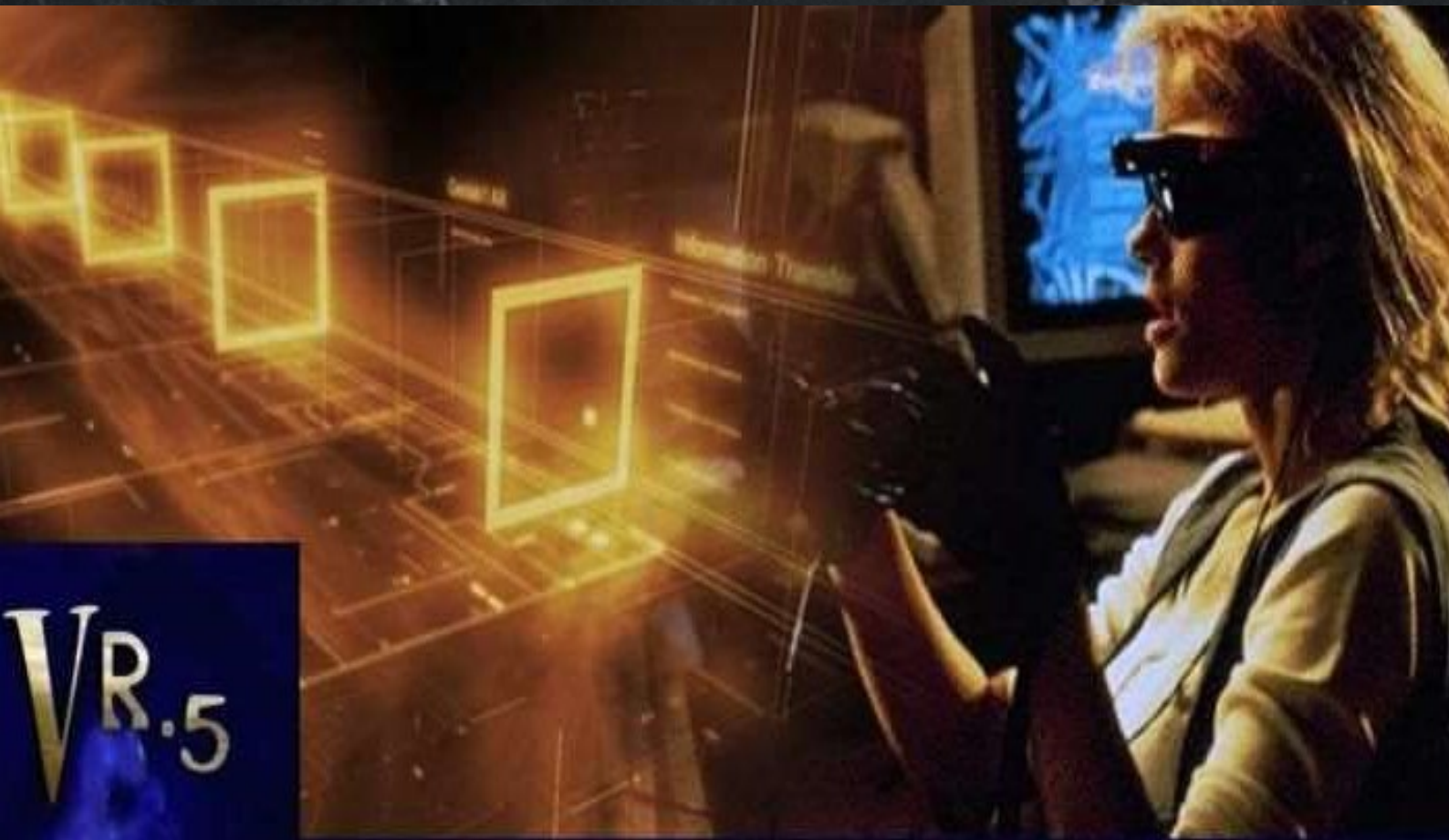


It's 1996, the cold war was forgotten, the World Trade Centre still exists, the Hubble Space Telescope orbits the Earth, Spice girls, Aerosmith and Nirvana were everywhere, and people wore more colours. It was the ramp of the internet, everybody was on MSN and Myspace, had a skateboard, a Nintendo 64, and tectonic was a weird dance. Mobile phones had polyphonic songs, young boys weren't afraid to swim naked, TV showed old people singing for kids. Kids played outside more. Organized crime, pedophilia and missing people were not part of the news yet, therefore, not a reality easy to imagine.

In this series, the girls delve in a thin live between reality and the metaphysical as more young teens disappear in other small villages.

Golden sunsets by the river, misty nights but also an arid ground paints the landscape of this small fishing village that changes forever when one of the girls disappear. The group of girls are wrapped in rumours of possible suicide, runaway, organized crime, and a secret society of hackers that target their victims in a videogame called "Dreamlinked". The girls then unite to find their friend in a journey through parallel worlds, where they will find their strengths, overcome their school bullies, insecurities, and fears as they grow up together.





VR.5 (1996)
Created by: Jeannine Renshaw

The Genre

SCI-FI & Strong Female Characters

Although the show is designed as a coming-of-age mystery-drama, it includes elements of occultism, paranormal and suspense, - inspired by the master of horror Stephen King, - and equally rooted in science, by including parallel dimensions, string theory, dark holes and theoretical physics which has a fundamental role in the story that is lead by strong female characters who are still fighting their insecurities, questioning their purpose, and shaping their identity. *As Marias* aims to mix esoterism/spirituality with science, in a perfect balance to tackle complex existentialist questions, through a simple format.

The show also reintroduces technology as a connection to the astral world just like the series *VR.5* (1996) and *Experimental Laine* (1998) did in their time, only in a suburban universe. When crossing to the Astral plan, these girls glimpse dark shadows, lost souls, and animalistic, terrifying creatures – a combination of subtle CGI, prosthetics, and good use of light and shadow, inspired by the kings of grotesque: Guillermo Del Toro and H.R. Ginger. – Yet, it also adds a new type of horror – The humankind, especially when is a superstitious community and dangerously bored teenagers.

The horror personifies what already lies within all of us. In this fishing village, prejudice and religious fanaticism are very present; sexuality and witchcraft are a delightful taboo; and bullying and violence are as scary as the ghosts they find and heard of.

Entities which might have been around us all this time, in our dreams, in our thoughts, and now in our physical world as well.





Equinox (2020)
Created by Tea Lindeburg

Tone and Style



We all heard stories about women who gather in a deep sisterhood, especially to tackle and overcome difficult times, such as violence, loss, grief, and find a safe place where they belong. There's something special about the belief in an inner power, and the existence of other worlds, beyond our own imagination, making us part of something bigger. However, when those worlds open for us, it can be as exciting as dangerous.

The visual style of the show will be cinematic, emotional and fast pacing. The light is soft like in a painting, and slow moments of reflection and silence are used for dramatic purposes, such as it happens in *My Brilliant Friend*, and *13 reasons why*. The use of lightening and colours mirrors the character's emotions, even the ones they try to hide. There should be two main tones: One very warm with sunset colours, and a dark blueish. Fish-eye lens, Dutch angles and odd camera movements can be freely expressed when approaching unrealistic scenes, such as dreams, paranormal experiments, and hallucinogenic moments, such as did Terry Gilliam, David Lynch, and Hitchcock in their films.

As the show is set in the 90s, it will feature the period details, soundtracks and its slow progression from analog technology to digital.





The sisterhood of the night (2014)
Director: Caryn Waechter



THE VILLAIN

Deep-minded Artur has always been fascinated by spirituality and esoterism. A near-death experience gave him the confidence he needed to start his work where he gathers both science and spirituality: including astrology, numerology, tarot, astral projection, and reincarnation techniques. Records of past-life visions, evidence of reincarnation and astral projection made him believe it was in the astral plan that we could find the cure for many mental diseases, especially schizophrenia and personality disorders, which are actually spiritual diseases, just as old pagan religious once said.

Artur is not only driven by his greed and hunger for the unknown, but he is also a troubled man whose entire existence has been lost forever for his wife who struggles with Alzheimer, while he's still in grief for the sudden death of the rest of his family in a car accident. Lonely and determined, to conduct his dangerous experiments, Artur will need the help of better energy conductors, sentient people who is more connected with the other world, - children.

To kidnap them, Artur designed an addicting videogame with subliminal messages, which leads to physical places where they must go in order to complete the "mission" and advance the next levels, that eventually lead to his secret place, isolated from everything else.

He wishes to unravel the laws of God, and perhaps, be, himself, a God in his own world, and he is not alone...





The O.A. (2016)

Created by: Brit Marling & Zal Batmanglij



THE GIRLS

The unpopular, the marginalized, the outsiders...

MARIA INÊS is fourteen, she's a leader and a rebel. Her father is a pastor from the local church which she doesn't believe in and never met her family expectations. She is ambitious and determined to leave the village she hates, but her extreme acne makes her an easy target at school. She uses esoterism and the belief in paranormal to escape the bullying and her personal insecurities. Her confident spirit and sarcasm mask a co-dependent personality and need for affection which leads her to dangerous and sometimes toxic relationships, where everything needs to be put at a test. While some people believe she is just a lost cause, many believe she is dangerous, and perhaps mentally ill just like her distant cousin. She will soon realize the real meaning of leadership, and friendship.

MARIA LUÍSA (Marilu), fourteen, she's the Hermione Granger of the group, intelligent, loyal, and misunderstood. She's shy, short, and overweight with a natural dark humour. She was the result of a teenage pregnancy. Her mother still blames her for ruining her future, after giving her up to her grandmother. She pays too much attention to what others think of her, in school she is called "gipsy" because of the too long and messy hair. She lives with an overly protective grandmother, to whom she's more a nurse than a grandchild. Her need for freedom will land her and her friends in dangerous adventures, where she will discover the courage, she didn't know she had.

MARIA JOSÉ (Marizé), fourteen, the most organized of the group, with lists and schedules for everything. She lives near the train station, in a big and dysfunctional family, with 3 older brothers, and a baby, all from different fathers. People mess with her because she still has the body of a boy, but she's not a tomboy. She's the most sceptic of the group and will do everything to become popular and lose her virginity. Her frustration will be destructive and will grow angry and depression, which will put their friendship, and herself to the test.

MARIA RITA, fourteen, the missing girl. Alienated, humble, sentient and addicted to videogames. She's the daughter of a fisherman who became the town's drunk after she went missing. Her mother is not in the picture anymore, and there's rumours that she had suicide tendencies, and runaway like an attention seeker. When unravelling the mystery of her disappearance, the group of friends find out that she was in a romantic relationship with a weird guy that she met only in the videogame, as well as more intriguing secrets about the girl they thought.





Skins (2007 – 2013)
Created by Jamie Brittain and Bryan Elsley

THE TEENAGERS



IURI, is sixteen years old and son of Belarus immigrants. He's reserved, listless and a long-haired heavy metal guy with no faith in humanity. He's a nihilist, with no social life and never had a girlfriend. He's also a programmer progressing to a hacker level, whose skills will be very handy when tackling the conspiracy that might be the reason of Rita's disappearance.

LUCAS is sixteen. He dresses like a nerd, wears oversized glasses and is always falling in love for girls who do not want him. His extreme low confidence and clumsiness is easily forgotten when he plays the piano. His parents are always absent, so the guys in school always pressure him to use the house for parties; however, this does not grant him any popularity. He takes refuge in Lovecraft stories, and science but only when he finds himself in a real cosmic adventure, he will prove his knowledge.

RUBEN is seventeen, almost eighteen. He is a bully who's repeating high school and will perhaps stay there forever. Poverty and the divorce of his parents made him a very angry and troubled man; and moreover, into alcohol and drugs. For a while, he was badly influenced by his own gang. However, this bully will become a powerful friend of the group who were once his victims.

ADRIANA is sixteen and she has cousins everywhere. She's popular and knows everyone's secrets. She's charismatic and has an entrepreneur and inventor spirit, but the town rulers always were against her "too modern" ideas. Her dreams are too big for her, it doesn't matter how much she tries or how many powerful friends she has; this town will never change. She shares a great relationship with her parents, who are incredibly supportive of her hobbies, even when she goes against the law and leads a riot in the street.





Dazed and Confused (1993)
Director: Richard Linklater

ADULTS

The adults are our collective secondary characters that bring conflict and personality to the show. With them we can see how the emerge of the internet and mobile phones, inter alia, provoked even a wider difference between the two generations who struggle understanding each other.

While the kids and teens represent the modern future we have today, the adults come from a reality where women married early and dropped out from school, men beat their families, by default. Especially in a small village where there's nothing to do, and rumours spread like fire, along with envy, repression, and prejudice.

The entire village is ruled by closed-minded people whose jobs were automatically transferred from father to son, instead of earned by their efforts, even though they could see the lights of the capital city from the other side of the river, it was too far away to reach. They were unaware that the entire world was evolving elsewhere, while for the youngsters the feeling of being stuck was constantly growing inside them, as well as the impatience for something more in their lives, and the panic of the stagnation and languish that the adults could never understand.

Unlike the typical mystery series, the investigation of the missing girl is almost inexistent, since policemen are lazy and lean towards a corrupted system. There's only a crime if a body is found. Justice was many times taken by their own hands and influenced by creative rumours.





My Brilliant Friend (2018)
Directed by: Saverio Constanzo

STRUCTURE

Despite the ability to manipulate reality, such as time and space through parallel dimensions, this show is structured like a film, with a beginning, middle and end. Every character has complete arcs.

ACT 1 (episodes 1 – 2) starts when a house mysteriously explodes in the neighbourhood, and our protagonists see a dead body for the first time; The house becomes abandoned and scenes of bullying and violence lead the group to seek comfort in the burned and now abandoned house, - their secret place, in a possible haunted house – where their fixation on the paranormal increases. The teenagers decide to use the house for an epic party where the first paranormal event occurs. The next day, Rita “vanishes” and the group of 3 girls start their own investigation, which lead to more questions than answers about the mysterious life of Rita and the secrets she was hiding. By the end of the Act 1, our characters come to the same conclusion: Rita did not runaway, neither suicide, nor nobody else is on their side to try to find her.

ACT 2 (episodes 3 – 7) will depict the terrible consequences of Rita’s disappearance within each character’s lives, individually, and eventually separating the group.

It’s only when Rita appears online and, in their dreams, that they come together again to find her, but this time in the astral plane. The years pass slowly, they grow up, fall in love, have their hearts broken and commit mistakes while making spiritual experiments and exploring other states of consciousness, almost like Rita have left them a legacy. Furthermore, while traveling to alternate dimensions, they end up opening a “door” to supernatural forces that “haunt” the village. Parallely, the teenagers realize that more kids have been mysteriously disappearing in other villages, as well as strange symbols from a videogame start appearing drawn in the walls. This act will end with all storylines coming together.

ACT 3 (episodes 8 – 9) will climax with all characters working together to defeat Artur, save Rita as well as more victims.



Donnie Darko (2001)
Directed by: Richard Kelly

WRITER STATEMENT

The TV series “As Marias” represents the loneliest teenagers who either grew up in a hostile environment or, in places of scarce opportunities, like me. It’s an invitation to remember the gold age of the 90s and aims to inspire, captivate, and encourage the next generations to defend and fight for their dreams, regardless of the place they were born.

This story returns the ancient belief of something else beyond what we can see and is also a story about bullying physical and psychological, resilience, friendship, and the urge to run away to write your own destiny. The series is influenced by Lynch’s Surrealism, Aronofsky, and Linklater existentialism, mixed with Lars von Trier naturalism, such as if series like Skins and 13 reasons why met sci-fi and surrealistic series such as Twin Peaks, Experimental Lane, The O.A., VR.5, and Stranger Things.

I write this story from the heart as it was growing up inside me during the two decades that I spent living in a small fishing village which seemed isolated from the rest of the world, in the south of Portugal. Always wanting to leave this place forever. Time has taught me to hate and love this place, as well as the people in it, I’ve learned to understand them, respect them, and forgive as well as I do with myself, which I share with great passion and enthusiasm.



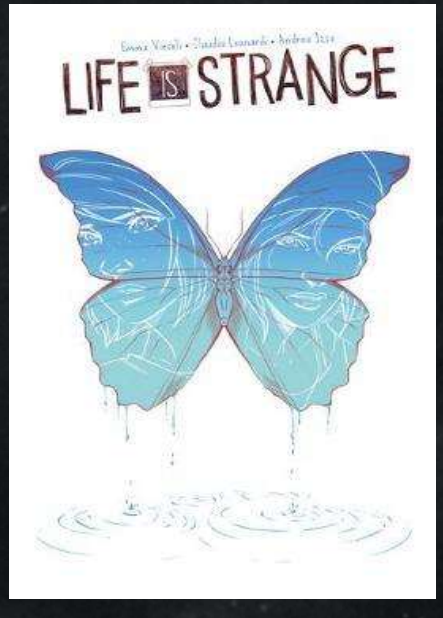
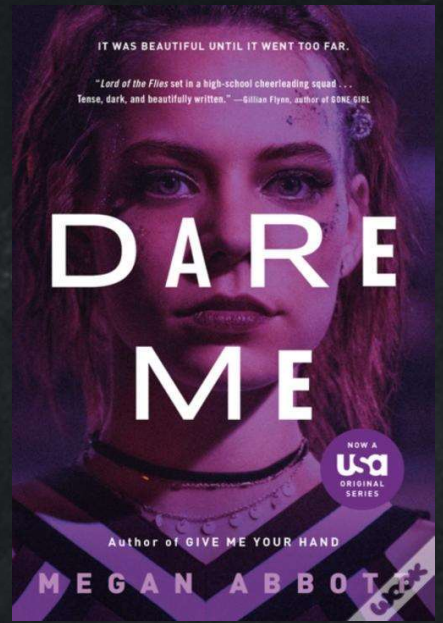
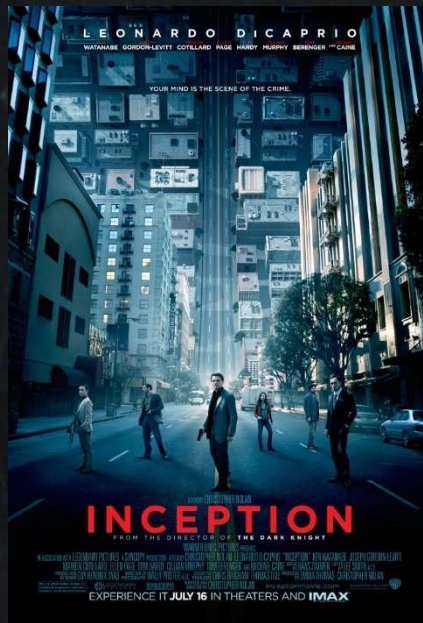
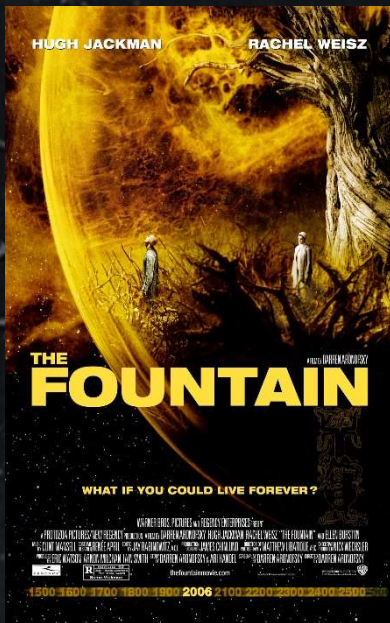
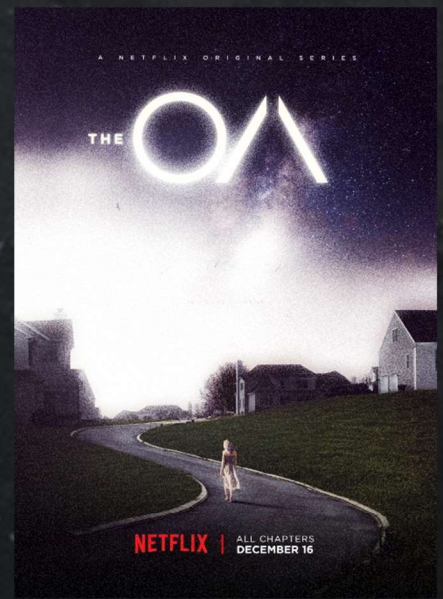
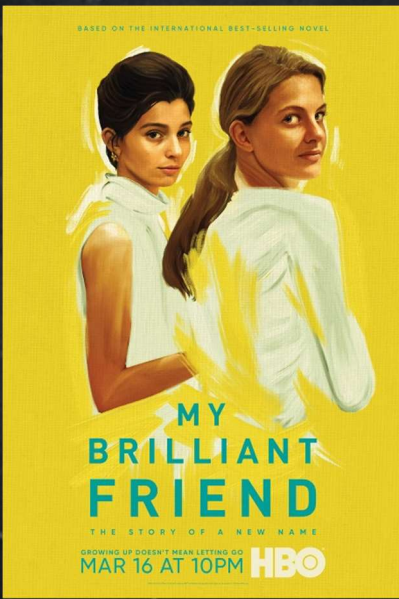


The Others (2001)
Directed by: Alejandro Amenábar

FRANCHISE POTENTIAL

Even though this series is designed for a 9-hour TV series, its story can continue in subsequent instalments as the girls grow up and investigate more cases of missing people under mysterious circumstances, lead by Artur's followers within a bigger conspiracy.







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