

10-part, one-hour drama **VIRTUAL** is set in the not-too-distant future where the challenges of the modern world have reached a tipping point. Society is in flux and technology is both the bread and the circus. Virtual Reality and Augmented Reality is a fact of life from dispensing psychotherapy, banking, sex, travel, education and other extreme experiences where players join the collective "reality" for a temporary blast of pleasure and connection.

The powers that be - business, government, military, religious and criminal - are intent on exploiting VR for their own ends. On the flipside, there's a rise of Neo-Luddite activists intent on keeping those powers from utterly co-opting the masses.

**"Reality is merely an illusion, albeit a very persistent one."  
— Albert Einstein**

**VIRTUAL** begins with the murder of two operatives of a secret organization safeguarding humanity against a growing conspiracy designed to give rise to a New World Order. They had unearthed a plan that involves attacks on the final frontier -- the mind. Enter the **Astronaut**, a mysterious man who was once lost in space. He recruits two radically different people into the secret organization.

Reclusive **Jakov "Jak" Petrovic** is former juvenile offender turned soldier discharged from the army upon suffering a head injury while on a mission. When he was 12 and his autistic brother was six, his mother was sentenced to prison for the criminally insane for killing a visiting foreign government official. His mother claims that she was brainwashed and Jak has long dismissed the idea – until the Astronaut confirms that what his mother says is true. And that she's not the only one whose brain was primed as a weapon.

When VR prodigy **Ophelia Lovelace** (think Mozart on the computer keyboard) contracted a deadly form of encephalitis as a child, her neuroscientist parents cured her but then they made her their secret guinea pig. On her 8<sup>th</sup> birthday her father disappeared and Ophelia suspects her mother had him killed. When the Astronaut finds Ophelia in the private psychiatric clinic she's been committed by her mother for treatment - he reveals that her father **Byron** is alive and is an infamous Neo-Luddite leader.

The Astronaut reveals that Jak and Ophelia are uniquely capable of entering the "virtual reality" of another person's mind to expose their secrets. But this experimental technique called "skin-walking" has limitations - they can only get flashes and must interpret memory from imagination. Their mission is to infiltrate the worlds of the suspected conspirators.

Utopic Industries is the preeminent creator and supplier of VR and augmented reality for user experiences and national security applications as well as advances in brain science and neurological health. **Cyrus Erebus**, founder and President is a scientist whose code name was The Puppetmaster when he was a spy. He conducted highly controversial top-secret experiments into mind control involving unwitting human subjects. The irony is now he is slowly losing his mind from dementia. One of his protégés and current Head of R&D is **Isabella Lovelace** – Ophelia's estranged mother.

One of Utopic's efforts is to synthesize a drug that will surpass the potency of the plant-based SON that's currently huge business for the criminal cartels. SON is in high demand for opening up the mind for a super-charged VR experience. A rising figure in the cartels is **Sam Bikram**, one of Jak's gang friends when he was a teenager.

**VIRTUAL** will follow Ophelia and Jak as they undergo the quest to expose the conspiracy and root out the players. Each step of the way their own personal agendas will complicate their mission and make them question what is real and what is virtual.

Combining the intrigue of **Homeland**, the technopunk verve and suspense of **Mr. Robot** and the spirit of the works of Philip K. Dick and Ursula K. Le Guin, **VIRTUAL** will draw on the visual tenets of VR and gaming (first person shooter, found footage, etc) and immerse viewers in a riveting new world as well as deepening the story-telling with other properties like VR games and interactive web-based experiences.