

ALTER EGOS

Created by Christine Alexiou

A half-hour live-action/animated comedy for tweens about four grade 9 friends who are the secret webmasters of a popular online game called "Alter Egos" where players can create their own super hero personas and be who they want to be and maybe who they really are.

Watch the gang as they navigate the highs and lows of teen life - at school, at home, and in their world - with a little help or hindrance from their "alter egos" who pop up in animated form during the action.

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THE SHOW

Jeff Kim, Winston Johnson, Clio Papadopoulos and Melissa Wozniak have been best friends since they were eight and played on the same soccer team. Back then, they were united by their mutual obsession with *Harry Potter*, *Lord of the Rings*, video games and the internet in general.

Now they're 14 and diving into the big leagues of high school. Jeff is a hyperactive sports nut who makes everything a competition and who wants to be a stuntman or WWE star – despite the fact he's not the most athletically gifted. Winston is naturally gifted in science and technology and when he's not creating whacky inventions, he's helping his friends problem solve with annoying "Spock" like logic. Clio is a foodie and a fashionista who firmly believes she's always right and is determined to set trends when she's not making over something or someone. Melissa is a bleeding heart, nature girl who can't resist championing new causes. She just wants to make the world a better place – whether people like it or not.

They might have different interests, but the gang is in the same boat and each other's safety nets, as they navigate the treacherous social waters of high school life.

One moment, you're balancing everything – the clothes, the attitude - everything's under control. You're cool. The popular crowd is even taking notice. But one false step and you're floundering - ripe for social humiliation.

In those moments – and there's many - who doesn't wish they could be smarter, stronger, funnier, cooler, quicker with the comeback and totally in charge of every situation? In short – be someone completely different. It might not be that easy in real life, but it can happen when you're playing *Alter Egos* – a totally retro-cool on-line videogame where players can create their own super hero personas and be who they want to be and maybe who they really are. Not to mention the chance to relive a situation to their satisfaction, get out their frustrations or try out pick-up lines.

Our four friends are the secret webmasters for the *Alter Egos* game site. They find the CD of the game after they decode a map they were mysteriously sent in a gamer chat-room. The story goes that *Alter Egos* was created back in 1999 by a mysterious game design genius who goes by the moniker of Dransky. The free game nearly crashed the internet back in the day because of its popularity but on the eve of Y2K – all traces of it completely disappeared. It became the stuff of urban legend, until Jeff, Winston, Clio and Melissa upload it once again.

Alter Egos quickly becomes a hit and the foursome create their own avatars with personalities, powers and the supreme self-confidence they wish they possessed and could express in real life. The cardinal rule of playing the game – keep your secret identity a secret. Well that's easier said than done sometimes....

From time to time, Dransky will communicate with the gang in the form of cryptic messages – whether on-line or by texts or maybe in disguise. The friends and other *Alter Ego* players at their school suspect that Dransky is actually controlling the game play and the super villains.

ALTER EGOS is about growing up - which means trying a lot of things on for size - whether it's a different look, hobby, love interest, social group or persona. It also means coming up against nemeses – whether that be another classmate, a social pressure, or a teacher.

THE ANIMATION

In each episode, Jeff, Winston, Clio and Melissa's alter egos in animated form will pop up in the middle of the live action to make comments, observations and quips or give them advice that's always sure to be entertaining and complicating.

Comedic moments from the online game will play in between the episode's acts – as a sort of “preview” or comment on the episode's action.

THE GAME

The game is played similarly to *World of Warcraft* but the characters are super heroes and super villains and their sidekicks. As the characters win battles and complete missions – they earn enhanced powers and gadgets. There are 100 stages of the game and once a player has completed level 100 – he or she is allowed to create a new hero and re-enter the game. But legend goes that only one player has ever reached level 100 before the game vanished on the eve of Y2K. Rumour goes that the player was Dransky's long lost love and arch gaming rival Zone.

Jeff Kim is “Frenetic”: he's got super speed, super agility, super flexibility (he's like silly-putty) and has super good looks – not mention what he thinks is a super quick wit. He's also able to manipulate the atoms of matter like rock, plastic, metal, wood, etc in order to destroy them, move them or walk right through them. Has a massive ego, sports a pompadour, and likes Elvis tunes.

Winston Johnson is “Dr. IQ”: a freak experiment in cybernetics grew his brain twice than normal size and rendered him a super genius – a walking computer – and gave him X-Ray vision, the ability to move and bend objects with his brain, and to make himself invisible and create short-term force-fields. Has a massive ego, sports an afro and likes chillin' to reggae music.

Clio Papadopoulos is “Goddess”: beautiful and curvaceous with a short temper, she has the ability to teleport, is an expert at swordplay, can hurl thunderbolts and cast spells that allow her to shape-shift into various animals. Has a massive ego, sports a cascading ripple of golden locks and likes to play the lyre in her spare time.

Melissa Wozniak is “Natural Calamity”: tall and ethereal, and upbeat, she can fly and swim the depths of the ocean. She has immunity to extreme heat and cold and can harness the power of the earth – causing natural phenomena like volcanic eruptions, landslides and earthquakes. She can communicate with flora and fauna. Has a massive ego, sports a shining sheath of raven tresses and likes to scrapbook when she's not fighting evil.

THE EPISODE IDEAS

WAR SHARE

Clio and Jeff are forced to share a locker during renovations at school. A war erupts between neat freak Clio and the slobby Jeff after Clio's designer t-shirt is eaten alive by a fungus growing from his forgotten ham sandwich (while she's wearing it) and she's nicknamed "Stinky". In the meantime, Winston agrees to help Melissa develop a meatless hotdog to sell at the cafeteria as a vegetarian option. The dog becomes a big hit – but when Melissa finds out that Winston forgot to tell her that he added bacon essence foam to the recipe – because "bacon make everything better" – she freaks.

GAME ON

The gang attends the Comic Book & Gaming Fair. Winston falls in love with a computer program, Clio and Melissa go head to head in a contest to win a date with the heartthrob actor of their favourite werewolf movies and Jeff goes undercover on the search for the mysterious Dranksy.

BEWITCHED AND BEWILDERED

Winston and Jeff are bewitched by the new girl in French class and compete for her affection but somehow end up helping her meet the guy *she* has a crush on. In the meantime, Melissa's attempts to help Clio "speak green" to catch the eye of the cute Enviro Club president backfire when she realizes she's got a crush on him herself.

SENSORY OVERLOAD

It's exam time and the gang is sleep deprived and grumpy from studying. Getting together for one last study session – they all drift off and end up interacting with their superhero alter egos (in live form) in dreams that quickly turn into nightmares.

DETENTION DETOUR

Tired of her goody-two-shoes image, Melissa asks Jeff to coach her on becoming a class clown. Melissa's clowning overshadows Jeff and he becomes jealous. Their "joke-off" lands them both in detention. Meanwhile, Clio agrees to be Winston's guinea pig for his math robot the "Tutor" – and gets trapped in the lab with the tyrannical Tutor after Winston locks himself in the utility closet by accident. It's up to Jeff and Melissa to work out their differences and work together to sneak out of detention to help their friends.

PILEDRIIVER

Jeff is humiliated when a girl beats him in a wrestling match and enlists Winston in a plan to come up with an amazing stunt that will make everyone forget his humiliation. Clio is mortified herself when a video of her tripping and falling in the library while wearing a tight new outfit she's designed is posted anonymously on the school intra-web and she's intent on unmasking the culprit responsible.

CREATOR BIO

CHRISTINE ALEXIOU is a Toronto-based writer and filmmaker. She has a Bachelor of Journalism from Carleton University and graduated from the Canadian Film Centre's Prime Time TV Writing Program. She is a winner of the Canwest Global Writers Apprentice Program for BANFF 2010.

Kids television writing credits include: DEGRASSI: THE NEXT GENERATION, and the animated series CHILLY BEACH, and THE VERY GOOD ADVENTURES OF YAM ROLL IN HAPPY KINGDOM.

She has also written for a range of documentary series including X-WEIGHTED, FAMILY RESTAURANT and FORENSIC FACTOR.

She has produced, directed and written the films: TELLING LIVES: PORTRAITS OF IMMIGRANT GRANDMOTHERS, HELLO DOLLY? which aired on SCN, and WHO'S AFRAID OF HAPPY ENDINGS? for Bravo! and SCN . Her live-action/animated documentary TRAVELS WITH MY BROTHER, had its world premiere at the 2009 Toronto Reel Asian International Film Festival.