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Whenever a new product is released we often get the chance to do an interview with the people responsible. In 95% of those interview opportunities they are the musicians and or singers of the bands. But in this particular case not, although we could talk with the musical sculptor behind Roswell Six's second album it was our wish to talk to the novelist Kevin J. Anderson, the man who wrote the books that this whole project is based upon. He sat down at his PC for us to answer these questions.

Text: [Winston](#)

To interview a novel writer for a website like ours, Lords Of Metal is new to me. Have you been interviewed before regarding the Roswell Six albums?

Thanks, Winston. Yes, because this is such an interesting crossover project - novel and rock CD together - we've done quite a few interviews, from both sides, both in music magazines and websites and also in science fiction and publishing sites. I've always thought that the prog rock and science fiction audiences had a large overlap, and this was a way to get the two groups to enjoy the same story.

Do you like the music that was created around your two books 'Terra Incognita; Beyond The Horizon' and 'Terra Incognita; Lines In The Sand'?

I love it, of course! This is exactly the kind of music I love to listen to, and this time I had a hand in creating it. Shawn Gordon of ProgRock Records worked with me to come up with musicians and vocalists that were exactly right for the story and the characters. The two CDs have different styles, due to the two different composers - Erik Norlander and Henning Pauly - but they capture just the right feel. 'Beyond The Horizon' is sweeping, symphonic, and generally upbeat, focused on sailing ships and exploration, while the second CD, 'A Line In The Sand', is darker, heavier, edgier, about a more violent part of the story, focusing on a terrible war between the two lands in the novels. I got to work with some of my idols in the music business.

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How close were you involved with the recording and creating of the albums?

Because they were companion pieces to my novels, I mapped them out and planned the content. I decided which tracks we needed to tell the story. My wife Rebecca and I wrote all the lyrics to the songs (on two tracks for 'Line In The Sand', Grammy-award-winning singer/songwriter Janis Ian helped us out). I was sort of like the "director" while Shawn Gordon was the producer. I wrote all the content for the CD booklet and commissioned the artwork from some of my science fiction artist friends.

How was the connection established to start this whole idea?

Shawn Gordon had read some of my novels and he contacted me, because he knew I liked prog rock music, which is what his record label releases. We corresponded, talked on the phone, met for dinner, and swapped some books and CDs. During one phone conversation, I mentioned that I had always wanted to do a CD crossover project with one of my novels, and he was excited by the idea. We brainstormed some more and decided that the new series I was just then planning - Terra Incognita - would be perfect for it. Shawn knows most of the prog rock artists that I love the most, and he was able to get them to join in on the project. (Some of them were already readers of my novels.) It was a great collaborative project. The composers of the music - Henning Pauly for 'A Line In The Sand' and Erik Norlander for 'Beyond The Horizon' - were my picks, because I had very much enjoyed their other work. Putting such a project together was very complex with all the players involved, and all the big names, but it was also a very exhilarating experience.



Why was the project named Roswell Six and not Terra Incognita?

'Terra Incognita' is the name of one fantasy trilogy I'm working on (and the subject of the two rock CDs so far), but I have also written the highly successful 'Saga Of Seven Suns' epic and many others, a hundred books so far. I wanted something broader as a name under which to record the music, not just limit it to one series. And there was already another group named Terra Incognita who had recorded at least one album in the 1990s. We thought Roswell Six was an interesting name for a

group, something we developed with Erik Norlander.

Can you describe the process of translating the story to a prog rock album?

The 700-page novels contain a lot more story than we could possibly fit in a CD, and I had to look at the overall canvas of the many plots and distill out one specific story thread that was best fitted to musical adaptation. On 'Beyond The Horizon' I chose a tale of a sailor lost at sea, trying to make his way back home to his wife. On 'A Line In The Sand' I looked at both sides of a bloody religious war. When I decided which story to focus on, I tried to find which pivotal points or character epiphanies that would be good jumping off points for songs. In the novel, 'The Map Of All Things', one of the opening scenes has the leader of one country building a towering wall, a barricade to keep the other side out. That barricade seemed a perfect metaphor for the opening song (sung by Steve Walsh from Kansas). I did songs about the leader of each side, some from the perspective of the common soldiers. Henning Pauly wrote a wonderful instrumental "Battleground" about the climactic battle. All the pieces fell together well.

On your website I noticed a third 'Terra Incognita' book is the works; the logical question; will there be a third album by the Roswell Six project too?

These CDs are very complex with all the different performers, some of them very well known and with crowded schedules. It takes much longer to write, compose, and record one of the CDs than it takes me to write a 700-page novel, so there just won't be enough time to get the third CD done before the third novel is published.

If that third album will be made, which musicians / singers would you like to participate when budget and availability wouldn't matter?

I had my "dream team" of performers already on the two CDs - Steve Walsh from Kansas, James LaBrie from Dream Theater, Michael Sadler from Saga, John Payne from Asia, Arjen Lucassen from Ayreon, Sass Jordan, Janis Ian, Chris Brown from Ghost Circus, Gary Wehrkamp from Shadow Gallery, Chris Quirarte from Prymary, and of course Henning Pauly, Lana Lane, and Erik Norlander. There are a couple of my idols I would still like to have...but that may still happen.

Can you see other books of you come to musical fruition?

I've done so much science fiction as well that it might be interesting to develop a CD based on an upcoming SF novel. For now, however, I'm still trying to catch my breath.

Your genre, the fantasy / sci-fi offer a great challenge to movie makers, bands and artists. What would a perfect combination be when combining a full package of book, album, movie and multimedia?

I remember listening to Jeff Wayne's 'Musical Version Of War Of The Worlds' over and over again when I was in high school and college. That was a perfect synthesis of the classic novel, words, and musical adaptation (as well as great paintings in the accompanying booklet). I also saw the spectacular live stage show in Melbourne, Australia. I thought that was a very good full package, but with the 'Terra Incognita' CDs, the novels, and the artwork in the lyric booklets... that comes very close.

Anything else you would like our readers to know about you and

or the Roswell Six project?

I hope your readers will check out the novel and the music together. You can get signed copies of both at www.anderzonestop.com or at www.progrockrecords.com.



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