

What inspired you to write *The Brave Historian*?

I was hiking, contemplating all the songs I had written as a young man that were now stored inside cardboard boxes somewhere in the attic. Certainly, not all great artists are discovered. I thought about Van Gogh, Kafka—amazing depth, perception, beauty . . . and yet dead, the past littered with unsold paintings and instructions for the writings to be cremated.

Earlier, I had written a strange book called *The Man with Total Control*, without any idea how to get it published. That's where the original idea for John Hammond struck me—a man of great talent, yet unpublished, unknown . . . and a dream that continued to dwindle. But, damn, it couldn't be a sad story, the guy had to have the guts and the humor to try and live forever.

We've heard you worked on this project over the span of many years—when did you first start this story?

The summer of 1993. I had a beautiful young family, a good career, nothing I would ever want to change . . . except that aching deep inside that I missed being a singer/songwriter and that I needed to someday write the great American novel.

Is John Hammond a reflection of a real-life person, or perhaps even of yourself?

He's a little bit of me—an overactive mind muddling through waves of brilliance and self doubt. And I do have tons of cardboard boxes filled with random ideas, unrecorded songs, and unfinished stories. Beyond that, the baggage of John's life is much different than mine.

What challenges did you face in writing *The Brave Historian*?

Probably like most writers, I could blame family, career, or day-to-day life. Mostly, however, it was procrastination and the curse of perfection. As the story evolved over 20-25 drafts, I seriously fluctuated between *The Brave Historian* being the greatest novel ever written and a numbing certainty it would remain unpublished, never to be read. Fortunately, by the time I really got into the book, the main characters were doing most of the talking within my mind. They loved the book.

What's next for your writing career?

I have about five books that are at various stages of completion. A couple of them are close to being done . . . maybe a few more drafts.