

AARON M. MINER—MEDIA KIT



As an author, filmmaker and entrepreneur with training in animation production and experience in crowdfunding, Aaron M. Miner is available for interviews, speaking engagements and convention appearances.

BIO

Aaron M. Miner is an author, filmmaker and entrepreneur. He is the founder of indie animation company Studio Kenaz LLC and its publishing arm, Gebobooks Publishing.

In 2012, he directed the promotional music video “Falling in Flames” for the comic book and concept album Yumiko: Curse of the Merch Girl. He completed *Rosaria of Venice* while finishing his degree in Animation Production Management at Cogswell College.

While *Rosaria of Venice* is his first novel, he has written several short stories, some of which are available via his website, Runicfire.net. In his free moments, he sometimes dreams of adopting a Bengal cat.

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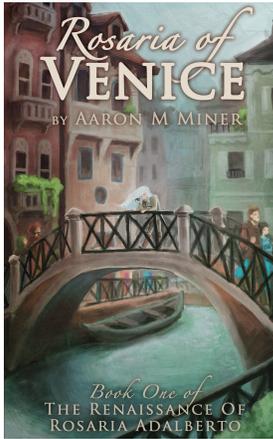
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Email contact is preferred and will receive the fastest response.



ROSARIA OF VENICE — BOOK INFORMATION

Title: Rosaria of Venice

Author: Aaron M. Miner

Publisher: Gebobooks Publishing

Date of Publication: July 22nd, 2014

Retail Price: \$14.99 (Paperback), \$2.99 (Kindle)

ISBN: 0991590902 (Paperback) 0991590902 (Kindle)

Pages: 336 (Paperback)

“Miner combines the spirit of the Italian Renaissance with the energy of Steampunk... All coupled along with a generous mixture of strong characterization for a protagonist who ends up embodying the struggle of both the classic and modern heroine.”

J. Malcom Stewart
Author of *The Eyes of the Stars*
sabbx.wordpress.com

What would happen if the Industrial Revolution began in the 15th century? Rosaria Adalberto, the protagonist of *Rosaria of Venice* (info) by author Aaron M. Miner, is a scientist and noblewoman living in such a world. Despite the promise of her research in electricity and magnetism, her status as a woman in the Italian Renaissance stymies her attempts to acquire funding and recognition for her work. When a mysterious patron approaches her, she gladly accepts his support—and plunges into the depths of conspiracy and danger.

Rosaria of Venice is the first in a series of novels about the life and times of Rosaria Adalberto. It is a pioneering work in the Renpunk subgenre, the author’s term for Steampunk-style science fiction set in Renaissance Europe. Very few prior works appear to exist in this vein. Most fiction combining Renaissance and Steampunk elements, such as Alison Sinclair’s *Darkborn* series, are explicitly fantasy instead of science fiction.

In addition to the action, adventure, intrigue, swashbuckling and camaraderie, *Rosaria* touches upon deeper themes and issues. Not only does the novel explore feminist themes, it portrays a protagonist who has still yet to realize her true sexual orientation, raises questions regarding the role of science and religion in society, and briefly touches on matters of social class. These themes will be expanded upon, and joined by new ones, in future volumes.

Rosaria of Venice's combination of adventure, thoughtful social commentary and engaging characters has the potential to appeal both to particular niches—namely Steampunk enthusiasts, feminist readers and the LGBT reading community—and a broader audience. Media outlets whose fans intersect with the above segments, as well as general Science Fiction and Fantasy, are likely to find *Rosaria of Venice* worth reviewing for their audiences.

ROSARIA OF VENICE—PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

***Rosaria of Venice* Imagines a Steampunk Renaissance**

Today we consider the Renaissance as an era of artistic, technological, cultural and scientific breakthroughs that forged the modern world. But what would the Renaissance have been like if it had spawned industrialization as well?

This question underlies the premise of new science fiction author Aaron M. Miner's first novel, *Rosaria of Venice*. Set in a steampunk version of the year 1491, the book follows the travails of Rosaria Adalberto, a young scientist and Venetian noblewoman in search of a theory of electromagnetism. With her attempts to acquire funding stymied by the sexism of her society, she leaps at the offer of a mysterious patron who takes an interest in her work.

Rosaria's Venice is a hybrid of the historical city-state prior to the turn of the 16th century and a healthy dose of steam-powered industrialization. Steamships are a common sight in the Venetian lagoon, factories belch smoke in the industrial districts, and the aristocracy have built a system of elevated locomotives as a testament to their ingenuity and power.

"In many respects, the largest changes are social instead of technological," according to Miner. "Historically, the rise of science and industrial technology coincided with a long power struggle with the Catholic Church and a more traditional, mythological view of the world. In *Rosaria of Venice*, these changes occur sooner and more abruptly."

"What you have is a sort of schizoid society whose technological advances have outpaced that of the era's culture. The juxtaposition of old and new technology, of more modern and more classical fashions, are outer reflections of this battle for the soul of an era."

So far, that social structure is decidedly more Renaissance than modern, with an entrenched aristocracy assuming the roles of corporations in the actual, historical Industrial Revolution of the 19th century. As *Rosaria of Venice* is intended as the first in a series of twelve novels, future installments might further explore the distinctions between this alternate history and our own.

Aaron M. Miner is a California-based writer, filmmaker and entrepreneur. He is the founder of indie animation company Studio Kenaz LLC and its publishing arm, Gebobooks Publishing. He maintains a blog at Runicfire.net and the official *Rosaria of Venice* website at Rosariabooks.com.

Rosaria of Venice is available for sale in Kindle and paperback formats on Amazon.com. The Kindle edition sells for \$2.99, and the paperback for \$14.99.

SAMPLE Q&A

What’s the story behind the book? How did *Rosaria of Venice* come into being?

I’d had the idea for an alternate history novel clattering about my skull for several years, ever since I learned of the Antikythera mechanism (a rudimentary Greek mechanical computer from the 3rd century BC). The characters of *that* story, however, did not appeal to me, so the idea remained unused. This was for the better, as I would later learn that the premise I was working with had already been done.

Years later, my favorite band came out with a new album. It was a concept album, but I did not own the companion comic, so the story behind the music was left to my imagination. As I replayed each track, as I am wont to do with new music, a few connections sparked in the recesses of my mind. I imagined this swashbuckling adventure of a female Musketeer in a steampunk version of the Renaissance. While nameless at the time, Rosaria appeared to me quite vividly, and proved herself a character worth writing a story about. A year after that, I developed an outline and wrote the first draft of Book One.

You bill *Rosaria of Venice* as “Renpunk.” Where does the name come from?

During the Kickstarter campaign for the book in 2013, a friend of mine referred to *Rosaria of Venice* as “Renpunk” in a promotional tweet. The word so perfectly captured the essence of the novel’s setting that I began to use it myself. Besides, steampunk fans often consider Victorian steampunk to be the only true steampunk, and thus branding *Rosaria* as another subgenre is probably more appropriate than not.

Your protagonist, Rosaria Adalberto, is a woman. As a male author, did you have any concerns about how she would come across?

I did, but I tried not to worry too much. My philosophy on writing characters is that people are fundamentally the same, despite our differences, and that the differences we do exhibit are matters of degree rather than kind. I believe male authors writing women often fall into the trap of focusing on writing a *woman*, obsessing over how a *woman* might act or how a *woman* speaks or sees the world, instead of simply writing the character. Even feminists—and I consider myself a feminist—can succumb to this snare, and end up merely substitute a demeaning stereotype with a more flattering one. With my protagonist, I tried to focus on who Rosaria was as a *person*, and let the fact of her sex be merely that: a fact.

You mention feminism, and the early chapters involve revelations about Rosaria’s sexual orientation. Do you pursue a broader social agenda in your book?

I suppose I do, although I really would like to say otherwise. People tend to get uncomfortable when they think you have an “agenda.” While I definitely share the popular tendency to balk at heavy-handed lecturing in books and movies, and I *certainly* abhor propaganda masquerading as art, I do not believe that artists shouldn’t be allowed to have opinions. Such opinions are, after all, what make stories interesting, and infuse them with life and character. And the beautiful thing about storytelling as a medium, when approached with care, is that it grants the audience space to disagree with the author. A good story is an

exploration of ideas. The author might make his or her case, but presents it in such a manner that the audience perceives it as an experience, rather than an argument, and can evaluate it on its merits as such.

Why the decision to self-publish?

I have several reasons. Firstly, I like to do things myself. I have greater control over when and how I approach a task, and, ultimately, the only way to ensure that something gets done with absolute certainty is to do so yourself. Why spend so much time and frustration courting agents and publishers—who might or might not be on board with my artistic vision—when I have the technology and the training to be my own?

Secondly, I wanted to ensure that I maintained strict control over the rights to the story. I originally conceived of *Rosaria* and its sequels as animated films, and in the future I intend to follow through on that plan. Publishing through the studio allows me not only to maintain greater creative control over the work, but to exercise greater power over the rights to it.

What authors and creative works do you admire?

Frank Herbert's *Dune* is probably my favorite novel of all time, and I am quite the fan of Neil Gaiman. I grew up on Asimov, Heinlein and Clarke, and have recently gotten into Terry Pratchett's Discworld novels. Of course, when it comes to TV I'm a big fan of *Star Trek* (prior to the reboot), *Doctor Who* and *Babylon 5*.

Do any of these stories influence your own writing?

Just about anything I read, fiction or not, worms its way into my creative process. In fact, I would say that nonfiction tends to inspire new concepts more than fiction. Reading about history and science opens your mind to different ways of looking at the world.

That being said, I definitely draw from the fiction I've read and watched as well. *Rosaria's* style and tone is heavily influenced by swashbuckling adventure books and films. A discerning reader might find one or two references to *The Odyssey*. With regards to its thematic content, I cribbed somewhat from Rodenberry's "lure them with action-adventure, then throw in a heavy idea when their guard is down" approach to science fiction, though only time will tell if I actually succeeded.

Have you read a lot of Steampunk or alternate history novels?

Hardly any, I'm afraid. I am looking to correct that oversight, as it is a very broad and diverse genre.

So what motivated the Steampunk angle?

It just seemed to fit with the time period and the alternative history I wanted to explore. Other than that, there's not much to say about it.

The novel contains elements that could be read as fantasy. Is this a science fiction or a fantasy novel?

I'm not going to spoil anything for readers, but I do see *Rosaria of Venice* as being primarily science fiction. Fantasy and science fiction typically differ in more than just setting: science fiction approaches its content with a more inquisitive worldview than fantasy typically does. In many a fantasy story, those old legends the elders tell to scare you really are true, and the villain is some festering evil from a forgotten era. In science fiction stories, there's typically a lot more going on, and skepticism, versus adherence to tradition, is typically what enables the protagonists to persevere. *Rosaria* may or may not contain fantasy, but the approach it takes is that of science fiction.