

Sylvain Neuvel. A Canadian writer. A rising star of the sci-fi world. The author of the book series The Themis Files. When I read all three books from his series, The Sleeping Giants, Waking Gods and Only Human, I was really impressed and wanted to learn more about the man who created the story of the giant robots invasion. So, I asked him if he could answer some of my questions and he was so kind he accepted. The result is here.

When did you know you want to become a writer?

That's an interesting question. Always? Never? If you want to be an astronaut, you study, and train, and if you're extremely lucky, you get to be an astronaut. Writing isn't like that. If you want to write, you can write. I've been doing it for as long as I can remember. At five or six, I was selling little handmade comic books to the neighbors for twenty-five cents (to buy action figures). I never stopped writing, sometimes to earn a living, sometimes for fun. I don't think it matters that much.

What would you be if you wouldn't be a writer?

An astronaut 😊

What inspired the story of The Themis Files?

I spend a lot of time on the computer and, once in a while, I like to build things, physical objects. I offered to build a robot toy for my son when he was two or three years old. Instead of just saying yes, he started asking questions: what kind of robot? What does it do? Does it fly? Does it have pilots? He wanted a backstory for his toy. A few days later, we were watching Japanese anime about a giant robot and it got me thinking about what would happen if we discovered alien artefacts. That night I started writing the Themis Files.

Which character from The Themis Files series do you resemble the most?

Tough question. All of them, I suppose. Kara is the easiest to write, she just pours on the page. The Interviewer is fun. I like writing Rose but she knows things I don't so she means more research. Vincent is the hardest for me to write.

What would you do if you would discover a part of a giant robot in your backyard?

Jump up and down. Call everyone I know. Try to make it work. Then, I would try to befriend helicopter pilots, find a brilliant physicist and work out a plan. It would probably be easier to make more coffee and wait for a nameless man to knock on the door but I'd be too excited to think.

Only Human has, in my opinion, a strong critical note on current events around the world. Do you believe books have the power to change the world?

I don't think one book can drastically alter the course of humanity, but if the timing is right, it might give one person a gentle nudge in the right direction, inspire them to do something, write something. With lots of books, lots of gentle nudges, who knows what can happen?

In your process of writing ...do you structure the plot before you start writing and follow it 100% or do you build a story spontaneously?

I plot the hell out of these books. I like to plot anyway, but the interview format really makes it necessary. I need to decide what will be on the page, what I will let the reader figure out on her own. I need to decide who has the better point of view for a particular scene, etc.

Talent or hard work – which is more important in your opinion?

You need both. Talent will get your first book published. Hard work will give you a writing career.

3 greatest authors of all times?

Nooooo. Can't do that. For starters, my tastes change a lot over time. I will say that I admire any author who churns out good books year after year. It takes a special kind of person to sustain a writing career for years, or even decades.

Your favorite word or phrase (any language, even Ekt ☺)?

Yokits! Seriously, my favorite word when I'm writing is always the one that comes next, the one that keeps it going.

I would like to thank Sylvain to take the time and feed my (and my readers) curiosity.

If you want to learn more about the author and his work, visit his [author page](#).