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**Q: What's your book about?**

*Vinyl Tiger* is about Aleksandr. He's an eighties club/dance act who's not exactly the world's most talented musician. He's a *new romantic* and a heartbreaker but he has to rely a lot on his charm and wits to get by because it was tough catching a break back in the 80s.

Because he's a singer I get to explore different themes, such as how popular culture has changed since the eighties, how he balances his personal and professional ambitions and desires, and of course, how time always catches up with us in the end.

**Q: Where did you get the idea for this book?**

Aleksandr has always been floating around in my head. I always imagined him as a gay pop star, because I think every great male pop star should be. So that inspired me to think about how pop culture might've been different if there had been a major, openly gay act back in the eighties.

**Q: What traits do you share with your main character?**

Aleksandr suffers a lot from wanderlust. He really believes in following his heart and that leads him to all kinds of different places. He's quite sensitive and he's a romantic at heart, but he's also cynical and motivated. I think those are things we share. We were both born in Melbourne but I'm not into kohl as much as he is.

**Q: Did any of your inspiration for this book originate in your real life experiences?**

I spent years living in London and Kyoto, so those places figure quite prominently in the book. And the book starts out and returns to my hometown Melbourne.

There's a real indie/creative element to Aleksandr's beginnings and I guess that was the same for me when I started out as an artist, or later set up my own art gallery. I guess that also applies to self-publishing the book too. Just a belief that you should give it your all and not wait for someone else to give you an opportunity. Take a risk and a chance and do something. I firmly believe in that.

**Q: What made you decide to self-publish?**

The book is essentially about an indie act who wants to breakthrough to the mainstream, so I thought it was a good fit for indie publishing. It's been a learning curve, but I'm happy for having had



the experience and for staying true to that early eighties idea that anyone can and should have a crack at things. We're not as open to that in some parts of our culture anymore.

**Q: Are there any specific authors whose writing styles or subject matter inspired your book?**

I don't know that there are any specific authors whose writing inspires mine. I try to read work by different authors but I constantly end up reading contemporary fiction. I love really urban and gritty writers like Junot Diaz and John Niven but I tend to just write in what way comes naturally to me.

**Q: Do you have another project in the works?**

I have a draft of a manuscript that I'm now going to revisit now that *Vinyl Tiger* is done. It's an intimate and shorter work than *Vinyl Tiger* and set in one time and place. The working title is *When Winter's Wrong* but I constantly change my mind about titles so we'll see where that goes. I am also trying to find the courage to get to work on a photo book that I have been planning.

**Q: When you self-publish do you do it all yourself?**

Self-publishing requires you to do a lot more for yourself but you're never really alone. In my case I used an editor who consistently gave me really clear advice, and whose eye for detail was remarkable. The visual elements were also handed over to a brilliant designer I know and he came up with the cover concept which I love. Then of course, there's a great support network of other writers who are kind enough to share their experience, so you never really do it all yourself.

**Q: What's your writing background?**

I came from a more visual background. I mostly worked on an off in art circles or in areas that were related to visual work. Over the years I've written a lot for different websites; mostly articles about art and travel, and I also did a brief stint as a Roman art correspondent. Since 2010 I've been writing the Paperlesstiger blog which focuses on pop culture and I've been working as a teacher and translator.

**Q: Why should someone want to read your book in particular?**

I think *Vinyl Tiger* works on different levels. I approached it as if I was making a pop album, but with words, not music. To me a good pop album has fun, light moments and some meaningful, emotional elements to it that make it hard to forget. That's what I aimed for, and I think there are a lot of people who would enjoy reading it. I feel like it really reflects how our shared popular culture has changed over the years, but it's also a reflection of how we change as time catches up to us.

**Q: Does your book take place in a specific region?**

It takes place almost everywhere. Alekzandr is Australian born, but he follows his instincts and it takes him places. The book happens across nearly all of the continents because in a way, the pop music arena became a really international industry from the eighties onwards.