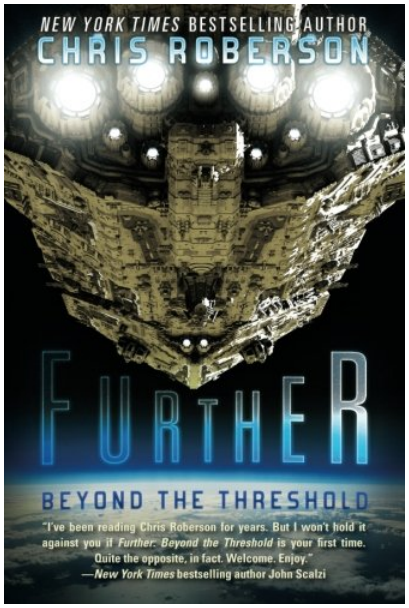

Author Chris Roberson has the fantastic in his blood. A three-time World Fantasy Award finalist, Chris is a novelist in the science fiction and fantasy genres—and he recently achieved "#1 New York Times Bestselling Author" status with the Cinderella: Fables Are Forever graphic novel collection. Fans of his horror-themed iZombie comic may lament its impending finale, but they'll be pleased to know that there is plenty of Roberson material on the way, including his latest novel, Further: Beyond the Threshold, a science fiction epic filled with his trademark humor and big ideas.

Q: *Further: Beyond the Threshold* blends humor, space opera, and hard science. What stories inspired you to combine elements that are often not brought together in one book?

A: My tastes are fairly catholic, in the sense that I like a lot of different kinds of things, and the stories that I tend to enjoy the most are those which combine as many different interests of mine as possible. So it's only natural that those are the kinds of stories that I tend to write, as well. Most of my work, both in prose and in comics, tends to combine and blend elements of multiple genres and subgenres. As for the decision to include humor in the mix, I guess I just like it when things aren't always quite so serious and dour!

Q: Though you're an accomplished novelist, many of your greatest successes have been in the comics realm with bestsellers like the *Cinderella* miniseries and fan favorite

iZombie.
How did you know that
Further
was best told as a novel and not a comic?

A: I think that the story of RJ Stone probably could have been told in comic book form instead, but it seemed a more natural fit for prose because of the complex web of flashbacks and personal reminisces through which Stone deals with his experiences in the far future. Comics are particularly good at showing the reader something that's happening, and getting across the visual content of a scene, but I think prose tends to edge out comics when it comes to portraying what a character is *thinking*.

Q: Faster-than-light travel factors heavily into *Further*, as does your unique concept of the Human Entelechy. Can you tell us more about the hard science in your latest novel and what, if any, research you can do when exploring such concepts?

A: I tend to do ridiculous amounts of research for all of my projects, and *Further* was no exception. I'm an ardent buff of theoretical physics anyway, and have always enjoyed reading the works of science popularizers like Clifford Pickover and Michio Kaku, and a great deal of the extrapolation in
Further
was inspired by things I'd already encountered in my reading. But when I began to work on the novel, I ended up having to do a
lot
more research. Admittedly, some of the theories I ended up using are fairly fringe, and not generally accepted by the scientific establishment at large, but they made for more interesting fiction!

Q: As the publisher of the independent press MonkeyBrain Books, how has working on the professional side of the publishing industry affected you as a writer?

A: I suppose it's not that much different than the ways in which my experiences as a reader have affected my growth as a writer. I love stories and I love books, and learning everything that I can about how they are constructed, published, sold, and enjoyed has helped to inform the way that I approach my work.

Q: As a four-time finalist for the World Fantasy Award, what do you enjoy most about writing science fiction? What lies ahead for you?

A: There's a quote from William Gibson that I think neatly sums the roots of my endless fascination with science fiction. Paraphrasing, it is that growing up, science fiction was my native culture. As a child of the 1970s, the vast majority of the entertainment that I consumed, in whatever medium, was science fiction in one form or another, and what remained was usually fantasy, science fiction's close cousin. Going forward, I'll still be writing comics and prose, and chances are that whatever it is I do next will likely be science fiction or fantasy, one way or another!

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