

Science fiction thriller from US writer

Gary Farrow

Writer and artist Matt Kambic brought his trades from Pennsylvania in the United States all the way to the Waikato in June 2013.

Since then, he has found a footing in the local creative industry and written his first book, science-fiction thriller *Everest Rising*, published by STM in Sacramento, California.

Having enjoyed books with an immersive atmosphere himself, Kambic has tried to echo that in his novel.

It is set around Vancouver, where an earth science firm announces the ability to replicate every known mineral on the planet, Switzerland, where a seismologist notes a concerning development deep below the Earth's crust and meanwhile, in Nepal, the world's highest mountain, Everest, is slowly but surely forging upward.

The scene is set for an epic expedition lead by geophysicist James Von Kamburg to investigate the connection between these anomalies.

Von Kamburg has a mystical vision at a Buddhist monastery on the mountain, forcing him to consider science beyond anything imaginable.

"There's one event in this book that I actually experienced myself that kind of worked its way into the story and ended up fitting pretty well," said Kambic.

"It's one of those events that is unexplainable by natural physics, and I'm not generally the kind that skews that way."

But Kambic commented that renowned science-fiction writers like Jules Verne and Michael Chrichton have regularly written narratives that involve extraordinary metaphysical events and a relatively grounded lead protagonist, which he found exciting.

"*Lord of the Rings* writer Tolkien is one of my favourite authors," he said.

"It's not necessarily the great battles and

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Writer and artist Matt Kambic has released science-fiction thriller *Everest Rising* in a number of Hamilton's bookstores.

wizardry that I love. It's when Frodo and Sam are hiking in the evocative woodlands — mostly natural and 'normal', but just a hint of that extraordinary Middle Earth on the edges."

As if by fate, he now lives not too far away from the Hobbiton movie set, in the country that is now commonly likened to

the fictional Middle Earth itself. Kambic moved from America to the Waikato with his Kiwi spouse Alison Annals, teaches digital publishing at Wintec, gives an intro to InDesign with Learning Works, and plays music and sings locally. There are more books from Kambic in the pipeline.

He said he appreciates New Zealand's

anti-nuclear stance, the prominence of its agricultural industry, the quality of the All Blacks, and the coffee.

Everest Rising by MD Kambic is now available in Hamilton at bookstores Browsers, Penny's Bookstore in Chartwell, Poppies in Casabella Lane, and PaperPlus in Rototuna and The Base (Te Awa).

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