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The Freedom Formula: A Conversation with Gen LaGreca on Sci-Fi, Storytelling, and Building Better Worlds

[Nicole Muj](#), Jan. 18, 2026



Gen LaGreca is an award-winning executive producer, screenwriter, and novelist whose work explores bold ideas of freedom, individuality, and human achievement. Across four celebrated novels—collectively honored with thirteen

literary awards—LaGreca has earned praise from prominent figures including Steve Forbes, Nobel laureate Milton Friedman, and former AMA President Edward Annis.



Gen LaGreca on set of *Fugitive from Asteron*

In addition to her fiction, LaGreca has adapted two of her novels, *Just the Truth* and *Noble Vision*, for the stage, and her commentaries have appeared in *Forbes*, *The Orange County Register*, and *Real Clear Markets*, among others.

As president of the [Winged Victory Foundation](#)—a 501(c)(3) charitable organization—LaGreca oversees educational, artistic, and literary programs that champion the power of storytelling to celebrate and communicate the ideals of freedom.

Her most recent film, the award-winning drama/thriller *Noble Vision*, premiered in fall 2024. The film, which exposes the bureaucratic complexities and political struggles of the U.S. healthcare system, garnered critical acclaim on the festival circuit and is now streaming on major digital platforms across North America.



Gen LaGreca on set with Dean Cain

Up next, LaGreca's highly anticipated sci-fi drama *Fugitive from Asteron* adapted from her own award-winning novel and starring Henry Ian Cusick (*Lost*, *MacGyver*, *The 100*), Rory Gibson (*The Young and the Restless*), Morgan Bradley (*American Skyjacker*), and Dean Cain (*Lois & Clark: The New Adventures of Superman*)—is set for release later this year.

We were thrilled to sit down with this creative trailblazer for an inspiring conversation.

Fugitive from Asteron has now moved from page to screen. As the original author, what has it been like to see your imaginative world and characters visually realized for the first time?

It took two years to take the raw material of my novel and produce a finished movie. It was an absorbing, difficult project, but a labor of love!

It's been incredibly exciting to see the story I created with words on paper come alive with real people and places and the whole cinematic treasure chest of expression. Director Dan Hall and the actors enhanced the roles with their own personalities and interpretations, which were close to mine but not exactly the same, with some characters becoming more subdued and others more emotional than I had imagined. The combination of my vision and their interpretation, I think, worked well in the film.

The cinematic projection of the story intensified everything, from the suspenseful scenes to the romantic ones. I think the story in the novel ended up having more depth and impact on the screen.

The story explores powerful ideas of freedom, truth, and individual purpose—hallmarks of your writing. What inspired you to tell this particular story through the lens of science fiction?

Science fiction is so imaginative. Perhaps more than the other genres, it can sweep us away from the world around us into something entirely different. In *Fugitive from Asteron*, I envisioned two realms: a world that was better than the one we have today and a world that was much worse, and I invited the audience to compare these two societies as my young fugitive experiences them when he escapes from the bad world and discovers the better one. Sci fi fits this fantastic journey well and at the same time has real-world relevance.

I also aimed to reach a young audience through a genre they enjoy and young leading characters to inspire them.

Henry Ian Cusick, Rory Gibson, Morgan Bradley, and Dean Cain make up a remarkable cast. How did their portrayals bring new depth or dimension to the characters you originally created on the page?

Our casting director, Paul Ruddy, did a fantastic job in bringing a professional, experienced, and talented cast to the film.

Rory Gibson plays the lead role of Arial, a young pilot on Planet Asteron who escapes to Earth and changes his name to Alexander (Alex) to elude Asteron's tyrannical ruler, Feran, who's pursuing him. Arial has had an abused life under Feran, leaving him with inner wounds and emotional scars that prevent him from realizing the potential of a new life. In this role that seems made for him, Rory is thoughtful, sensitive, and subtle. He's also forceful and courageous when the situation calls for it. He's a true hero and incredibly handsome too!

Henry Ian Cusick plays Asteron's ruler Feran. Ian played the role with a calm, controlled manner that amazingly accentuates the ruthlessness of his actions. He also shows moments of jealousy, fear, and rage as the situation demands. Although I think he's best known for his positive roles, this talented, versatile actor plays a credible, fearful villain.

Morgan Bradley plays Kristin, the beautiful pilot whom Alex meets when he arrives on Earth. Morgan projects a self-confident person who's all-pilot and all-woman. In her character, she's amazingly skillful and serious about her career, and she's also drawn to this handsome alien man and the secrets he holds about

himself. Morgan and Rory have a strong chemistry, and they both delivered the romantic lines beautifully and convincingly.

We should also mention Jam Murphy, who plays Reevah, Ariel's girlfriend on Asteron. Jam brings a magical element to Ariel's life, a free and daring spirit drawing him deeply into a relationship that spells danger for them both.

Dean Cain is amazing as Mykronie, Alex's boss in his new pilot's job on Earth. Mykronie is Alex's mentor and the father figure he never had. There's a chemistry between them that works beautifully. Dean brings real fatherly warmth to his character, which adds a deeply human touch to his relationship with Alex.

The film juxtaposes the oppressive society of Asteron with the free society of a future Earth. What message do you hope audiences take away from this contrast?

Fugitive from Asteron reminds us of how precious freedom is and how it enriches our lives in everything we do. When our young pilot escapes from Asteron and lands on Earth, every aspect of living in freedom is new to him—from choosing his own work, clothing, and girlfriend to living privately in his own apartment to eating tasty food like this amazing thing Earth's people call cheesecake.

It's been said that in the old Soviet Union people would see glimpses of a free culture, such as through contraband Hollywood films, and they yearned for the little things we take for granted: a beautiful dress on an actress, a modern car, a table filled with food. That's what Alex experiences when he arrives on Earth.

We discover through Alex how essential freedom is, so let's cherish it and never let it slip away. That's the message.

*As someone who's transitioned successfully from novelist to screenwriter and producer, what were the biggest creative or emotional challenges in adapting *Fugitive from Asteron* for film?*

First, as a writer, my goal in the screenplay was to maintain the same story as in the novel, but also to streamline it to its essentials for the screen. The ability to show so much on the screen makes for an economy of words ("show-don't-tell"), which is a different kind of writing than in a novel. It was challenging (and sometimes painful) to edit details and subplot issues of the novel in order to essentialize the story, as well as to show as much as possible through visuals. It's been a great learning and growing experience for me.

Second, as an executive producer, I had to recognize the need to collaborate with an entire team and to appreciate the supreme value in doing that. Before venturing into movies, my work as a novelist was solitary. I alone created my characters, settings, and every aspect of my stories. But in a movie, the team needs space to

express their own creativity and put their stamp on the film. That needs to be juggled with protecting the integrity of my story and message. This has also been a learning process for me and very rewarding.

The expertise of our talented team has contributed to making this movie great, from the actors, to cinematographer Mark David, to line producer Pauline Jones, to associate producers Jake Huber and D. Paul Thomas, and many others.

I owe a special debt of gratitude to our director-producer-editor Dan Hall, who collaborated with me on every aspect of this project, starting with the 24 drafts of the script from the novel and down to the final movie edits. Dan shepherded the project through every phase, including supervising our cutting-edge, international visual effects team. I've learned a lot about both the art and the science of filmmaking from Dan.

The trailer hints at both high-stakes adventure and a deep personal journey. How does the film balance these two elements—spectacle and soul?

It's a tightly plotted story with lots of external action as Arial hijacks Feran's ship in a death-defying escape from Asteron. Feran, about to make a secret journey, has a mysterious cargo aboard that ship, embroiling our fugitive in a scheme that jeopardizes the Earth itself. So, an adventure and mystery spanning two planets drives the plot.

But it's also a very human story of Alex's inner struggle to heal the wounds of a brutal past and carve a new, fulfilling life for himself. In the words of our character Senator Robert Goodwin, played by Jim Krueger, the great, prolific comic book writer and Comic Con celebrity: "If your destination is happiness, then freedom is the path to take you there." Freedom is a precondition for human happiness. That's the great inner truth that Alex discovers. It's absorbing to watch his emotional transformation.

*The Winged Victory Foundation emphasizes storytelling as a force for freedom. In what ways does *Fugitive from Asteron* embody that mission, and how do you see your foundation shaping future projects in film and the arts?*

The blend of high-stakes action, young love, moral tension, and philosophical depth gives *Fugitive from Asteron* an uncommon richness to stay with the viewer long after the end credits play. This is what we strive for at Winged Victory Foundation: a compelling plot story that's also deeply personal and with thematic depth that highlights and celebrates the freedom to think and act for oneself, without an outside, controlling authority. *Fugitive from Asteron* perfectly suits Winged Victory Foundation's mission.

People should also see our first feature film, *Noble Vision*, the winner of over two dozen film festival awards and available on Prime Video and the other major streaming platforms. Through the love story between a brilliant surgeon with a new cure and a tragically injured ballerina who needs it as her only hope, *Noble Vision* explores the consequences of mixing medicine with political power and how the system profoundly affects this doctor and patient. Everyone needs healthcare and should see this eye-opening film.

We have future projects in the pipeline, ranging from a historical drama set in the Old South to a contemporary murder mystery involving the abuse of power and truth in journalism. All of our film projects are thought-provoking and highly relevant to today's world.

I hope viewers will be enlightened by a greater understanding of today's challenges, as well as inspired by the idea that they can be the best that they can be and the future can be a place where the good triumphs.



Official Trailer *Fugitive from Asteron*:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y7Fy0ZXJb6M>