



RED CARPET PREMIERE OWC Studios head Alec Peters says he wants to premiere the Axanar short films at San Diego Comic-Con 2019, four years after *Prelude to Axanar* debuted there. *Image/TrekMovie.com*

Fact Check

Axanar Aims for Winter Shoot, Comic-Con 2019 Premiere

Production Update Proposes Dubious Shooting Schedule, Fails to Mention How \$200K Project's Being Financed

Table of Contents

- [Winter Shoot, Summer Release](#)
 - [Budget?](#)
 - [The Four Years War](#)
- [The 'Ridiculous Lawsuit'](#)
 - [Making 'Axanar' After the Settlement](#)
 - [Returning Cast](#)
 - [The World at War](#)

By [Carlos Pedraza](#)

Fans hoping to see the two short films comprising what's left of [Axanar](#) may not have much longer to wait, according to OWC Studios head [Alec Peters'](#) August 21, 2018, production update.

Peters told fans on the [Axanar blog](#) that he’s planning on a two-day December-January shoot in Los Angeles, followed by up to another two days in Atlanta a couple of months later, with a premiere he hoped to stage in San Diego while Comic-Con happened in July 2019.

FACT CHECK is an **AxaMonitor** series examining claims made with regard to Axanar, chiefly Alec Peters’ blog posts, interviews and public announcements.

[Read the series »](#)



Winter Shoot, Summer Release

Peters’ update waits until its final paragraphs to talk about *Axanar*’s shooting schedule, though with a number of caveats:

This has only been discussed briefly, we think we are looking at two days of shooting in Los Angeles in Dec. – Jan. and then two days of shooting in Atlanta a month or two later. Our goal is to have everything in the can by end of February and a release date next summer. If all goes as planned, another red carpet event at [San Diego] Comic-Con will be planned.¹⁾

Prelude to Axanar, the 22-minute short produced to raise money (eventually \$1.2 million in crowdfunding, plus another \$500,000 in direct donations and merchandise sales) for the *Axanar* feature, premiered at an off-premises screening not part of Comic-Con in 2014. The feature project, however, was derailed by Peters’ decision to build his ill-fated California studio using donors’ money, and by a copyright infringement lawsuit brought by Star Trek’s owners, CBS and Paramount Pictures.



FACT CHECK Misleading *Prelude to Axanar*’s 2014 premiere was a private screening not connected to Comic-Con in any way other than occurring in San Diego concurrently. There’s no indication the *Axanar* shorts Peters hopes to have ready in 2019 would be any different.



MOCKUMENTARY *Prelude to Axanar* was fancied by producers as Part III in a documentary series, “The Four Years War.” The hoped-for two *Axanar* shorts are intended as the fourth and fifth

installments of that faux series.

Budget?

Unmentioned in Peters' update was any mention of how he planned to pay for production of the two Axanar shorts, which he has estimated between \$150,000 and \$200,000.

The settlement of the copyright lawsuit brought against him by CBS and Paramount Pictures prohibits him from seeking crowdfunding, and no private effort appears to have happened.

The decision to make 'Prelude' a war documentary was inspired by 'The World at War' — an influence Peters never before mentioned, even while his lawyers searched for any non-Trek inspiration they could find.


The Four Years War

Peters explained the two short films were to comprise Parts IV and V of the larger faux-documentary, *The Four Years War*:

One day in post on *Prelude*, when [editor] Rob Burnett and I were in the edit bay, where ... we were talking about the title. We knew it was to be called "Prelude to Axanar" but we wanted to give it scope and make it part of a series, and so I came up with "The Four Years War, Part IV." Rob loved it, but I immediately realized that Star Wars was re-titled "Episode IV: A New Hope," so we changed *Prelude* to Episode III. We had no intention of ever making episodes IV and V, let alone I and II. *Prelude* was meant to be a proof of concept, followed up by the full-length movie, *Axanar*.²⁾

FACT CHECK Disputed Peters' account is disputed by *Prelude* director [Christian Gossett](#). In an April 27, 2018, interview with **AxaMonitor**, Gossett credited Peters with the idea of making the short film in a documentary format:



 *Prelude* director **Christian Gossett**

"Doing it as a doc was in fact his idea," Gossett said, adding, however, "he had never seen *World at War*, the first great military doc, so I brought that 'major event' feel to it."³⁾

Omits Facts Peters' account also leaves out a couple of crucial facts, according to Gossett, including the fact Gossett directed *Prelude* and had quite a bit to say about its format and title.

“I was there for that conversation,” — a fact Peters neglects to mention, he said — “and the decision to finalize our ideas about the numbering was mine as director. They presented ideas, we discussed them, and I chose from those ideas.”⁴⁾



Since Gossett’s public break from the project (Gossett was deposed in the lawsuit as a witness for CBS/Paramount), Peters has publicly minimized Gossett’s contributions to *Prelude* and tried to blame him for [Peters' admitted bad decision](#) to lease a studio for three years that he only needed for a number of months.

The 'Ridiculous Lawsuit'

Earlier in his blog, Peters blamed CBS’ and Paramount’s “ridiculous lawsuit” for costing fans \$500,000 of the money they donated, further damaging *Axanar*’s chances of ever being produced.

FACT CHECK Mostly False Peters failed to mention the loss of a half-million dollars was a direct result of his signing a three-year lease to build out a studio intended for future commercial projects, rather than focus on making *Axanar* right away with rented studio space he would only have needed for a few months.



Peters’ attempt to monetize *Axanar* for his own benefit was a direct cause for the lawsuit, and the federal judge in the case ruled Peters had in fact [personally profited](#) from intellectual property he did not own.

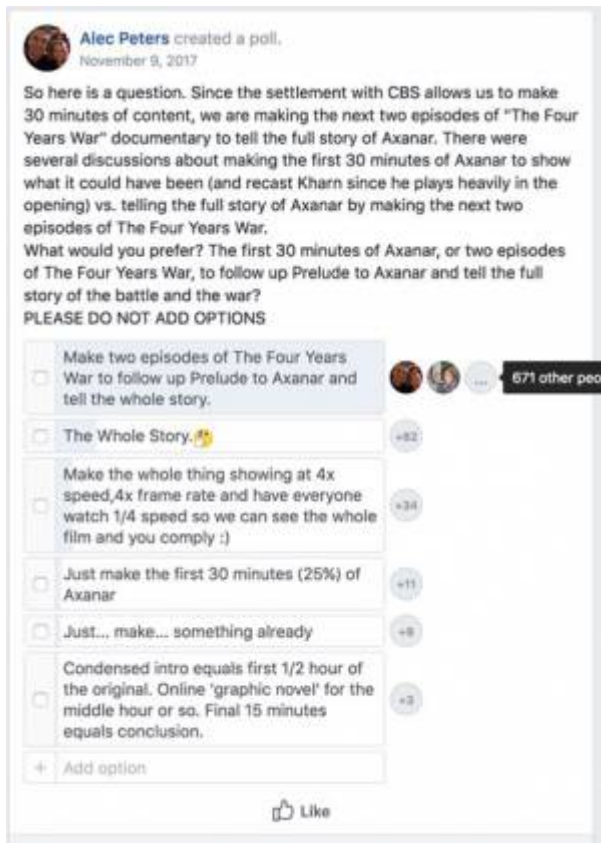
By the time he abandoned the beleaguered studio in mid-2017, Peters had spent nearly [three-quarters of a million dollars](#) on his aborted Industry Studios.

Making 'Axanar' After the Settlement

Peters repeated his story that in the wake of the settlement former *Axanar* director [Robert Meyer Burnett](#) and co-writer [Bill Hunt](#) had wanted to make the first 30 minutes of the planned feature film. Instead, Peters claimed, [fans backed up](#) his desire to produce the faux-documentary two additional episodes of “The Four Years War.”



FACT CHECK False As **AxaMonitor** reported in a previous fact-check, Peters [did not tell the truth](#) about when he decided to make *Axanar* Lite as sequels to *Prelude*. The fan poll to which he alludes actually took place nine months after he had decided to reject Burnett’s and Hunt’s idea. The poll, with its foregone conclusion, was posted a week after Burnett and Hunt had already announced their resignations.



EX POST FACTO The poll Alec Peters said made up his mind about Axanar Lite’s format was conducted almost nine months *after* he’d already announced what he was doing.

See also: [Director Burnett Resigns from Axanar](#) and [Axanar Co-Writer Announces Departure](#)

Returning Cast

Peters also announced at least two of *Prelude*’s cast would be returning, Gary Graham (Soval) and J.G. Hertzler (Admiral Travis). Both are scheduled to appear at November’s [AxaCon](#) convention. However, while both actors have publicly indicated interest, no deal appeared to have been signed as yet.

With regard to the rest of the cast, Peters wrote:

We are **in discussions with Kate Vernon** to reprise her role of Sonya Alexander, and we are casting another 12 roles as we speak.⁵⁾



FACT CHECK Misleading “In discussions” is a meaningless statement. Vernon has in fact avoided pledging herself to the Axanar shorts; her management has refused comment about her participation.



REVISIONIST HISTORY The World War II saga, *Band of Brothers*, was cited by Alec Peters during the lawsuit as one of the inspirations for the story of *Prelude to Axanar*, not the British TV series, *The World at War*, which he claimed two years later. *Image/HBO*

The World at War

Peters also wrote that the decision in 2014 to make *Prelude* in the format of a war documentary was inspired by the British television series, *The World at War* — an influence he had never before mentioned, even when it was in his interest to do so during the lawsuit, when his defense lawyers searched for any non-Star Trek inspiration they could find for the Axanar works.

At that time, instead, Peters and his attorneys pointed to [six specific works](#) intended to distance *Axanar* from its Star Trek sources. None of those was *The World at War*.



FACT CHECK Incorrect *The World at War* was not a BBC series. It was produced by Thames Television and broadcast on the ITV network in 1973 and 1974.⁶⁾



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Keywords

[Axanar Lite](#), [lawsuit](#), [settlement](#), [fact check](#)

1) 5)

[Alec Peters](#), [Axanar blog](#), Axanar Productions website, 8/21/18. [*emphasis ours*]

2)

[Alec Peters](#), [Axanar blog](#), Axanar Productions website, 8/21/18.

3)

Facebook Messenger conversation between Christian Gossett and AxaMonitor editor Carlos Pedraza, 4/27/18.[*emphasis ours*]

4)

Facebook Messenger conversation between Christian Gossett and AxaMonitor editor Carlos Pedraza, 8/22/18.

6)

[Wikipedia](#), "The World at War", retrieved 8/22/18.

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