



## Author Interview – Eugene Ciurana – The Tesla Testament

<i>Title of the book:</i> The Tesla Testament	
<i>Subtitle:</i> A Thriller	
<i>Byline:</i> Eugene Ciurana	
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<i>Email address:</i> <a href="mailto:novelist@eugeneCiurana.com">novelist@eugeneCiurana.com</a>	
<i>Web site:</i> <a href="http://eugeneCiurana.com">http://eugeneCiurana.com</a>	
<i>Present occupation:</i> Systems Architect and Director of Platform Technologies, Walmart.com Global  This means that Eugene is responsible for making companywide software, hardware and Internet technology recommendations for development, testing and deploying new technology at this company.  Eugene frequently contributes articles to various technology magazines in the United States and is a frequent speaker at computer programming and technology conferences.	
<i>Prior occupations:</i> Eugene has worked in computer programming and other technology-related fields since 1983. Most of his career was spent at various startups in Mexico and the United States. He has worked as either a consultant or employee at these companies:  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• IBM</li> <li>• Bank of America</li> <li>• Sun Microsystems</li> <li>• Nations Bank</li> <li>• Data General Corporation</li> <li>• Credit Suisse retail and private bank</li> <li>• CompuServe (now America Online)</li> <li>• National Oilwell Varco</li> <li>• Bank One</li> <li>• AIPAC</li> </ul> Between 1994 and 1998 Eugene provided information warfare and IT consulting to a number of organizations chartered with promoting the use of nonlethal and less than lethal technologies integration and operational concepts by the different branches of the US military. These include:  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Nonlethal Group</li> <li>• M2 Technologies</li> <li>• Technical Solutions Group</li> </ul> Eugene’s last involvement with nonlethals occurred during the 1997 and 1998 Force Protection Equipment Demonstrations organized by the U.S. Department of State in Quantico, VA.	



*Educational background:*

Various writing courses through the San Francisco City College  
Computer Engineering, Autonomous University of Guadalajara, 1985 – 1989  
Bachillerato, Humanities and Marketing, University of Guanajuato, 1983 – 1985  
Molalla Union High School, Molalla OR class of 1982

*Fields or interests of study, including hobbies:*

- **Sushi** – the Sushi Eating HOWTO, an on-line reference for non-Japanese people who want to enjoy the best experience at the sushi bar. Published in 2002, it's now the top search destination for sushi etiquette worldwide, as reported by Google, Yahoo!, Dog Pile, MSN Search, and other search engines, as well as the community site del.icio.us (search = sushi)
- **Muay Thai** – considered the most devastating martial art and known as Thailand's national sport; practiced it for over 9 years; participated in a number of amateur fights between 1997 and 2006; became a certified Fairtex Muay Thai instructor in May of 2003; taught Muay Thai at two different Fairtex combat sports camps in 2003 and 2004
- **Extreme sports** – high level of proficiency (Motorcycle Safety Foundation advanced certification) in motorcycle riding and training; skydiver since 1994, licensed by the United States Parachute Association; completed USPA basic instruction course; top-three placer in yearly skydiving competitions.
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*Principal U.S. cities and states in which you have lived and approximate dates:*

- San Francisco – 1990 through today
- Los Angeles/Orange County – 2000, 2001
- New York City – 1998
- Columbus, OH – 1992 – 1997, at least 3 months/year
- Chicago, IL – 1996
- Atlanta, GA – 1995
- Jacksonville, Palm Beach, Miami, St. Peterburg FL – various dates between 1993 and 1996
- Molalla, OR (outside Portland) – 1982, 1983.

*Principal foreign countries in which you have resided or traveled; provide dates:*

- Switzerland – 1995 through 2000, 3 months/year
- Russia – periodic business trips at least twice a year since 1995
- France – periodic visits since 1985; lived in Paris on-and-off
- Netherlands – long-term visits in 1997, 2001
- Mexico – 1966 through 1982, and 1983 through 1989

*Please list magazines or periodicals to which you have been a contributor. Kindly give the approximate dates your articles appeared. Star if you are currently a contributor:*

- The Server Side – <http://www.theserverside.com> \* - June 2005, July 2006
- Computerworld – <http://www.computerworld.com> - April 2004
- Omni Magazine - 1998
- PC/Novice – various times between 1993 and 1996
- PC-Tips – various cover articles between 1988 and 1991
- EE Times – Guest column, 1995
- Newspaper: Excelsior (MX) – 1990
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*Please write a few paragraphs on how you came to write this book, including any interesting experiences researching it or getting it published:*

The author wanted to read a good adventure story that combined contemporary themes



(terrorism, geopolitical turmoil) with a high concept premise (something more destructive than a nuclear weapon was invented and tested before 1910). The author was also tired of the rehashing in current stories such as:

- The James Bond series has been in decline for the last 20 years; Raymond Benson's books were mildly interesting at best
- *The Bourne Ultimatum* and the newer Bourne books written after Ludlum's death are cartoons of the original stories
- Ted Bell's and Clive Cussler's characters always win, are one-dimensional, and take on almost superhuman qualities

*The Tesla Testament* also has roots in the author's education as a computer engineer. Nikola Tesla has a mythical status among engineering types. There are many urban legends about Tesla (i.e. did he discover a new power source? Why did the government confiscate his belongings?) that make a great story. The quality of Tesla's achievements, such as the invention of the electrical distribution systems that we use today and the power generation turbines in Niagara Falls, give credibility to what in another person would've been the rants of a madman.

Last, the story draws from the author's personal experiences as an extreme sports buff (skydiving, Muay Thai kickboxing), his work at a couple of Swiss banks, and his involvement with the people who developed the doctrine and some of the original technologies for nonlethal weapons for the US Department of Defense. He felt that his real life experiences could provide a credible frame for combining these elements into an entertaining, modern adult tale.

The book came about as the result of various experiences that happened in real life, and got embellished into this story.

- Some of my friends who work at Swiss banks enjoyed the fanciful depictions of the security measures described by the novel's protagonist; a couple of years later, similar security measures were implemented for real in said banks.
- I was involved in nonlethal and less-than-lethal weapons research from 1993 through 1998. My work involved meetings with several government and military types such as intelligence officers, Marine Corps, Air Force, etc. I also had a chance to meet with some people at Lawrence Livermore National Labs around 1996. These experiences culminated with participation in the late 90's Force Protection Equipment Demonstrations, a weapons, vehicles, gadgets and devices tradeshow hosted by the Department of State in Quantico VA, and attended by the military, FBI, CIA, and other agencies.
- Then came all the mythology around Tesla. Others either exploited his genius (Edison) or stole his thunder (Marconi), yet Tesla clearly stood head and shoulders above his contemporaries. He achieved so many fantastic things that it's plausible that he might have accomplished some of his more outlandish claims regarding wireless transmission of energy and its weaponization.
- The biggest surprises during research came from discovering how many of his writings are still classified/missing. The potential use of Tesla's technology in things like the Strategic Defense Initiative particle beam weapons was awe-inspiring. Some of the



sources for this information were PBS and others that don't strike me as quacks. The question "I wonder how much of this is true?" kept coming up as the novel progressed. <http://www.pbs.org/tesla/index.html>

- Another neat experience was the author's discovery of Sea Launch. A lot of people don't know about it, but Boeing and others came up with the concept of launching rockets from a customized oilrig known as Sea Launch Odyssey. In the first outlines of the novel, the bad guys pirated a boat. The boat became a mobile oil-drilling unit (MODU) based on Sea Launch, though a smaller one. Much sexier than a boat. It also made more sense since the Tesla power transmitter needs to be grounded to operate – and grounding means having a drill on board. <http://www.sea-launch.com>

*Please describe briefly the theme of your book and its scope:*

Nikola Tesla was to engineering what Einstein was to physics. He was the inventor of electricity distribution systems, remote control, and other wonders just recently put to use in modern appliances or machines. Between 1900 and his death in 1943, Tesla perfected a "weapon that will end war". Tesla's "death ray" was probably tested prior to 1922. It's historical fact that he sold half of the plans to build such a weapon to the government of the USSR in 1933 for \$25,000. Tesla went into seclusion in 1934 until he passed away.

J. Edgar Hoover ordered Tesla's remaining papers confiscated at the time of Tesla's death. Nobody outside of the US government knows where some of those documents are. Serious scientists and organizations, including the US Navy and the Air Force, have shown interest in Tesla's writings. The particle beam weapons intended for the Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI or "Star Wars") may be based on a Tesla design.

"The Tesla Testament" is a novel that speculates about how the Rebirth Alliance, a terrorist group, managed to obtain the complete plans for Tesla's weapon based on the documents in the hands of the US and Russian governments. The terrorists build a weapon more powerful than a nuclear blast and more lethal than all biochemical weapons. Former undercover agent Francis Montagnet finds himself in a race against time to recover the plans and to stop Rebirth before they use the weapon for killing millions, including the leaders of the free world. Aided by the brilliant doctor Varenka Ulyanova—who is also the Rebirth leader's ex-lover—Francis outwits and outruns the terrorists across two continents.

The final face-off is an epic battle for the survival of the free world and for the love of the beautiful Dr. Varenka.

The Tesla Testament is written in a style that blends a grittiness evocative of Robert Ludlum, Ian Fleming, and Ted Bell with the in-depth research and speculative slant of Michael Crichton or Dan Brown. The fantastic adventure elements have a solid foundation on the real life work of Nikola Tesla and factual events like the documents confiscated by the US government upon his death and research carried out by the US Air Force, Navy, and DARPA, and partially made public under recent Freedom of Information Act requests. The story appeals to readers who enjoy speculative fiction that blurs the line with reality.

*Are there groups to which your book would have particular appeal?*

- Men who enjoy the works of Ken Follett, Michael Crichton, Ted Bell, Robert Ludlum, Clive Cussler, Neal Stephenson, and Tom Clancy
- Women with a taste for contemporary, fact-based, fast-moving fiction like the works of Francine Matthews, Dan Brown, Greg Iles, and the like
- Thrill-seeking readers tired of the influx of "Da Vinci Code" knock-offs expected to be



<p>available in 2006 (source: CNN)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Espionage buffs who are tired of Le Carré’s style, and need a plot-driven adventure; similar audience to Pineiro’s and Richard Clarke’s</li> <li>• “Geeks” of both genders familiar with Nikola Tesla’s work; covers electrical engineers, conspiracy theorists, software engineers, etc.</li> </ul>
<p><i>What basic points in your book should be publicized? Please be specific (i.e. why is it unique; how does it differ from other books on the subject; what are its strengths?):</i></p>
<p><i>Please list books that cover a similar subject area that might be considered competition for your book, including any works in progress that you are aware of:</i></p>
<p><i>Are there any well-known people who should see an advance copy of your manuscript for purposes of giving a pre-publication promotional quote? These people do not have to know you personally, however, please star names of those who do. Please provide full names, address, and their relationship to you and/or the book:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Michael Krasny, KQED</li> <li>• Terry Gross, WHYY</li> <li>• Ira Flatow, Talk of the Nation Science Friday NPR</li> <li>• Peter Sagal, Wait Wait Don’t Tell Me NPR</li> <li>• Steve Paulson, To The Best Or Our Knowledge PRI</li> <li>• Former Vice President Al Gore</li> <li>• Peter Hartlaub, Leba Hertz, Regan McMahon, San Francisco Chronicle Datebook</li> <li>• James Bamford, author of the best-researched, open-sourced books about the NSA</li> <li>• Ted Bell, author</li> <li>• Francine Matthews, author</li> <li>• James Patterson, author</li> </ul>
<p><i>Do you regularly attend any major conventions or conferences?</i> Frequent speaker at The Server Side Java Symposium, Java in Action, etc. Scheduled to speak at the Web 2.0 conference, autumn 2006</p>
<p><i>Please list any organizations, institutions, or associations that might be interested in either selling or publicizing your book. If you have contacts with any of these groups, please indicate the name and title of the person or persons with whom you have dealt.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Tesla Society of San Francisco</li> <li>• The Tesla Society of New York secretary, Dr. Jasmina Vujic UC Berkeley faculty of Nuclear Engineering.</li> </ul>

**The Tesla Testament**  
**10.October.2006 - Fiction**  
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