Why Nikola Tesla deserves a museum

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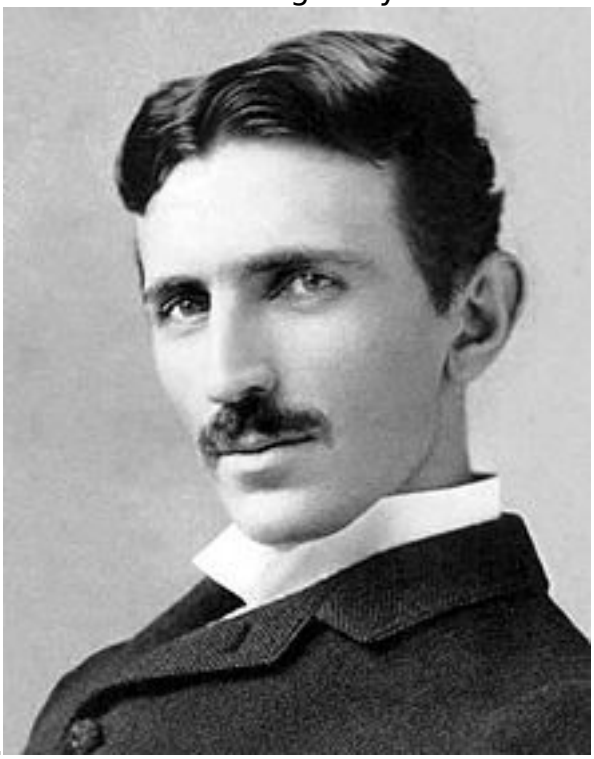
Nikola Tesla is arguably one of the most underappreciated scientists in history.



He was a very cool, brilliant guy, but money wasn't *really* his strong suit. He built a laboratory called the Wardenclyffe Tower in Shoreham, New York, which he lost due to his financial problems. The tower that Wardenclyffe was named for was destroyed in 1917, 15 years after it was built.

In a rare nod to the importance of both historical buildings and the work of Tesla, Matthew Inman of The Oatmeal [1] has launched an Indiegogo campaign called "Let's build a G*ddamn Tesla museum" to take what's left of the laboratory and turn it into a museum honoring the great scientist.

The goal was to raise $850,000, to be matched by a grant from New York State. As of publication, the campaign [2] had raised a whopping 1,129,653 – for a few days it

was $27,000 an hour – to put towards the land. The property is listed at 1.7 million dollars.

Many of the scientific discoveries Tesla made are credited to other people and some of his genius wasn't truly appreciated for years.

He was constantly railroaded by Thomas Edison, who once promised him a big payoff to fix his DC generator and when Tesla delivered, Edison said it was a joke and "Tesla you don't understand our American humor." Though he did work for Edison for a short time, after that charming exchange, Tesla resigned and started working on an alternating current system, which unlike Edison's bulky, expensive DC system, used smaller wires to transmit higher voltages over longer distances.

Besides the AC system, Tesla [3] created the radio (credited to Marconi), Radar, X-rays (credited to Wilhelm Rontgen), worked on cryogenic engineering, recorded radio waves from outer space, discovered the resonant frequency of earth, neon lightening, wireless communications, and worked on the precursor to the transistor. Plus, he invented an earthquake machine, a seven-inch, two-pound, steam-powered mechanical oscillator that almost succeeded in destroying his New York laboratory. Did I mention he also created ball lightening and spoke eight languages?

Oh, and he designed the hydroelectric plant [4] at Niagara Falls. The park that surrounds the falls features one of very few statues of the great scientist.

The fundraiser has revealed that people do have a deep appreciation for the work Tesla did and want to open a museum that honors him and teaches future generations about his accomplishments. The man would memorize entire books, think of designs in his head, and then build them with no blueprints. If that isn't deserving of a museum, then I don't know what is.

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