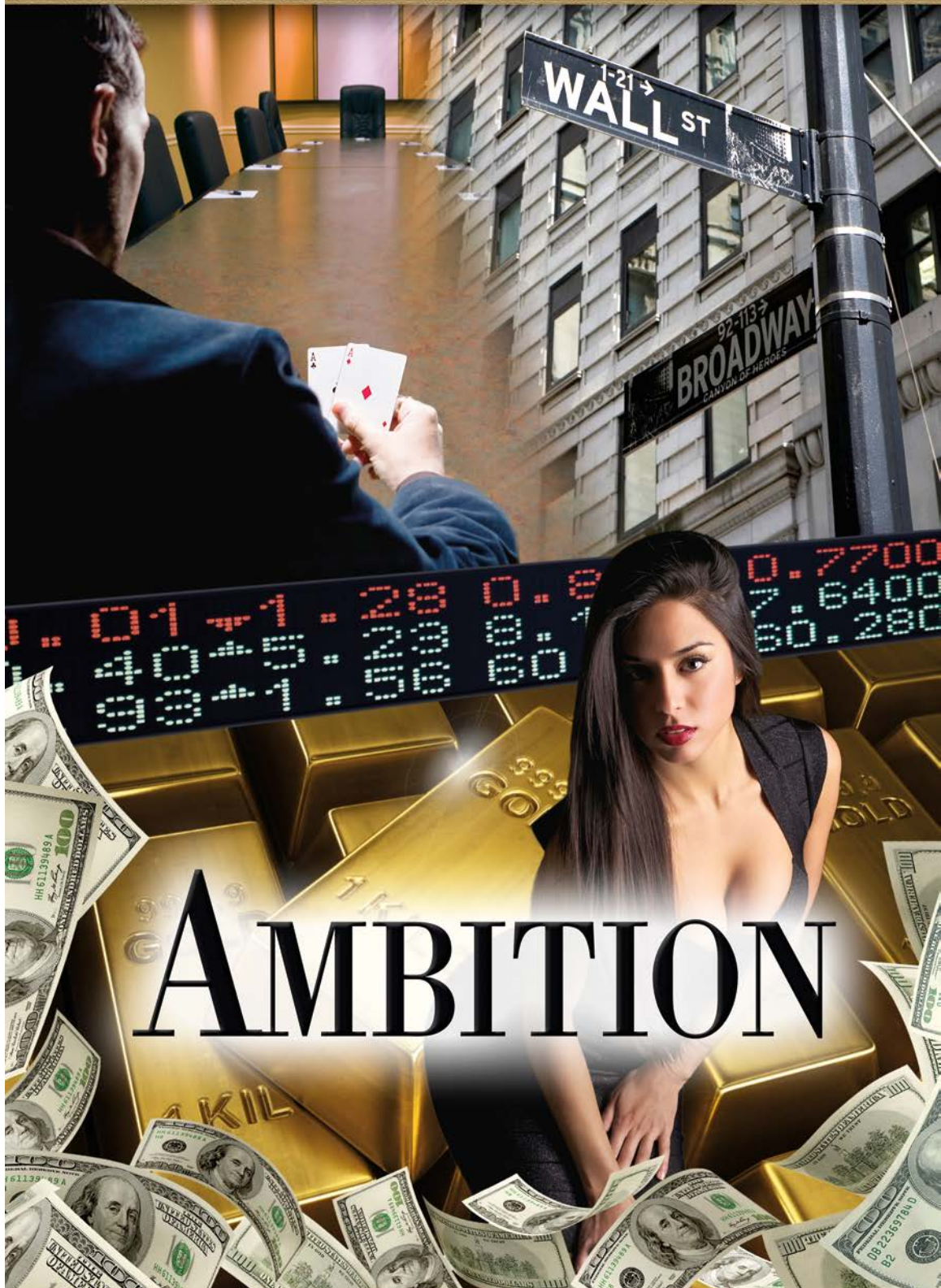


STEPHEN MAITLAND-LEWIS



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Maitland-Lewis' new novel, *Ambition*, mirrors Wall Street scandal, bad bank loans, and the theft of millions

Ridge Literary Inc. is pleased to announce the February 25, 2013 publication of Stephen Maitland-Lewis' new novel, *Ambition*.

A financial thriller set in Los Angeles and New York, *Ambition* follows George Tazoli, an aspiring dealer on the trading floor of a prominent California bank who is sent to New York to sell off the bank's bad loans. While in New York, George, who is dating the bank president's daughter, discovers a scandal involving his potential father-in-law. The bank's president and his father, the chairman and grandfather of George's girlfriend, are embroiled in a long-standing feud with another family of stockholders competing for control of the bank. As the boardroom tension heightens, George becomes involved in his own web of deceit—an affair with his beautiful assistant, and lured by vast riches, he begins a game of cat and mouse with the bank's funds.

Stephen Maitland-Lewis, author of the award-winning book *Emeralds Never Fade*, drew on his experience as an international investment banker—and his front row seat to the embezzlement of millions—to weave this suspenseful new novel. With the topical issue of Wall Street deception, bank loans gone bad, and the loss of millions to investors in the news, Maitland-Lewis gives readers an insider's view of greed, intertwined within a mystery of sex, blackmail, and unbridled ambition.

“Although fictional, I based *Ambition* on my experience of watching the duplicity which lined the golden road of Wall Street,” Maitland-Lewis said. “Someone once told me, write what you know. During my years in investment banking, I was privy to many an inside deal and had to be discreet—until now.”

Ambition will be available for purchase February 25, 2013.

For further information, visit the author and publisher web sites:

www.maitland-lewis.com
www.ridgeliterary.com/amb

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Ridge Literary Inc. presents for review

Title: Ambition

Author: Stephen Maitland-Lewis

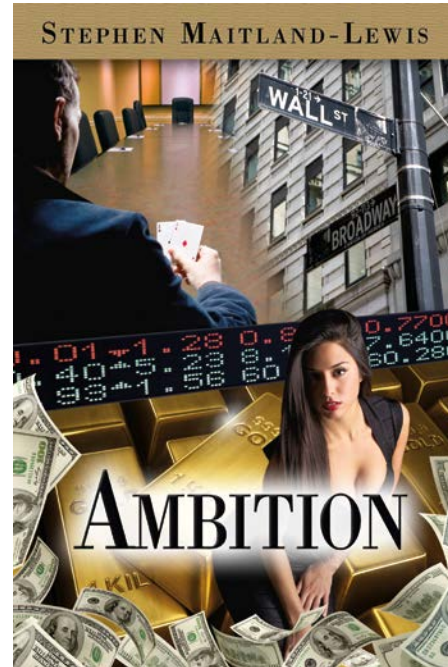
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Description:

Having it all will never be enough for George Tazoli, an ambitious dealer on the trading floor of a prominent California bank. He is hand-picked for a special assignment to sell off bad loans, but not because he is dating the daughter of the bank's president, rather for his skill at working the market. The promotion sends him to New York, putting a strain on his relationship, but then a scandalous discovery lures him into the gamble of a lifetime. George must gauge the risks—his direct superior is the bank's president and his potential father-in-law, who is married to an heiress worth billions, all the more reason for George to vow his fidelity. Back at the bank's headquarters, the president and his father, the chairman and grandfather of George's L.A. girlfriend, are embroiled in a long-standing feud with another family of stockholders competing for control of the bank. The boardroom tension and ultimate showdown keeps everyone busy while George makes difficult choices that will teach him a lesson learned the hard way—even wealth has a price.

Cover image and other materials available at
www.ridgeliterary.com/amb/press

A copy of your review would be appreciated.
Send via e-mail to: info@ridgeliterary.com

Synopsis: Ambition

In Los Angeles, the Vignes and Forest Bank has a big problem—an overabundance of bad loans, in part thanks to a inept bank president, Peter Donovan, whose father, Charles Donovan, is also the bank’s chairman. Complicating matters, since a merger decades earlier, the Donovan family has faced opposition from one of the bank’s largest stockholders, the Leigh family, who are adamant to remove Peter Donovan from his position as the bank’s president.

Board members are fed up with Peter and his gambling addiction, and he is charged with fixing the bad loans problem. His solution is to establish a ‘loan disposal unit’ that will discreetly dump the bad notes, but he wants it away from the L.A. headquarters. The New York branch of the bank is his choice and all that remains is to select the best candidate from the L.A. trading floor. The man for the job is George Tazoli, who it so happens is dating Peter Donovan’s daughter, Samantha.

Sam, rich and spoiled to the extreme, concludes that her father is sending George to New York simply to break up their relationship. It wasn’t Peter’s intent, but the side-effect is welcome—it helps appease his wife Blair, a vicious snob and heiress to one of the country’s largest fortunes, as she loathes the lowly boy from East Los Angeles that her daughter is dating.

Rushed to New York, George’s apartment isn’t ready so Peter Donovan offers the use of his Park Avenue apartment for a few weeks. During his stay, George stumbles onto photographs and videos of his boss having sex with prostitutes in that very apartment. He must confide in someone—certainly not Sam—and chooses to tell his cousin, Draeger Garcia, a sleazy broker who has been trying to convince George to funnel the sale of bad loans through Draeger’s office and keep a portion of the proceeds for themselves. George has resisted the dishonest scheme, but with the incriminating materials now in their possession, Draeger insists—with blackmail they are protected. George finally agrees, and with Draeger’s help, they begin to enrich themselves by many millions of dollars.

Though living at two ends of the continent, George and Sam try to maintain their relationship, but when he needs an assistant, his cousin Draeger offers an idea that helps protect their scheme—hire Draeger’s sister-in-law Xhana, a Brazilian with all the right qualifications, and not just those essential for the job. Xhana is hired and in little time she begins an affair with George.

Then comes news that Sam is pregnant. She forces George into a secret wedding in Las Vegas, which George

agrees to as it will secure his place in the Donovan family. But his true love is Xhana, and soon after his marriage to Sam, George learns that Xhana is pregnant as well. In the meantime, his offshore account continues to swell and Draeger insists that George take no action that might upset the loan sales and their increasing profits. So George continues to deceive both women, along with the bank.

When Peter Donovan learns that his daughter has given George a wedding present of two million dollars, he explodes and threatens to fire his new son-in-law. George panics as it would end the cash cow that he and Draeger had created. With incriminating photographs and videos in hand, George blackmails Peter Donovan and safeguards his position at the bank.

Oblivious to George’s infidelity, Sam buys a Los Angeles mansion for her new family and hires a renowned English interior decorator. When she discovers that he is a Viscount and heir to an Earldom, she decides that he is a better choice of husband than George. She hires an attorney and together they convince George to divorce her. He is reluctant to relinquish all rights to his unborn child but money talks, and they reach an agreement that makes George even richer. Besides, he and Xhana will no longer have to keep their relationship a secret.

Officers at the bank suspect that George is engaging in fraud and demand that Peter Donovan launch an investigation. George threatens blackmail again to keep the investigators off his back. Peter tries to make a deal but when George refuses to return the photographs and videos, Peter hires shady characters to have George silenced for good. It becomes time for George and Draeger to flee with the multi-millions they have stolen.

As the investigation progresses, it appears that Peter Donovan might be involved in the fraud as well, and when the U.S. Attorney’s Office summons him, he is shocked to find that a duplicate set of the photographs and videos had been left behind when Draeger Garcia abandoned his office. Horrified at the prospect of the material becoming public, ruining his marriage and career, Peter Donovan takes drastic measures with his life.

Meanwhile, George and Draeger plan their escape to Xhana’s home in Brazil, where as father of her child, George will avoid extradition. But first he must empty his account, obtaining enough cash to flee the country and transferring the rest to a Swiss bank. If he succeeds at evading the bank officials and thugs on his trail, he will be free to consider what he’s given up in his quest for wealth, and whether it was a sacrifice worth making.



***First Place for General Fiction in
the 2013 Rebecca's Reads Choice
Awards***



***2013 USA Best Book Awards
finalist***

A dark, plummeting tale of corporate greed, civil rancor and personal vice set against a backdrop of contemporary economic woes. Blackmail, betrayal and manipulation of the highest order.

KIRKUS REVIEWS

Fans of the film Wall Street will recognize the basic theme, but *Ambition* brings it to the next level. The term “page-turner” is cliché, so let’s just say that his writing sucks you into the story and holds you there throughout the entire book. As Kitty Kelley states in her testimonial, “it’s un-put-downable.”

FOREWORD REVIEWS

You really feel the life blood of the rich and powerful. It is as if you are there, on the Lear jet, in the conference room, sunk into the plush leather of your chair, witnessing it all.

REBECCA'S READS



Praise for Ambition

“This financial thriller rocks and rolls with sex and ‘skull-druggery,’ and more money than Midas can count. It’s un-put-downable. Stephen Maitland-Lewis, a former New York investment banker, writes fiction about a leading commercial bank with an insider’s knowledge of embezzlement. Chilling.”

Kitty Kelley

America’s bestselling investigative biographer

“*Ambition* makes ‘Wall Street’ look like a Boy Scout Convention. At the end of this vividly graphic exploration of life at the top of the financial world, there is hardly a character left standing who has not been involved (as victim or perpetrator) in blackmail, betrayal or sexual excess. This is clearly a prime candidate for big screen film entertainment.”

Bill Bernstein

*Former President of Orion Pictures Corp. and
former Executive Vice President of Paramount Pictures Corp.*

“*Ambition* creates the excitement of a free-fall – it’s difficult to look down or to put it down. Who said financial institutions were dull! A wonderful book and a great reading experience.”

Mickey Kantor

Former United States Trade Representative and Secretary of Commerce

“It’s about time we have one more great page turner. Stephen Maitland-Lewis steals the sins that caused the financial meltdown and weaves them into a fascinating mystery story.”

Richard J. Riordan

Former Mayor, City of Los Angeles

“*Ambition* proves that greed travels well, be it California, New York or Switzerland. Maitland-Lewis writes with knowledge of banking and the behind the scenes deceptions combining it with the glamour and excitement of high stakes romance. The price is always there.”

Connie Martinson

*Nationally syndicated journalist and
TV host of CONNIE MARTINSON TALKS BOOKS*

Praise for Ambition

“In the style of Harold Robbins, *Ambition* is a rich and gaudy tale of a young trader’s determination to succeed at any price and its unexpected consequences.”

Peter Truell

***Former journalist at THE WALL STREET JOURNAL and
author of FALSE PROFITS: THE INSIDE STORY OF BCCI***

“A shocking tale of corruption, greed, and blackmail. Told from an insider’s perspective, *Ambition* reads like a true story, especially with America’s current economic plight. Stephen Maitland-Lewis has penned a timely and absorbing winner. Put *Ambition* on your to read list, then be prepared for some late nights.”

Robert Dugoni

NY Times bestselling author, MURDER ONE and THE CONVICTION

“Stephen Maitland-Lewis is a great storyteller who draws you seductively into his characters. He takes you through the footsteps of their greed and deceit of unbridled ambitions, culminating with an ending that makes it all too real. Harold Robbins would be proud!”

Jann Robbins

***Author, HOPE AND HONOR (winner of the Colby Award),
HAROLD & ME: MY LIFE, LOVE AND HARD TIMES WITH HAROLD ROBBINS***

“*Ambition* is a page-turner which will appeal to both the financial community and to readers who have only been briefly exposed to Wall Street’s inner workings. An ambitious trader turns his job into a money making scam – a scene many of us on and off Wall Street have seen first hand. In *Ambition* we learn how far someone will go in order to capture a fortune; this is an enjoyable and very realistic journey with many magnificently profiled and flawed characters.”

Douglas Kass

***President and Founder of Seabreeze Partners Management;
Co-Author of CITIBANK: THE RALPH NADER REPORT;
frequent contributor to Barron’s; guest host of CNB’s Squawk Box;
and regular guest on CNBC’s The Kudlow Report.***



Praise for Ambition

“Extremely interesting! The financial and personal twists and turns really surprised me. Having been involved in banking for over thirty years, I found the author has exposed weaknesses that can cause a bank to lose millions. He shows what can happen when common sense rules are not followed. I found this book to be spot on when it comes to the interworkings of banks.”

Wade Francis

CEO of Unicon Financial Services, a leading bank consulting firm in the United States and overseas; former National Bank Examiner with the United States Treasury

“With *Ambition*, Stephen Maitland-Lewis takes us on a fascinating ride with a young banker in a hurry. George Tazoli is thrust into temptation and treachery through his courtship of a beautiful woman, the daughter of the president of the bank for whom George is a rising star. Maitland-Lewis follows Tazoli to the world’s most exotic places and details the cost of George’s frantic pursuit of the good life.”

Jim Engster

NPR host and President of Louisiana Radio Network

“Even those who already have a jaundiced view of the shenanigans of high finance will be taken aback by the goings-on from the boardrooms and bedrooms in Stephen Maitland-Lewis’ highly entertaining latest novel, spun with a wicked insider’s eye and a venomous pen.”

Martin Berg

Former editor of The Los Angeles and San Francisco Daily Journals and currently editor of WheresOurMoney.org

“*Ambition* is a slick, sexy, powerful escape. Juicier than any Daytime Drama, it takes the reader on a ride filled with twists and turns until the very last page. I couldn’t put it down!”

Eileen Davidson

Actress and author of THE SOAP OPERA MYSTERY series

“The author takes a motley crew of despicable but fascinating characters and manages to concoct a compelling plot of greed and avarice that will keep the reader turning the pages.”

Raymond Benson

Author of THE BLACK STILETTO series

Praise for Ambition

“Anyone who works in banking will love *Ambition*. From a young Gordon Gecko type hoping to make his mark, to an old-school chairman of the board, to a bank president who’s lost his way, and some ambitious women as well, Stephen Maitland-Lewis’ panoply of characters are unforgettable. Crisp writing and page-turning suspense make this financial thriller a terrific read.”

Libby Fischer Hellmann

Author of SET THE NIGHT ON FIRE and A BITTER VEIL (2012)

“Stephen Maitland-Lewis’s latest thriller *Ambition*, has more exciting twists and turns than an Olympic skier in the finals of a slalom race. I couldn’t put the book down. A terrific read.”

David Niven, Jr.

***Former Vice President of both Paramount Pictures and Columbia Pictures;
former international ski champion.***

“This page-turning story captivated me from the outset. The backdrop of the banking world is intriguing and the characters are attention-grabbing. All the twists and turns of the plot are terrific. A delightful read which deserves to be a huge success.”

Marilyn J. Tenser

Executive Vice President – Production, Crown International Pictures, Inc.

“*Ambition* is a character-driven novel that grabs you as it weaves and twists together love, hate, greed and temptation in the very shadowy world of banks and high finance.”

Marvin Holen, Esq.

Bank chairman and banking attorney

“Stephen Maitland-Lewis spins a web of financial manipulation coupled with old-fashioned greed. He draws you quickly into the story and keeps you there until the last page.”

Alan R. Polsky, Esq.

Los Angeles business/banking litigator



ForeWord Reviews

THRILLER

Ambition

Stephen Maitland-Lewis

Ridge Literary Inc.

978-0-9993802-3-9

(Feb 25, 2013)

George Tazoli is a young, successful floor trader at Forest & Vignes bank, an institution reeling from a portfolio of bad loans. He is also dating billionaire bank president Peter Donovan's daughter, Sam. Although he is an outstanding employee, his working-class roots put Tazoli in a poor light, particularly for his girlfriend's socialite mother. When Donovan concocts an elaborate scheme to divest of the bank's bad accounts in order to court new investors, it seems that sending Tazoli from Los Angeles to New York to secretly disposition the loans would solve two problems simultaneously. Given a raise and an apartment, he could focus on turning around the bank's financials in a secure location thousands of miles away from Sam.

Normally trading and settling activities would be handled by two different people to assure adequate checks and balances, but in Donovan's mind the need for confidentiality overrides fiduciary caution. He has, however, drastically underestimated Tazoli's ambition. His arrangement opens the door for Tazoli to manipulate the system in his own favor. Discovery of a hidden sex tape involving his boss and a trio of prostitutes adds leverage to Tazoli's schemes.

Stephen Maitland-Lewis had a long career as an attorney and investment banker before turning to writing. An award-winning author, he is a member of the Executive Advisory Committee of the International Mystery Writer's Festival. Pulling from his vast industry experience he has crafted a startlingly realistic, yet interesting, story of greed, lust, and corruption set in the world of high finance.

Fans of the film *Wall Street* will recognize the basic theme, but *Ambition* brings it to the next level. In fact, the first three pages are packed with glowing testimonials from luminaries in a variety of different fields, including bestselling author Kitty Kelley, former Orion Pictures President Bill Bernstein, and former Los Angeles Mayor Richard Riordan. This means that the author has friends in high places or is damned good at his craft; a couple chapters into the novel it becomes clear that the answer is both.

The brazen greed, depravation, petty feuds, and boardroom manipulation of many of the characters may seem over the top at first blush, but when you remember real-life incidents like the CEO of the world's largest aerospace company being fired for violating the ethics rules he put in place, followed by his successor falling due to the same foibles a few years later, it puts such things in an entirely different light. Fascinating characters, credible dialogue, and outstanding pace drive the story. The term "page-turner" is cliché, so let's just say that his writing sucks you into the story and holds you there throughout the entire book. As Kitty Kelley states in her testimonial, "it's un-put-downable."

Lawrence Kane, January 28, 2013

<http://www.forewordreviews.com/reviews/ambition/>

**Ambition**

Stephen Maitland-Lewis

Ridge Literary Inc.

ISBN: 978-0-9993802-3-9

Reviewed by F.T. Donereau for Rebecca's Reads (11/13)

To say that Stephen Maitland-Lewis' new novel, "Ambition," is a thrilling run inside the world of the business of high finance, would be an understatement. This tale takes off from page one and hurls the reader through deals and double deals, blackmail, schemes of embezzlement, love and loss and betrayal. It speaks of the price of ego, of unchecked vices and surging, well, ambition. It is rambunctious, nearly un-wielding, and yet it flows with the beat of what might be called perfect precision. The train has left the station folks. The numbers are crunched. The games have begun in earnest. The dull of heart, step aside. A green and gold world is opening here. Everything is fast and suspect. Welcome aboard.

George Tazoli is the main protagonist on this trip. I can say, without reservation, that he is an anti-hero of the best kind. He is smart and rough hewed and slick. He keeps a wary eye on the world and is more than a little corrupt. He is the type of fictional character you learn to like, in spite of himself. The surrounding characters, Samantha (Sam), Charles Donovan, Peter Donovan, George's cousin, Draeger, and Draeger's sister-in-law, Xhana, are all drawn so you understand what they are: clever schemers worthy of any club full of Wall Streeters and international jet setters, types capable of almost any kind of chicanery.

You get all you need of board rooms, big money, exotic locales, and sex with a purpose. There is always trouble and you are often on the edge of your nerves wondering what will be needed for the players to survive, if not thrive, intact. George spins calm and cold, but fully alive; he makes you wish, maybe more than a little bit, that you were living his life.

Really the best aspect of "Ambition" just might be it's the clean, direct prose. What is said of the surroundings and people in it allows one to feel exactly the world brought forth. Since we're dealing with a plot moving like a high wire act, it's a great help in keeping one engaged. Maitland-Lewis certainly knows his stuff. The details he engineers seem flawless to me. It was not a surprise, finding out he once worked as an attorney, and as an international investment banker. You really feel the life blood of the rich and powerful. It is as if you are there, on the Lear jet, in the conference room, sunk into the plush leather of your chair, witnessing it all. I don't think I will be faulted for calling this world a high end doppelganger of the lowland places Elmore Leonard depicted. It is that tight a piece of writing, that flavorful and fast going. If you want a little excitement, I recommend you buy this book, put your seat belt on, and dive in—you'll never regret that you did.

<http://rebeccasreads.com/lewisambition/>

About the Author



Photograph by Nathan Sternfeld

Stephen Maitland-Lewis is an award-winning author, a British attorney, and a former international investment banker. He has held senior executive positions in London, Kuwait and on Wall Street prior to moving to California in 1991. He has owned a luxury hotel and a world-renowned restaurant and was also Director of Marketing of a Los Angeles daily newspaper. Maitland-Lewis is a jazz aficionado and a Board Trustee of the Louis Armstrong House Museum in New York. In 2014, he received the Museum's prestigious Louie Award. A member of PEN and the Author's Guild, Maitland-Lewis is also on the Executive Committee of the International Mystery Writers Festival. His novel *Hero on Three Continents* has received numerous accolades, and *Emeralds Never Fade* won the 2012 Benjamin Franklin Award for Historical Fiction and the 2012 Written Arts Award for Best Fiction. His novel *Ambition* was a 2013 USA Best Book Awards finalist and won first place for General Fiction in the 2013 Rebecca's Reads Choice Awards. His novel *Botticelli's Bastard* was a 2014 USA Best Book Awards finalist in three categories and won the Bronze Award in Best Regional Fiction (Europe) at the 2015 Independent Publisher Book Awards. In January of 2016, Maitland-Lewis was sworn in as a Freeman of the City of London and admitted as a Liveryman of the Worshipful Company of City Solicitors. In April of 2016, he became a Fellow of The Royal Geographical Society (FRGS). Maitland-Lewis and his wife, Joni Berry, divide their time between their homes in Beverly Hills and New Orleans.

www.maitland-lewis.com

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