

Hotline to *heaven*

Caterina Ligato says guiding lost spirits and exorcising demons is all in a day's work

"Many people have experienced the supernatural and haven't quite known what it meant," says Caterina Ligato (in Sydney on Feb. 22.)



Caterina Ligato says she “could fill a cricket stadium full of the souls who I’ve helped cross over” in her two decades as a medium and healer. So, yes, she sees dead people, but then she helps them home. “If you imagine someone falling over and they’re lying there in shock, they can’t get up and you go over to them and say, ‘Are you OK?’ and they come to,” says Sydneysider Caterina, 45. “It’s a beautiful process.”

In 2004, she established the Soul Centre to help the ever-increasing number of people seeking guidance on everything from career and love issues to suspected possession. It’s this work—ridding people and homes of “negative energies”—that Caterina considers her calling. The problem is much more prevalent than you’d think claims the psychic, who documents three case of possession she has dealt with in her book, *Ghost Whisperer*. She spoke to Karina Machado.

What led you to write *Ghost Whisperer*?

As I got into this work, I began helping people who were having paranormal emergencies.

What’s a paranormal emergency?

It’s when someone is becoming possessed, or they’re living in a haunted house, or they’re hearing voices—when they’re being affected by the supernatural world and they don’t know what to do. They’ve gone to doctors, exhausted medical options, and no-one’s come up with a solution. I put things into perspective for them and give them the remedy—this is what inspires me. The book wasn’t easy to write—talking about demons—but

I think people need to know because we can all be affected by negative energy: a negative relationship, a negative friendship or negative parents.

How did you come to feel that this exorcism work was your calling?

I started off doing readings for people and saw that they were experiencing a haunting or a black-magic ritual and I wanted to help them, not just say, "You're being psychically attacked, I'm sorry, go home." I wanted to provide solutions.

What would I see as witness to an exorcism?

You'd feel the coldness in the atmosphere. When the entity is removed you'd feel a descending peace.

What would the "possessed" person experience?

They'd feel scared and afraid, but I explain what I'm doing. I tell them they're going to be lying down as I'm channelling light. I get them to do a lot of deep breathing to relax; they've got to be comfortable. There's a lot of communication and keeping them calm.

That sounds very different to how you'd normally imagine a possessed person would behave.

There have been cases where the person

is completely unaware of what's going on, where the entity has taken complete control. The person may verbalise, spit and scream and carry on, but you must stay completely focused and not take any notice of what they're saying—it's a battle of light and darkness.

Many symptoms of possession sound like those of mental illness. How do you discern?

I can see if spirits are attached or if it is mental illness—I have to be so careful. I've turned a lot of people away. I've said, "This is a problem for the medical profession, not for me."

How prominent is the urban black-magic movement that you describe in your book?

Satanism? Very prominent. Unfortunately, people are drawn into these types of places because they're vulnerable, they're seeking a false sense of self-empowerment.

How do you answer sceptics?

I'm not here to change or convince anybody, but the results I'm getting from people speak for themselves. If I wasn't seeing those results, I couldn't possibly be doing what I'm doing. Maybe to many people my gift is unexplainable, but I'm doing good with it and that's all that counts. ■

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Is your house HAUNTED?

Caterina Ligato says a huge part of her work is dedicated to "clearing" haunted houses of spirits and negative energies. Here are some of her symptoms of a haunted house (just because you can't see a ghost doesn't mean it's not there!):

- A perpetually cold house.
- Family members feeling fatigued and depressed.
- Arguments amplifying, a lack of calm.
- Items moving or disappearing.
- Lights switching themselves on and off.
- A sense something just isn't right.

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