

Immediate Release:
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Bay Area's Favorite Magician, and Storyteller of the Strange, takes helm on SF's beloved Ghost Hunt

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With movies like *Ghostbusters*, *Poltergeist*, and *Conjuring 2*, one would think that a ghost hunter is nothing but a Hollywood trope. But, no, there are real ghost hunters in the world, and San Francisco, with its short history of fire, sin, and gold, has a long list of specters that supposedly haunt The City to this day.

Enter Christian Cagigal, the new ghost hunter in town. Actually, he's less a hunter and more a lover of the weird and spooky. Cagigal is an acclaimed magician and storyteller. His shows are a veritable cabinet of curiosities, overflowing with strange stories and illusion. His work has been presented by many of the Bay's best known theatre companies, as well as regular stops in Chicago, New York, and Montreal. He's won the Best Magician Award, three times, given by the readers of the SF Bay Guardian, garnered two nominations for Best Solo Performer by the Theatre Bay Area Awards, and is a co-founder of Fog City Magic Fest.

Now, Cagigal is the new owner of the San Francisco Ghost Hunt Walking Tour a favorite haunt for locals and tourists, alike. The Ghost Hunt was created in 1997, by local raconteur and lover of

ghosts, Jim Fassbinder. As a child, Fassbinder had strange experiences with the paranormal but, “He grew up in a family of cops in Chicago,” says Cagigal, “And he wasn’t allowed to talk about it.” As an adult Jim’s interest in the paranormal never waned and he eventually moved to San Francisco. After taking ghost tours around the world he realized San Francisco had yet to have one, and that inspired him to create the first ghost tour in The City.

“At the time, I was going to SF State, majoring in Drama,” Cagigal says, “and I was starting to develop my mix of storytelling, magic, and theatre.” This was exactly the kind of thing Fassbinder wanted to bring to the San Francisco Ghost Hunt and Cagigal was instrumental in its creation. “I came on board in the first days as a co-director, researcher and creative consultant” says Cagigal. After 18 years, Fassbinder retired last year, and Cagigal stepped forward to pick up the mantle...uh...lantern, and continue the tradition.

While Cagigal invites people to bring their EMF detectors and download EMF apps (that means Electromotive Force for those of you not in on ghost hunting parlance) Cagigal says, “It’s, really, a fun historic walking tour of the Pacific Heights area. You learn about historic names of San Francisco that you’ve probably never heard of, how they lived, how they died, and the reports of their hauntings, ever since.” Cagigal admits, “We don’t make it up. We just report it.”

Okay, okay, but for real, have you seen a ghost?

“To be honest, I consider myself a healthy skeptic, and even I have had weird things happen on the tour that I can’t explain; cameras stop working, sensations of touches from hands that

aren't there, and some get their backs hit by acorns from a nearby tree," Cagigal continues, "I won't say it's ghosts, I'll just say that I can't currently explain them."

The Ghost Hunt has fans around the world, but it's not just for tourists, "Lots of natives take the tour as way of learning about their hometown," says Cagigal, "Last month, I had a couple on the tour, probably in their mid twenties. She had taken this tour when she was 9 years old and now returned, almost 15 years later, with her boyfriend." The best part was, "The boyfriend used to regularly visit one of the stops on the tour as a kid and he told us all the spooky things he had experienced in there. Right from the horses mouth!" When asked which spot, and why, Cagigal replied slyly, "You'll have to find out on the tour."

Okay, okay, fair enough, but we love magic tricks! Will you do magic tricks?

"Maybe..."

Ugh! Just like a magician, loath to give up his secrets.

If you want to learn the spooky secrets of San Francisco, the San Francisco Ghost Hunt runs Wednesday to Sunday nights at 7pm with a special added tour for Monday, October 31st. Online reservations are required. Check their schedule at www.sfgghosthunt.com

BIOGRAPHY

Christian Cagigal - Magician/Writer/Performer
San Francisco, California

Christian Cagigal has been performing his trademark blend of theatre, storytelling, and magic as an Artist in Residence at EXIT

Theatre, in San Francisco, since 2006, and as an Artist in Residence with Beyond the Mountain, in Montréal, since 2012. He's been named a Finalist for the Theatre Bay Area Award for Best Solo Performer, two years in a row; recipient of a Mastermind Award by the SF Weekly; and three time winner of the Best Magician of the Bay Award by the San Francisco Bay Guardian.

His shows include, the popular Pandora Experiment, the long-running OBSCURA, the secretive happenings of The Collection, and the critically acclaimed Now and at the Hour which has been seen in New York, Montréal, Chicago, New Orleans, Minneapolis and San Francisco.

Christian has consulted for A.C.T.'s MFA program, Shotgun Players, Crowded Fire Theatre Company, The Traveling Jewish Theatre Company, Marin Shakespeare Company, EXIT Theatre, Wilderness, and Tilted Frame.

He's the Co-Founder of the new Fog City Magic Fest, and the new owner of the San Francisco Ghost Hunt Walking Tour, an 18 year tradition in the City by the Bay.

For downloadable photos go here:

<http://www.sfghosthunt.com/press-photos.html>

Single click on desired photo, then right click or two finger click if on a Mac, then Save As.

For Calendar Editors

San Francisco Ghost Hunt Walking Tour: Meet ghosts from wild and romantic times gone by. Wed-Sun 7pm (added tour Monday Oct 31st) \$25, online reservations required at www.sfghosthunt.com

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