



It's all about a happy medium

Tom Colton says everyone has the ability to speak to the spirits, reports
John Daly

AM a non-believer. At least, I think I am. What really happens when people die, where do they go after being freed from their mortal flesh, and can we still talk with them? Such were the questions orbiting this cynical mind as I approached my chat with Tom Colton, the man called 'Ireland's foremost spiritualist medium'.

Rather than a bearded sage in flowing robes, this open-faced, be-suited thirtysomething presented instead as the soul of reason with measured voice and calm delivery. "I really don't like the word 'gift' because I believe everybody has the ability to communicate with spirits — there is no special gift," he explains of his calling. "There is none of that seventh son of the seventh moon thing about it," he says. "The ability is within all of us, but some are quicker to recognise it."

His website describes a medium as "a person who has developed their spiritual knowledge to form a link between this world and the spirit world. They can give the required proof that our loved ones have not left us, that they are still around and want to make contact."

Colton first discovered the ability to communicate as a child, but it was not until his uncle died in 2001 that he started reconnecting as an adult.

"People do tend to lump mediums into the same bag as fortune tellers, faith healers and psychics, which can mean a certain amount of undeserved criticism," he says of the many dubious types inhabiting this netherworld. Visions of Steve Martin as the charismatic but fraudulent faith healer conning

poor country folks in the 1992 movie, *Leap Of Faith*, spring to mind. "Being a medium has nothing to do about reading the future, getting the right Lotto numbers or telling you to pack up the family and move to Spain. It is about knowing that loved ones are still around."

Over the past eight years, Colton has become a Reiki Master as well as studying at the Arthur Findlay College in London, the world's foremost college for the advancement of spiritualism and psychic sciences.

"It is only in recent times that the West has begun to open to this kind of thinking, whereas the Eastern world has always been very spiritual in its attitude. Ireland especially is only now starting to open up to the whole area of communication with spirits."

As part of his Feel the Spirit Tour at venues across the country until next November, Colton wants audiences to see first hand his skills in connecting with the spirit world and how he can deliver messages to members of the audience from loved ones and friends who have passed away. He claims to be the only known medium to allow those he 'reads' to feel the energy of their loved

ones in the same way he does. "The whole purpose is to show people that everybody can do this, that

it is an ability everybody has," he says. "It is about helping those who come to feel as a medium does, to educate them to what mediumship is all about."

Encouraging audiences to bring photographs of their departed ones along, he acts as the conduit between the two worlds.

As to why we might attempt spirit communication through a medium in the first place, Colton reasons that it "helps bring together that which

seems to have become separated and lost through death, namely, love and interaction with our loved ones. We seek spirit communication because we want to know if our loved ones survived death. If so, where are they? And are they

the same people that we knew and loved while together on earth?" He believes they are sepa-