



DEBBIE HILL/TORONTO STAR/GETTY IMAGES

# 'I realised the CIA wanted to turn me into a weapon'

Uri Geller tells *Judith Woods* about being asked to kill a pig with his mind – and how he told Theresa May she would become PM

I am in Uri Geller's new home on the outskirts of Tel Aviv to discuss recent CIA revelations that a battery of tests in the Seventies concluded he was indeed psychic. Geller fixes me with an urgent brown gaze. "You must tape over the camera lens," he says. "Governments are engaged in all sorts of covert surveillance, even when your phone is

turned off. I tape all my equipment; so does Mark Zuckerberg." I nod, politely silently thinking: "Paranoid nutters." Days later, the Wikileaks story breaks that British spies have helped the CIA to convert the everyday smart technology we have in our homes into listening devices that send conversations to secret servers. Crikey. It's a mollifying moment.

But then, hindsight (unlike second sight) only kicks in after an event. It's easy to believe any theory, however outlandish it seemed at the time, once its veracity has been established. In January of this year, an extraordinary series of declassified CIA documents revealed the results experiments it conducted on Geller over eight days in 1973, during which he was tested for "clairvoyant" or

"telepathic" abilities. The conclusion drawn was that he did indeed possess paranormal skills.

Geller, who was kept in a sealed room, showed that he could "read" minds by copying complex pictures drawn elsewhere – even, in one case, hundreds of miles away – and also planted thoughts in other people's minds. He claims that those who tested him were left baffled and sometimes frightened by what they saw.

The story was picked up by newspapers and broadcasters across the globe, but this is the first time he has spoken about it publicly since it broke. "Part of me is glad that, after five decades, the world knows the truth about that secret part of my life", he says, adding that showbusiness was the "perfect cover for those activities".

Despite moving back to his native Israel 14 months ago, with Hanna, his wife of 50 years, Geller's emotional ties to Britain, where he lived for 33 years, remain strong.

But the nature of his links to the British establishment remain shrouded in mystery. Take his prediction, a full three and a half years ago, that Theresa May would become prime minister. He had a premonition when the former home secretary was visiting him at home in Sonning-on-Thames.

"I took her out to the Cadillac in my garage, which is covered in bent spoons from every era, which were owned by every famous person you

can think of," he says. "I touched the Churchill spoon and told her she would be prime minister."

Mrs May deflected the issue, he says, murmuring that David Cameron would be in the top job for a long time to come. Geller, in turn, repeated his assertion, and the rest is history.

But why was the then home secretary visiting Geller anyway? She surely didn't drop by for a display of spoon-bending – although I bet she got one, because it is, quite frankly, as irresistible to witness now as it was in 1973, when he appeared on *The David Dimbleby Talk-In*.

That night he bent cutlery and restarted stopped watches from Land's End to John O'Groats and we took him into our hearts. So much so that he moved to Britain, gained citizenship and brought up his now adult children here. "I can't tell you why Theresa May wanted to see me back then, or whether I am working with any intelligence agencies now," says Geller, who has a frustrating habit of intimating without elaborating.

Maybe we should have slapped an export ban on him so he could guide us through Brexit, telepathically altering the odds in our favour. After all, he cites as his finest hour the occasion when the US defence department flew him to Geneva in order persuade the Russians to sign



The young Uri shows off his gifts, above, and back home in Tel Aviv, left

**'I can't tell you why Theresa May came to see me – or if I am working for the secret services now'**

a nuclear treaty during the Cold War. He is uncharacteristically evasive about the date it happened, but says he bombarded them with the single thought: "sign, sign, sign". And they did.

"The declassified documents released by the CIA in January are only the tip of the iceberg. I was tested by Mossad and by MI5 and MI6 as well. As for any current involvement, I cannot confirm and I will not deny it. Whatever I say now could endanger my life."

This sounds hyperbolic, but that doesn't mean it's not true. Frankly, those of us born before the advent of the internet, contactless payment and driverless cars have already lived through the astonishing confluence of science fact and science fiction.

"You know, I believe MI5 was behind my invitation to appear on David Dimbleby," he says, out of nowhere. "What?" I cry in dismay. "First Richard Whiteley was dubbed in as a spy by Ricky Tomlinson, and now you're telling me that David Dimbleby is a secret agent?"

"No," he sighs with well-worn patience. "I didn't say that. I said that MI5 or MI6 wanted to get me to the UK, so that was how they arranged it. They knew about the tests in the US and wanted to see for themselves."

Geller underwent psychic

*Continued on page 26*

End of Season Event

5% OFF

Sofas from £359

LIMITED PERIOD ONLY



...the news of a male backpacker of being rescued by kidnapper in Mitchell, after allegedly being for two months. This was a reminder of 20-year-old daughter, ung, who was killed in Townsville, in the same To me this was a very trio - Mia was dragged and stabbed to death fine how traumatised family must be. were planned

was not Australian - French national Smail Ayad, 29, a fellow backpacker, has been charged with her murder - I believe her death would not have occurred had she not joined the Australian government's second working holiday visa programme, which entails completing 88 days of (usually) agricultural work in rural regions within one season. This is a scheme on offer to young travellers from Commonwealth countries, France, Germany, South Korea and Japan, allowing them to extend their visas by a year while plugging a labour gap. In theory, it is

**be killed in a country so similar to our own'**  
fruit-picking to working with animals - are advertised online, and so young people accept work in places that may take a 14-hour coach ride to reach. Young people from smaller countries like ours simply don't understand how isolated they will be; internet and mobile phone coverage is not a given, and Greyhound buses stop in town perhaps once a day. Once there, they are forced to book into often overcrowded farmworker

beautiful girl would be looked after by people drawn to her charm. After making her way through northern Africa and Asia, I was relieved when she arrived in Australia in February 2016. Mia settled down happily to her job at Bond University in Brisbane and acquired a flat-share with a view of the beach. She was having such a good time that I was not surprised when she told me she was going to embark on the 88 days so she could spend a second year out there. In late August, she headed up to Home Hill, just south of Townsville, where her job was to clear fields of

  
Rosie wants the Australian government to monitor migrant workers' safety  
stones to protect farm machinery; back-breaking work in the searing heat. Four days later, she was dead. Two police officers arrived on my doorstep. They knew little, other than that Mia had been fatally injured - it was only when I spoke to the consulate that I found out she had been stabbed

to grieve for my only child. In my mind, she will always be a few weeks shy of her 21st birthday. We can't stop children going on gap years - nor should we. Travel is an important, life-enhancing part of education. But until there are serious changes to the Australian system, I would urge any young adult to avoid the second year visa scheme. Go to Australia for 365 days of fun, sun, adventure and laughter. And then move on. It will always be there for a return trip in years to come. As told to Victoria Lambert

# Could the power of the mind be used to trigger nuclear weapons?

FROM PAGE 25

part of the Stargate... whether "remote things through... bringing back... could be used in Cold... and to discover if the... could be harnessed... weapons. to erasing floppy... from Mexico to... ing radish seeds... power alone, and to... man sperm from... will not talk in any... clear matters. n *The Men Who Stare*... sed on that research. is that I was led into... there was a pig and... want to see the pig... come back," he says.

"I realised they wanted me to stop the heart of the pig, which is similar to a human heart, and it scared the hell out of me," says Geller. "That's the first moment I realised I was being weaponised, but I never agreed at any point to do anything dark. I could never harm another person." We've met before, Geller and I, several years ago at Sonning. What fascinated me then, and still does, is the way he can flip from guarded spook to roar-of-the-crowd showman without turning a hair; first he bends a spoon for me, then he writes the name of a European city on a piece of paper and plants the thought in my head. I correctly state Paris, but I wonder if it was a fluke. He draws a shape on paper and conveys it to me as I draw a shape of my own; we have both scribbled identical pyramids, blocks and all. When we compare pictures,



DEBBIE HILL

Geller holding a bent spoon at his home in Israel

**'I never agreed to do anything dark - I couldn't harm another person'**

the hairs on my arms prickle. Geller smiles. "I don't care if anyone calls me a fraud or a charlatan, but if they tell downright lies about me I will sue," he says. At present he's aerated about a defamatory poster that has appeared in Bristol featuring his headshot and words to the effect that "Maybe if we all concentrate really hard, Donald Trump might disappear". Geller was an early lone voice in the wilderness predicting a win for Trump and was mocked for it. Nobody's mocking now. He's also fan of the 45th President, on account of his support for Israel. These days, he gives motivational talks and personally answers the hundreds of emails he receives every day. He has also bought a building near his flat, in which he plans to house a museum dedicated to his

life and achievements. Outside will be a specially commissioned giant spoon. If that sounds frivolous, then it is by intent. The murkier side of the paranormal world is hardly the stuff of tourist attractions. "There's a major network of scientists and secret intelligence agencies who are trying to get 10 people like me to concentrate on one city and blow it into a black hole, making it disappear," he says. "Since the Large Hadron Collider at Cern, we have grown more accustomed to the idea of extra space and time dimensions; if a proton can be made to appear and disappear, then it's only a matter of scale." Do we believe him? Hand on heart, I have no idea. But I think we can all agree it's really cool to be able to bend spoons.



The Telegraph  
**SAVE 35% on car hire worldwide with Affordable Car Hire**

Telegraph readers can save 35 per cent on Affordable Car Hire bookings made before Friday, March 31, 2017. The offer is valid for pick-ups, up to and including December 31, 2017. suppliers, including Hertz, Sixt and Europcar. One of the UK's largest car rental companies, Affordable Car Hire provides pick-ups from more than 1000 locations worldwide. **HOW TO CLAIM** Visit [telegraph.co.uk/go/carhire2017](http://telegraph.co.uk/go/carhire2017) and enter the promotional code **telegraph35** to receive an exclusive 35 per cent discount.