



Theater group, cult or stage?

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What is the Theater of All Possibilities?

Allegations have been made by one-time members of the Theater of All Possibilities which suggest that the theater group has cult characteristics using psychological humiliation and corporal punishment to keep members in line

According to taped statements from several individuals who have asked that their identities be kept confidential, the theater is really an Ouspensky-Gurdjieff grounded commune where followers are expected to adhere to the dictates of teacher leaders, Alex Horn and his wife, Sharon Gans-Horn.

Since the Horns and the theater attorney have refused requests for a meeting, there is no way of either proving or disproving the following allegations:

- Theater members allegedly are required to pay tuitions of \$200 a month

to the Horns. Such payments are made in cash with no receipts issued.

- Members are allegedly assigned ticket-selling quotas, and those who fail to meet them are administered corporal punishment, ostensibly to promote their growth and development.

- Teachers allegedly issue directives concerning marriage and child birth and those who do not marry or produce a child within the given time limit are ordered out of the movement.

- Unquestioning loyalty to the teachers and total dependence on their leadership allegedly is fostered by psychological humiliation and other brainwashing techniques.

It has also been alleged that at least one, and possibly as many as three, commune-type ranches are connected with the Theater of All Possibilities, and that the questionable activities involved in the "growth process" are accelerated at these locations.

City agencies have been asked to look into a Mission District day care center purportedly operated by mem-

bers of the theater. Some of those individuals once associated with the theater have expressed concern for the health and well-being of the youngsters there.

What is a theater critic doing involved in an investigation?

Several months ago, in the capacity as theater critic for The Progress, I was invited to review a play at the Theater of All Possibilities, 160 Golden Gate Avenue, entitled "The Magician."

The play was written by Alex Horn and starred Sharon Gans-Horn. I went. I saw. I reviewed.

I reported I found the philosophy that made up the text of the play strange, and that except for some impressive stagecraft, "The Magician" wasn't very good theater.

With that, as with other assignments, I thought I had heard the last of The Theater of All Possibilities. If only I had known then what the theater group was "really" all about.

A week ago, Thursday, Jim Eason, KGO radio, received an on-the-air call from a man who asked,

What do you really know about the Theater of All Possibilities?" And then went on to supply some alarming answers.

At this point I was in the preliminary stages of preparing a television piece on the theater for KGO – TV's AM Weekend Show. As Eason's in-coming calls became focused on the theater, I asked listeners to contact me directly with all information, pro or con, about the theater operation.

Many of the replies concerned people being approached on the street by Theater of All Possibilities members soliciting ticket sales. Former members referred to the group as a "family."

By promising anonymity, I persuaded several of these persons to record their stories on tape. They all gave me permission to use their names, should it become necessary to verify sources.

Since that conference and my subsequent disclosure of the allegations on the air, more testimony has come forward.

I have invited current members of The Theater of All Possibilities, including their leaders, to meet with me so that I can hear, first hand, their answers to questions and allegations. The only response was from a local actor who spoke to me as an ex-officio representative of the theater, with witnesses present.

He told me that the Horns (the teachers) had closed the theater because their family had been threatened as a result of my activities. He also said the Horns

were only employees and that the theater could function well without them.

The theater is apparently now closed.

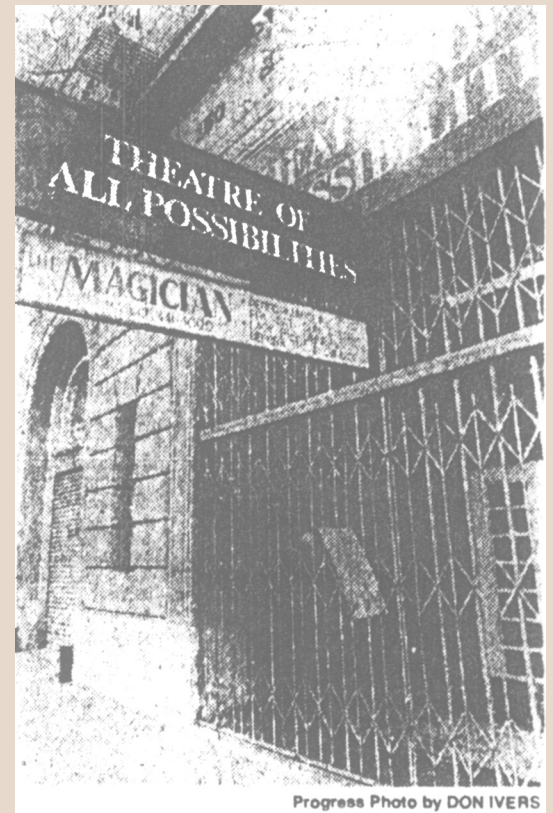
Why? Ads appearing in local theater guides have not been cancelled.

An attorney who said he was representing his "client" (Theater of All Possibilities) requested me personally, and KGO television station collectively, to allow him to "review all materials" prior to airing so that no "erroneous or defamatory" materials on the theater would be used.

That was not acceptable to media policies.

It has also been reported that he is, in fact, a member of the leadership and a member of several years standing and figures heavily in many of the allegations.

I have asked the Theater of All Possibilities to come forward to clarify these allegations. I have done it through their actor emissary, through their attorney, and on the air. I now repeat the invitation in the San Francisco Progress.



Editor's Note: As the investigation of the allegations continues, members of The Theater of All Possibilities, leaders or representatives are encouraged to contact Jack Brooks at KGO radio or the San Francisco Progress regarding the allegations or any other information regarding the organization. Other persons who have had contact with this organization are also encouraged to contact Jack Brooks.