

# Blithe Spirit

By  
Noel  
Coward



1 to 4 December 2010

Network Theatre, 246A Lower Road, London, SE1 8SF

[www.networktheatre.org](http://www.networktheatre.org)

Network  
Theatre  
Company

# Message from the Chairman

Good evening, ladies and gentlemen, and welcome to the Network Theatre Company and our production of *Blithe Spirit* written by Noel Coward and directed by Emily Godowski.

A classic play such as this one, by The Master himself, provides us with an excellent evening's entertainment, and I am pleased to welcome new faces to this production, both on stage and behind the scenes, who attest to our continued appeal, growth and success.

It will come as no surprise to any keen theatre supporter that the arts are facing great financial challenges these days, including those involved in amateur theatre.

We rely on ticket sales, donations, fundraising and bar profit to help pay our bills, and I would like here to acknowledge the continued generous support of our members and their friends and families.

So please sit back and enjoy this classic comedy, and don't forget the Green Room bar which is open before and after the show, as well as during the interval.

**Kay Murray**  
Chairman of the Network Theatre Company  
December 2010

# Blithe Spirit

I am very happy and proud to mark my third year as a Network Theatre member with this production of “Blithe Spirit”. In the wake of the theatre’s 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebrations, it seemed right and fitting to step back in time and celebrate one of the theatrical greats of that age. The Christmas slot seemed a perfect time for some great comedy tinged with nostalgia and a supernatural twist.

This is my directorial debut here at Network Theatre and getting lost in the crackle of Noel Coward’s razor sharp dialogue stands in sharp contrast to my first ever experience as a director at Manchester University where the relentless angst of Pirandello’s “Six Characters in Search of an Author” left us all needing a stiff drink!

“Blithe Spirit” is billed by Coward himself as an “improbable farce”. One of the most improbable things about it is that it was written in 5 straight days during the Blitz in London. I would like to thank my cast and crew for demonstrating what can be achieved in a short space of time with a bit of “Blitz spirit” and a lot of hard work.

Enjoy the show!

**Emily Godowski**  
Director

I would like to dedicate this production to the memory of my father,  
Felix Jan Godowski.

# Production Credits

Director	Emily Godowski
Assistant Director	Juliet Heap
Stage Manager	David Harvey
Assistant Stage Managers	Charlotte Mackintosh Eshani Weeresinghe Sarah Hozier
Costume	Kay Murray & Actors' own
Lighting Design and Operator	Steve Moles      Sue Walker
Sound Design and Operator	Paul D'Orley
Set Design	Helen Mason      David Harvey
Set Construction	David Harvey      Emma Byrne Paul Lunnon      Sue Walker Tom Martin      Members of Cast & Crew Steve Moles
Front of House Manager	Hannah Few

## **With special thanks to:**

**The Grey Goose** pub in Clapham for the loan of furniture and the provision of nerve-steadying refreshment early on in the process!

[www.thegreygoose.co.uk](http://www.thegreygoose.co.uk)

**Gail Caplan**, for the loan of her beautiful gramophone player and her upholstery skills.

**Stuart Walburn**, our emergency white van man.

**Esther Godowski**, for the loan of various items from fancy china to frocks.

# Company Biographies

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**Laura Courtney - Ruth Condomine**

Laura's first starring role was as Queen Victoria at the age of twelve. Since then, she has played a wide variety of parts including a singing nun with amnesia, a prophetic slave girl and a recently deceased aristocrat. She says that the best thing about playing Ruth is the one liners - no one writes them like Noel Coward.

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**Andy Bradshaw - Dr Bradman**

This is Andy's first Network show of the year since playing the recalcitrant Barnsley layabout Aiden Warburton in last Christmas' sell-out production of *Happy Chuffing Chirstmas*. Despite starting acting over three decades ago, with a long string of professional or otherwise credits to his name, this is his first Noel Coward role. He also directed Network's much acclaimed production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* in 2009 and returns as a Director in 2011 for what promises to be a visually stunning, exciting and heart-wrenching production of *Romeo and Juliet*, one of the must-see shows at Network for next year.

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**Laura Bosco - Mrs Bradman**

Laura is a new member of Network Theatre and *Blithe Spirit* will be her first production. Her previous stage time has been in the world of cabaret, where she creates and performs comedy character-based routines.

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**Zoe Hart - Elvira**

This is Zoe's second appearance with Network Theatre; she was also in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* as Hippolyta, as well as directing *An Ideal Husband* here a while back. Credits include a national tour of *Bad Girls*, Procne in *The Love of a Nightingale*, and Mopsa in Shakespeare's *A Winter's Tale*. She has also made several short films and recorded various audio books. She is greatly enjoying the role of Elvira.

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### **Sacha Walker - Mme Arcati**

This is Sacha's second production for Network having hidden under a large mop of electric blue dreadlocks to play Puck in last year's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. This year she has played Sarah Siddons in *The Actor's Nightmare* for South London Theatre, Lady Muldoon in *The Real Inspector Hound* for Woodhouse Players, and Mary in the new play *That Joke Isn't Funny Anymore* for Chelsea Players. She is looking forward to adding a few of her own eccentricities to Mme Arcati's long list of foibles.



### **Julian Farrance - Charles Condomine**

Since playing Bottom in last year's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Julian has been working for other companies, including *That Joke Isn't Funny Anymore* for Chelsea Players, *The Real Inspector Hound* for Woodhouse Players and *The Actor's Nightmare* for South London Theatre. He is delighted to be returning to Network for *Blithe Spirit*.



### **Kay Murray - Edith**

It's just 42 years since Kay made her acting debut with the Southern Railway Dramatic Society (now Network Theatre Company) in Noel Coward's *Present Laughter*. Since 1968 she has appeared in, and been associated with, more productions than she can remember, and it is fitting that she finds herself once more acting in a play by her favourite author. Of course playing the part of Edith, a Natural, she should have known this would happen.

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# The Arch 200 Club

Over 70 years ago, Southern Railways founded a theatre group at Waterloo.

The spirit of amateur theatre has survived through changes of name and nationalisation and is now struggling with the costs that came with privatisation. **Please help us to continue to entertain you by becoming a member of the Arch 200 Club.**

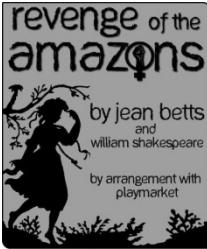
The Club exists to help the continued existence of the Network Theatre as a building in the face of ever increasing overheads. Membership subscriptions fund projects that are for the general good of the theatre, not productions themselves.

Membership costs from just £5 a month. Every month three membership numbers are drawn and half that month's subscriptions paid out in prizes.

There is so much more that needs to be done. The staging needs replacing and some parts of the theatre that the audience do not see are in desperate need of refurbishment. If there is a large enough membership it might even be possible to shorten the wait for the gentlemen's toilet!

More details are available from Nigel Williams at  
**[arch200@networktheatre.org](mailto:arch200@networktheatre.org)**

# Coming up



**Revenge of the Amazons by Jean Betts**

*Revenge of the Amazons* is a pantomime romp through a feminist Shakespearean's dream. A women's theatre group tries to persuade Hippolyta not to marry, and Oberon falls in love with a feminist bunny girl. Written for fun, mostly to provide more comic parts for women and a better share of the famous lines.

“The bard may well be turning in his grave, not because of the liberties taken with his play, but because he is laughing as helplessly as the audience did.”

- *Evening Post*

**Auditions: 8 & 9 December 2010**

**Performances: 2 to 5 March 2011**

For more information about Network Theatre Company, upcoming readings, auditions and performances visit [www.networktheatre.org](http://www.networktheatre.org)



## More than 70 years of drama

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