

BOB HOPE THEATRE ACTORS' COMPANY

Hail To Thee, Blithe Spirit / Bird thou never werk.....
To A Skylark, by Percy Shelley

BLITHE SPIRIT by Noel Coward

Production date(s) 12th to 15th June 2024 at 7.45 p.m.

Come and be a part of this fabulous play which Noel Coward wrote in 1941 whilst on holiday in Portmeirion. The play has become a classic of the British theatre originally playing 1,997 performances in London and it was also a huge success in New York. Since then it has been revived many times, most recently with Angela Lansbury playing Madame Arcati. It has been filmed twice with the classic 1945 film being the most memorable starring, Rex Harrison, Kay Hammond and of course Margaret Rutherford.

It tells the tale in 3 Acts of an author Charles Condomine who is writing a book on spiritualism. He, and his second wife Ruth, invite the local medium Madame Arcati and their friends Dr & Mrs Bradman to dinner. Charles wants to hold a séance. Only seen by Charles the séance conjures up his deceased wife Elvira. Mischievous Elvira causes havoc as she tries to "kill off" Charles so that he can join her on the other side but only succeeds in killing off Ruth. Now haunted by two dead wives, he tries to get Madame Arcati to rectify the situation but there are more powerful forces at work in the household. Blithe Spirit combines farce, emotion and great wit. It is intensely funny and character driven.

Characters are:

Charles, a writer in his 30's or early 40's

Ruth, his second wife. Roughly the same age.

Elvira. The deceased wife. Mischievous and vampish 20's perhaps?

Madame Arcati, the medium who is terribly eccentric and over the top.

Dr Bradman, Rather straight laced and older than Charles

Mrs Bradman. The twittery wife of Dr Bradman. Excitable.

Edith, the maid. Not very bright and rushes about a lot. Any age.

*I am not too bothered by cast age as I once played Charles at the age of 24 !
Reading on **Sunday 4 February at 11 a.m.***

Auditions: Monday 5 February and Tuesday 6 February at 7.30 p.m.

All to be held in the BHT Bar Lounge.

The original choice for this spot was the "The Odd Couple -the Female Version" but the rights for this play were not available. That is why we have chosen this classic play for the end of the season.

For those of you who may not know me as a Director, I have been directing musicals, plays and operas for nearly 50 years both locally, in London and also the USA. Some of my shows were amateur premieres and I have won several NODA awards over the years. Something of

a Noel Coward aficionado I have directed the musical revue "Cowardy Custard" 3 times, one of my all time favourites. I have recently been working with the Edward Alderton Theatre and my most recent productions were "Dirty Rotten Scoundrels" for Petts Wood Operatic in March and "The Ladykillers" last October at the Alderton.

Looking forward to seeing you,

KEITH NEVILLE – Director

If you want to contact me or have any questions, please contact:

auditions@bobhopetheatre.org.uk