



"An improbable farce"

**On stage at
the Playhouse Theatre
December 6, 7, 8 (matinee),
13 and 14**

INFORMATION NIGHT

Monday 23 September 2024 – 7:30pm

AUDITION

Tuesday 8 October 2024 – 7:30pm

Blithe Spirit is set at the house of writer, Charles Condomine, and his wife, Ruth. One evening, Charles invites local eccentric medium, Madame Arcati, to hold a seance at his house. He asks along his friends, Dr. and Mrs. Bradman, intending to gather character inspiration from Madame Arcati for his latest book. Despite initially thinking the séance has been a failure, it soon becomes clear that Madame Arcati has unwittingly brought back Charles' first wife, Elvira, to haunt him. Once in his house, Elvira is unable to leave and, as she cannot be seen or heard by Ruth, she causes all kinds of mischievous trouble between the married couple. When Elvira unwittingly causes Ruth's death in her attempts to bring Charles over to be with her, Charles becomes haunted by both of his now-deceased wives. Frustrated by their odd situation, the threesome call on Madame Arcati once more to send Elvira and Ruth back to the other side. Intensely funny and character-driven, *Blithe Spirit* combines farce, emotion, and wit to great effect.

AUDITION & REHEARSALS

(Whilst not strictly an 18+ cast, please be aware that preference will be given to those over 18)

- **The first READ-THROUGH is scheduled for 7:00pm on Thursday 10 October 2024**
Rehearsals will commence on Sunday 13 October (3:00pm – 5:30pm), continuing on Tuesdays/Thursdays (7:00pm – 9:30pm approx.), and Sundays (3:00 – 5:30pm), until Opening Night. Rehearsals may run a little longer towards the end of the campaign when rehearsing the full show.
- *Before auditioning, please consider the necessary level of commitment required.* If you are aware of the need to be absent during the rehearsal period, notification should be made to the Director or Stage Manager prior to rehearsals commencing.
- All successful auditionees will be required to become a financial member of the B.P.I. prior to the first rehearsal.

CHARACTER DESCRIPTIONS

The character descriptions provided are designed to give the performer an idea of what the writer had in mind when writing the play. Ages given are flexible and are intended to offer what level of 'worldly experience' the characters may have. Believable relationships must be created in terms of the married couples Charles, Ruth and Elvira.....and Dr and Mrs Bradnam, so the 'physicality' of the actors will need to be considered.

MALE ROLES

CHARLES CONDAMINE (30 – 50)

- An author who invites Madame Arcati to his house to conduct a séance for material for his upcoming novel. He is initially skeptical of Madame Arcati's powers, but when his late wife's spirit becomes visible to him, he becomes a believer. He prefers his first wife to his second.

DR BRADNAM (30 – 60)

- A friend of the Condomines. He and his wife are invited to the séance, but he is completely skeptical.

FEMALE ROLES

RUTH CONDAMINE (30 – 50)

- Charles's second wife. She is jealous of Charles's affection for Elvira, which only intensifies when Elvira's spirit returns. After dying in a booby-trapped car, she haunts Elvira.

EDITH (20 – 35)

- The Condomines' maid and, as is revealed in the end, a psychic. She is unintentionally responsible for Elvira's spirit being brought back to the house. She has frantic tendencies and is frequently encouraged to slow down by Charles and Ruth. She sings 'Always' in a cockney accent. *(This is a small role and it is hoped the actress will also be involved in backstage work.)*

VIOLET BRADMAN (30 – 60)

- Dr. Bradman's wife, she is the most interested in Madame Arcati's powers and seems to believe in them from the start.

MADAME ARCATI (40 – 80)

- The medium invited to conduct the séance. She is very particular in her dietary habits and travels exclusively by bicycle. She brings the spirit of Elvira to the Condomines' home, but does not know how to remove her.

ELVIRA (30 – 50)

- Charles's first wife, who died seven years before the events in *Blithe Spirit* take place. When she is summoned back as a spirit, she decides to take up residence in her former home. She intends to kill Charles so they can be reunited.
- In Charles' words – *"I haven't forgotten Elvira. I remember her very distinctly, indeed. I remember how fascinating she was and how maddening. I remember her gay charm when she'd achieved her own way over something and her extreme acidity when she didn't. I remember her physical attractiveness, which was tremendous, and her spiritual integrity which was nil."*