

Actors Ensemble of Berkeley

Presents

Noel Coward's

Blithe Spirit



Directed by

Hector Correa

July 23rd - August 21st, 2010

Live Oak Theatre
Berkeley, California

ABOUT ACTORS ENSEMBLE OF BERKELEY

Actors Ensemble of Berkeley has been around the block (and just around the corner from you) since 1957, making us the longest running stage company in Berkeley. In 1965, AE began performing at the Live Oak Theatre — and has ever since.

Our mission is to enrich, entertain and improve our community through fascinating theatrical works. With social consciousness and an ensemble approach, we provide area residents with opportunities to attend, participate in and be helped through theatre. Our shows will be affordable, our opportunities enjoyable, and our community impact felt year-round.

As Berkeley's only true community theatre company, we depend on our volunteers to bring their energy and creative vision to each play we produce. If you would like to volunteer in our theatre, give us a call or send us an email!

We'd love for you to play a part in our next show!

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Alan Barkan, Eric Carlson, Jeremy Cole, Jose Garcia, Jonathan Gordon, Margaret Gudmundsson, Bob Gudmundsson, Martha Luehrmann, William Martinelli, Jerome Solberg, Stanley Spenger, Kim Stewart

NOEL COWARD'S STAGE NOTE

"Perfection in art, as in everything else, is a question of degree. All genuinely creative artists strive to achieve it within the limits of the form they have chosen. I must say, with what to the reader will seem to be a refreshing gust of modesty, that in my opinion I have never achieved the perfect play that I have always longed, and will always long, to write but I shall ever be grateful for the almost psychic gift that enabled me to write *Blithe Spirit* in five days during one of the darkest days of the war. It was not meticulously constructed in advance and only one day elapsed between its original conception and the moment I sat down to write it. It fell into my mind and on to the manuscript. Six weeks later it was produced and ran for four and a half years, and I am still wondering whether or not it was "Important." Only Time will tell."

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Noel Coward's Blithe Spirit

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The Cast

Edith, the maid – Jody Christian
Elvira Condomine – Erin J. Hoffman
Dr. George Bradman – John F. Hurst
Ruth Condomine – Shannon Veon Kase
Madame Arcati – Chris Macomber
Violet Bradman – Jeanette Sarmiento
Charles Condomine – Stanley Spenger

The Crew

Director – Hector Correa
Stage Manager – Jose Garcia
Set Design – Rose Anne Raphael
Light Design – Alecks Rundell
Costume Design – Helen Slomowitz
Set Construction – Bob Gudmundsson
Light Production – Morgan Brown
 – Lizette Greijbe
Sound Production – Nayla El-Haber
 – Catalina Macdonald
Graphics – Shu Ping Guan
Photography – Tiffany Boswell

This play is presented by special arrangement with Samuel French, Incorporated

ALLOW US TO INTRODUCE OURSELVES

Morgan Brown is pleased to be helping run lights. His less than secret identity is as a grad student in Math at U.C. Berkeley. He is also acting in the Summer Staged Reading Series.

Jody Christian is a Bay Area actor specializing in physical comedy, Shakespeare, and dance. She'd like to dedicate her performance to her beautifully irreverent clown teachers. She'd also like to thank SubShakes for first welcoming her into the Berkeley theater community. And most of all, as always, thank you audience for coming to see the show!

Nayla El-Haber's birth was foretold by a comet! When she is not in the booth she tests optical devices - like little stars if not as bright as those in Blithe Spirit. Come see her star shine in our Summer Staged Reading Series.

Jose Garcia has stage managed many of AE's productions: Exit the King, Doctor Faustus, The Matchmaker, Uncle Vanya, Barefoot in the Park and LUV. He also loves to perform on stage; his favorite roles have been the Ambassador in Rosencrantz & Guildenstern Are Dead, and Haemon in Antigone.

Erin J. Hoffman is pleased to be making her debut with Actors Ensemble of Berkeley. She is a native of Washington State who has made the Bay Area her home for the last twelve years. She has recently worked with The Willows Theatre, 42nd Street Moon, New Conservatory Theatre, and Bay Area Children's Theatre.

Bay area actor **John Hurst** is delighted to be making his third appearance with Actors Ensemble of Berkeley. His previous credits with AE include appearances in such shows as Antigone and True West. Other roles that he has enjoyed have included the Fool in King Lear, Max in Dial M For Murder and Dr Cacophony in The Royal Courts Theaters Production of The Phantom Tollbooth. He is proud to be working with such a dedicated crew of individuals.

Shannon Veon Kase is elated to be part of this production of Blithe Spirit. She loves living and working in the East-Bay. Other roles include Maria in 12th Night (Marin Shakes), Rose in Dancing at Lughnasa (PASC), Greek Chorus in How I Learned to Drive. Shannon also directs and is part of an all female comedy troupe called "The Alley Cats." Thank you to the cast for their talent and a special thanks to Hector Correa, "Who always makes me a better actor."

Catalina Macdonald studies marine biology at U.C. Santa Cruz and wields a hammer and crowbar in Berkeley's Adventure Playground.

Chris Macomber began singing again and discovered theater after a long government career. She has been in many shows with 42nd Street Moon, Lamplighters and recently began doing plays, winning a Bay Area Theater Critics Circle award for The Cocktail Hour. She has done Shakespeare with Livermore's Shakespeare's Associates the last three summers. Chris is a violinist in The Exeter String Quartet.

Rose Anne Raphael is very happy to rejoin Hector Correa, Stanley Spenger, and AE of Berkeley for this wonderful production. She is thrilled to be entering UC Davis's M.F.A. program in scenic design this Fall, and thanks this wonderful group for giving her valuable experience in this most fascinating art.

Alecks Rundell is excited to be working with Actors Ensemble again. He received his Theatre Arts degree from Reed College, Portland, OR. He completed his thesis on Fractals and Chaos Theory as applied to Theatre, and still pursues the beauty of fractals. He thanks his parents, Jeanne and Richard Rundell, and sends his love to Priscilla.

Jeanette Sarmiento is delighted to be making her Actors Ensemble debut. Favorite roles include Herod and the title role in Junior Miss. Deep gratitude to my teachers, family and friends.

Helen Slomowitz is thrilled to be costuming another play for the the fabulous Actors Ensemble! She has costume designed for local theatre and has had the opportunity to work as a designer for TV & Film here in the Bay Area as well as L.A. She thanks the cast, crew and Hector the marvelous director for being so patient, kind, supportive & helpful.

Stanley Spenger performed most recently for AE in LUV, Uncle Vanya, and Doctor Faustus. He appeared in two productions of A Midsummer Night's Dream, for both North Bay Shakespeare (with Hector Correa) and Impact Theatre. Last summer he performed in the musical A Hot Day in Ephesus (based on The Comedy of Errors) by Vicki Siegel.

WE'D LIKE TO THANK THE FOLLOWING PEOPLE AND ORGANIZATIONS FOR THEIR HELP AND SUPPORT

Micheal Berg
Calshakes
Contra Costa Community Theater
Jean Fichtenkort, UC Berkeley Props Department
Jose Garcia
Smith Mitchell
Jerome Solberg
Sleeping Dog Productions
Stagecraft Studios-Alcatraz Ave, Berkeley

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in the Lobby

Fifty-Three and Still Play'n Around Join Us for Some Summer Fun

Actors Ensemble of Berkeley is pleased to announce a staged reading series, presenting new and/or rarely seen works. These will be held over a series of Tuesdays and Sundays in late July and early August.

Curtain: 8 pm

Tuesday, July 27th

An Evening of Short Comic Works by Christopher Durang

Directed by Jay Krohnengold

8 p.m., Pay-What-You-Can

Curtain: 6 pm

Sunday, August 1st

Harold Pinter's *"The Caretaker"*

Directed by John Hurst

6 p.m., \$8

Curtain: 8 pm

Tuesday, August 3rd

An Evening of Short Pieces Referencing Shakespeare

Directed by Alan Barkan

8 p.m., Pay-What-You-Can

Curtain: 6 pm

Sunday, August 8th

An Evening with Oscar Wilde - Short Pieces and an Adapted Story

Directed by Robert Estes and Ken Bullock

6 p.m., \$8

Curtain: 8 pm

Tuesday, August 17th

"The Village that Voted the Earth was Flat" by Rudyard Kipling

Directed by Vicki Siegel

8 p.m., Pay-What-You-Can

All tickets for this series can be purchased online at:

http://www.aeofberkeley.org/archives/2010_Readings/showinfo.html

Tickets will also be available for purchase and pick-up at the theatre one half hour before curtain. Our Box Office can only accept cash or check for purchase.

Actors Ensemble of Berkeley's 2011 Season

January 2011

"Heartbreak House"

the classic comedy by George Bernard Shaw
directed by Robert Estes
who recently directed "Curse of the
Starving Class" at AEofB

April 2011

"Passion Play"

the epic drama by Sarah Ruhl, in its West
Coast Premiere
directed by Jeremy Cole
who recently directed "As it is in Heaven"
at AEofB

July 2011

"Communicating Doors"

the innovative time-travel comedy by Alan
Ayckbourn
directed by Suzanne Loraine
new to our company but a familiar name
around the Bay Area

October 2011

"Doubt"

by John Patrick Shanley
directed by Donna Davis
returning to AEofB after a long absence

Visit our web site, <http://AEofBerkeley.Org> for more information or to purchase season tickets.

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