

**STROLLERS**  
THEATRE LTD.

# BLITHE SPIRIT

BY NOËL COWARD

APRIL 29TH - MAY 21ST, 2016

DIRECTED BY DAN MYERS

# FARCE!



THE  
**BRITISH INVASION**  
2015/16 SEASON

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

**THE BARTON**

# **STROLLERS** **THEATRE** **LTD.**

**Presents**

## **BLITHE SPIRIT**

**BY NOËL COWARD**

**Directed By**  
**Dan Myers**

**Produced By**  
**Justin Schober**

Running time for the show is approximately  
2 hours 45 minutes, including a 15 minute intermission.

Blithe Spirit is presented  
by special arrangement with SAMUEL FRENCH, INC.

**Please turn off all cell phones and similar devices.**  
**Use of cameras, video and audio recording is**  
**strictly prohibited during the performance.**

Strollers Theatre, Ltd is a member of  
the Madison Arts Production Center

## **CAST**

*In Order of Appearance*

Edith – Carrie Sweet

Ruth – Alicia McCanna

Charles – Scott Albert Bennett

Mrs. Bradman – Stephanie Frank

Dr. Bradman – Coleman

Madame Arcati – Rebecca Raether

Elvira – Jessica Jane Witham

Understudy for Charles – Doug Reed

## **PRODUCTION TEAM**

Stage Managers – Brianna Mueller & Trillian Bergmann

Assistant Stage Manager – Sarah Krahn

## **DESIGN TEAM**

Properties Design – Erin Baal

Dialect Coach – Scott Albert Bennett

Set Builder – Trenton Bowen

Properties Design – Mel Marcum

Costume Design – Molly McNair

Set Design – Dan Myers

Sound Design – Dan Myers

Lighting Design – John Penisten

Set Painter – Kaleigh Richards

Acting Coach – Sarah Streich

# DIRECTOR'S NOTE

Jessica Witham put it best when summarizing this show... “we dared to do a show about ghosts in the face of the theatre gods and... well, they spanked us.” In the process of mounting *Blithe Spirit*, three weeks before we opened, we lost our lead actress. Then, a few days later, illness took another actor for a good part of the rehearsal process. We ended up having to block the show three times between filtering in the actors and the understudies. Tensions became high, stress levels were at red alert and fires needed to be put out on a regular basis.

But here's the thing: when you have really, really talented and committed actors and crew that know their jobs and can be agile in the face of adversity, nothing can get in the way of making the production come to life. Tenacity and love of the art become motivation to overcome any obstacle in your path. I'm so very, very proud of what we have brought together and the love of the art that we, as a cast and crew, get the privilege to share with you tonight.

During load-in for this show, one of the actors shared her philosophy about acting with me and I find it very appropriate for this show. She said “The characters in a play only ever get to live when a play is being staged. They have no life on the page and only ever get to live through the actor. I see it as a debt I owe to the character to give them the best life I can give them while I have the honor to embody them and to be their voice.” So, as nothing could stop us from getting here, we just want to say, thank you for joining us this evening and letting these characters, these ghosts, live for you.

Cheers!

Dan Myers

# CAST

**Carrie Sweet (Edith)** is in utter awe of this talented cast and crew, and feels incredibly fortunate for the opportunity to be part of this amazing team. Past credits include: Jackie in *Mauritius* (MTG), Pam in *In a Clearing* (Forward Theatre), Female Greek Chorus in *How I Learned to Drive* (MTG), and Callie in *Stop Kiss* (Stage One). Enjoy!

**Alicia McCanna (Ruth)** is just a figment of your imagination.

**Scott Albert Bennett (Charles)** is thrilled to be re-visiting *Blithe Spirit* after having appeared as Dr. Bradman in a high-school production... “many” years ago. Scott has his MFA in Acting from UW-Madison, and is president of Strollers Theatre, another role he is happy to be playing. He will next appear in Harvey Fierstein’s *Casa Valentina* for StageQ in July. Thanks to the talented cast and production team for making this such a fun experience, and love to Landon – I’ll be home to do the dishes soon, honey.

**Stephanie Frank (Mrs. Bradman)** is really quite excited for her first production with Strollers Theatre! She is a graduate of UW-Green Bay with a B.A. in Musical Theatre where she performed in nine Mainstage productions, was a three-time recipient of the “Excellence in Performance” award, and received two KCACTF Irene Ryan nominations. Her Madison credits include: Transylvanian in *The Rocky Horror Show* (OUT!Cast/Mercury), Cinderella in *Gadzooks! Cinderella!* (Mercury), Maisie in *The Boy Friend* (MTG), and Penelope Pennywise in *Urinetown* (The House Theatre). Love always to the SS!

**Coleman (Dr. Bradman)** is a playwright, author, director and, all too frequently, an actor. He is the assistant groundskeeper of a new Vegetable Detention Center outside Mineral Point. This is his fourth Strollers production in a row, but probably his last for a little while. He needs to be writing.



He can't believe that he is three times as old as Stephanie Frank. Can you?

**Rebecca Raether (Madame Arcati)** is thrilled to be part of *Blithe Spirit* – the crown jewel in a Strollers trifecta that also included *The Mousetrap* and *Misalliance*. Deepest gratitude to Strollers Theatre for this wonderful season – and to the cast, director and crew of *Blithe Spirit* for making Madame Arcati a dream come true. Rebecca thanks her family and friends, with particular gratitude to the man who always claps loudest.

**Jessica Jane Witham (Elvira)** has played many roles on Madison stages, including a Bad Librarian in *Out of the Fire: The Banned Books Monologue Festival* (Forward Theatre), various roles in *The Suitcase Dreams* (Theatre Lila), Miss Adelaide in *Guys and Dolls* (Four Seasons Theatre), Maggie the Cat in *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof* (Strollers Theatre) and has spent six years on the Artistic staff of Encore Studio for the Performing Arts (local professional theatre company for people with disabilities). She is thrilled to be playing this wonderful role, with these wonderful people, directed by her wonderful husband.

**Doug Reed (Charles Understudy)** just moved back to Madison after a three year stint in Chicago. He couldn't be more grateful to be surrounded by his theater family in this city he loves. His play *Sweet William* just closed at Broom Street Theater. You're sorry you missed it. You can buy Doug's novel *Half* by going to [www.encpress.com](http://www.encpress.com). You can see Doug improvise with Monkey Business Institute. You can learn more about Doug by buying him a drink.

## PRODUCTION TEAM

**Dan Myers (Director)** has had a number of roles and titles in the arts community including writer, actor, musician,

director, photographer, designer, and builder. Dan is a WAMI nominated singer and as a writer he has seen four of his full length scripts (*Chat ;*), *Finding Human*, and *The Point of It All*, and Co-Writer of *Alice*) produced and performed on Madison stages. Dan is the owner/operator of Lumi Photo and has been photographing many of the theatre and dance companies in Madison for the last several years. As an actor, he has performed in both the Fringe (2012) and Frigid (2014) Theatre Festivals in NYC as well as in theaters in Madison, Milwaukee, Stoughton, and Racine. Some of his favorite roles have been Matt in *Dog Sees God*, the title role in *Drakula: The Performance*, The Man in Black in *On the Corner of Clark and Vine*, and Will Roper in *Meg*. Most importantly, to Dan, he's the guy that gets to mop the floors. Dan lives in Madison with his wife, Jessica.

**Justin Schober (Producer)** has been involved with community theater since 2012. After getting his degree in accounting in 2014, he's been doing all the things no one ever wants to deal with (namely the financials). But he loves it all since it all helped him kick off his accounting career at the Overture Center Foundation in the administration's finance department. He's been very proud to work with the cast and crew of *Blithe Spirit*.

**Brianna Mueller (Stage Manager)** Brianna's recent work includes stage managing MTG's *How I Learned to Drive* and *Mauritius* before stumbling upon this project with Dan, as if by the Theatre Fates. She couldn't be happier to have experienced his balance of brilliant directorial talents and gross teenage boy humor. Additionally, she's pleased to be back as the dynamic stage managing duo, Brilliant/Tree. Bri is always grateful to continue expanding her Theatre family and seeing the wonderful things we can create together.

**Trillian Bergmann (Stage Manager)** is so wonderfully happy to have had the opportunity to work with everyone involved in this production, her first with Strollers. She was

last seen stage managing (and dancing in!) *Psycho Beach Party* for StageQ. Her next production will be *Queer Shorts 2.0*, also put on by StageQ. Thanks to Dan and Brianna for asking her to help out.

**Sarah Krahn (Assistant Stage Manager)** is honored to be a part of the *Blithe Spirit* team! She recently earned her B.A. in Theatre Arts from Edgewood College. She sends thanks to Strollers Theatre for this opportunity and Dan Myers for being his incredible self.

## DESIGN TEAM

**Trenton Bowden (Set Builder)** helps build stuff.

**Mel Marcum (Properties Design)** has been finding, modifying, and/or creating props for the past five-ish years and is the resident Props Manager for Stage Q. His recent work was in Stage Q's *Psycho Beach Party* and he is happy to be working with a fine group of actors and crew for this Stroller's show. In the time he is not working on a show, Mel is a full-time student in the Graphic Arts program at Madison College and if he ever has free time left after that, he can be found tinkering, crafting, and putzing around doing leather work or other artsy-craftsy things. Enjoy the show! If you like what you see and have a need for prop-like or display items, feel free to contact Mel at [mmarcum@madisoncollege.edu](mailto:mmarcum@madisoncollege.edu). Thanks always to his ever-loving wife!!

**Molly McNair (Costume Design)** is a Madison native and a big fan of the 1940s and ghosts. This is her second time working on *Blithe Spirit*, second time working with Dan Myers, and third time exorcising a poltergeist.

**John Penisten (Lighting Design)** has worked with many of Madison's community, professional, and educational theaters in a variety of technical capacities. He has enormously



enjoyed working with Strollers Theatre this season. He wants to thank his wife for her patience and understanding when he disappears for weeks at a time to work on “yet another” production.

**Kaleigh Richards (Set Painter)** is delighted to be joining the Strollers production team. After graduating from The College of Wooster’s Theater and Dance program in 2013, she has worked in various fields of theater in Chicago and Boston and is looking forward to further collaboration with Madison’s many talented artists.

**Sarah Streich (Acting Coach)** Sarah’s Madison theater debut was with Strollers as Annie Wilson in *Apartment 3A*, directed by Tony Trout in 2009. Since then, she has worked with the following local companies: Madison Theatre Guild, StageQ, Music Theatre of Madison, Bricks Theatre, and OUT!Cast Theatre. With Four Seasons Theatre, she has played Lois Lane/Bianca in *Kiss Me, Kate!*, Percy Talbot in *The Spitfire Grill* (produced in cooperation with MTG), Emma Goldman/Ensemble in *Assassins*, and Eliza Doolittle in *My Fair Lady*. Most recently, she was seen as the Wicked Witch of the West in *Wizard of Oz*, produced by Children’s Theatre of Madison. She is very proud of this cast, and sends them all of her love. Have a wonderful run, my Elementals!



**Supporting Our Creative  
Community**

## Special Thanks To:

Children's Theater of Madison, First Baptist Church, Madison Arts Production Center, Madison Theatre Guild, StageQ, Matt Korda, Tom Littrell, Bob Moore, Matthew Viktor Petterson, and Karla Weber.

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