

Summer 2010

Direction of the Play: Blithe Spirit

Richard Shultz
Central Washington University

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Direction of the Play: Blithe Spirit

A Project Report
Presented to
the Graduate Faculty
Central Washington University

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts
Theatre Production

by
Richard Lee Shultz
July, 2010

CENTRAL WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY

Graduate Studies

We hereby approve the project report of

Richard Lee Shultz

Candidate for the degree of Master of Arts:

Theatre Production

APPROVED FOR THE GRADUATE FACULTY

8-24-10

Date of
Signature

Professor Michael J. Smith
Committee Chair

Date of
Signature

Professor Scott Robinson

8/24/10

Date of
Signature

Professor Elise Forier

Please note:

The signatures have been redacted due to security reasons.

ABSTRACT

PROJECT REPORT

Blithe Spirit

Derby High School

Directed by

Richard Lee Shultz

July 2010

This project entailed the selection, background research and documentation, musical analysis, casting, direction, vocal coaching, and post-production analysis of Derby High School's production of Blithe Spirit. Documentation includes research and analysis of the play, its music, and an evaluation of the play as a production vehicle for the Department of Theatre Arts at Derby High School.

CENTRAL WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY

Graduate Studies

Final Examination of

Richard Lee Shultz

for the Degree of

Master of Arts

Theatre Production

Committee in Charge

Professor Michael J. Smith

Professor Scott Robinson

Professor Elise Forier

McConnell Hall

Black 138

July 29, 2010

10:00 AM

Richard Lee Shultz

Courses presented for the Master's degree

Course No.	Course Title	Number Of Credits	Instructor	Quarter Completed
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BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

Richard Lee Shultz

Undergraduate Study:

Wichita State University, 1986-1989

BS Friends University, 1993

Graduate Study:

Central Washington University, 2006-2010

Professional Experience:

High School Teacher: 1989-2010

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**GRADUATE COMMITTEE
AND OPTION APPROVAL FORM
CENTRAL WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY**

Shultz 1

(Submit the original and three copies)

Note: This form is to be completed as soon as the student has formed a committee and selected an option from the list below. Submit the original and three copies to the Office of Graduate Studies in Barge 305.

Student Name Richard Shultz Birth Date [REDACTED]
 Mailing Address [REDACTED] Student ID [REDACTED]
 City, State, Zipcode [REDACTED] Date 06/25/2008

Check option: Indicate credits to be received for the thesis or option:

Written Exam*

Non-Thesis Project

Creative Project

Studio Project

Portfolio Review

Thesis

Course No. Title Credits

TH 700 Master's Thesis 6

Course No. Title Credits

MLA 6th Ed. _____ _____

Style Manual for Thesis or Project

*Students taking written exam option may omit items 1-5 below.

1. Proposed Title: Direction of the Production of Blithe Spirit.

2. Purpose of Study: The direction of the production of Blithe Spirit serves as the culminating experience in theatre arts graduate studies.

3. Scope of Study: Documentation based upon the preparation of pre-production research, the direction of the production (including casting, rehearsal of actors, and preparation of the director's production book), post-production evaluation and oral examination shall benefit the student and Theatre Arts department.

4. Procedure to be used: Three phases of study shall be included: 1) Pre-Production Research and Thesis Documentation, 2) Rehearsal and direction of production, 3) Post-Production evaluation and documentation.

5. Does the procedure involve collection of data obtained from
 Human Subjects (including use of surveys)?..... Yes** No
 Use of Animals? Yes** No

** If yes, your procedures must be approved in writing by the Human Subjects Committee or the Animal Care and Use Committee before you initiate your research.

Michael Smith
 Committee Chair (typed or printed)

 Committee Chair (signature) Date

Elise Forier Edie
 Committee Member (typed or printed)

 Committee Member (signature) Date

Scott Robinson
 Committee Member (typed or printed)

 Committee Member (signature) Date

Approved by: _____

Approved by: _____

 Dept Chair/Designee (signature) Date

 Associate VP of Graduate Studies Date

MASTER'S THESIS PROJECT PLAYSCRIPT APPROVAL FORM

(PLEASE MAKE SURE THAT YOU HAVE READ THE PLAY SELECTION CRITERIA SECTION IN YOUR GRADUATE HANDBOOK)

SCRIPT TITLE Blithe Spirit

PLAYWRIGHT(S) [If musical, list lyricist/composer] Noel Coward

NUMBER OF ACTS 3 APPROXIMATE TOTAL PLAYING TIME 2 HOURS 30 MIN.

CAST (fill in with the appropriate numbers)

MEN 2 WOMEN 5 CHILDREN _____ OVER 40 _____

ROLES REQUIRING PEOPLE OF COLOR _____ ROLES COULD DOUBLE _____

TOTAL NUMBER OF CAST 7

OTHER CASTING CONCERNS:

ARTISTIC STAFF (check those needed for this play or production idea)

MUSICAL DIRECTOR _____ DANCE CHOREOGRAPHER _____

FIGHT CHOREOGRAPHER _____ DIALECT COACH x SPECIALTY HIRE _____ (specify what kind)

ORCHESTRA/BAND (specify what size) _____

Will you be fulfilling any of the above? yes If so, which?

Dialect Coach with assistance from Michael Smith

Will a guest artist be fulfilling any of the above? If so, which?

SCENERY/PROPS (check those needed for this play or your concept of the play)

UNIT SET? YES NO (CIRCLE ONE) NUMBER OF SETTINGS 1

HISTORICAL PERIOD Late 1930's GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION Kent, England

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF SET CONCERNS OR SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS:

This show requires a number of special effects, including a Victrola that begins playing by itself and various small set pieces that are sent flying at the end. Care will have to be taken to secure the items to be broken before the production dates and to design and fabricate the means of knocking them off the shelves where they will reside. The phonograph will require a speaker in the cabinet and a means of opening the lid invisibly. There are three sets of doors, two of which require a magical opening and closing. Lighting will need to be especially fleet to move light levels as needed to create the "mood" that Madame Arcati requires.

APPROXIMATE NUMBER OF PROPS 25 PERIOD late 1930's

DIFFICULT OR UNUSUAL PROPS? YES NO (CIRCLE ONE) DESCRIBE:

The above-mentioned consumables will be the most difficult. I will need 5 copies of each item to cover two dress rehearsals and three shows.

WEAPONS OR FIREARMS? HOW MANY _____ DESCRIBE:

COSTUMES (CHECK THOSE NEEDED FOR THIS PLAY OR YOUR CONCEPT OF THE PLAY)

APPROXIMATE NUMBER OF COSTUMES PER CHARACTER 2

HISTORICAL PERIOD late 1930's SEASON English Summer Evening

SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS:

JUSTIFICATION FOR CHOICE OF SCRIPT

HAVE YOU SEEN THIS SCRIPT PRODUCED? YES NO (CIRCLE ONE)

Wichita Community Theatre produced Blithe Spirit several years ago.

HAVE YOU DONE THIS PLAY BEFORE? BRIEFLY DESCRIBE YOUR INVOLVEMENT IN THE PRODUCTION:

built the set for WCT's production, including most of the special effects of items flying from shelves and getting knocked over and the doors opening and closing. I was not involved in other aspects of the production.

WHY SHOULD YOUR ORGANIZATION PRODUCE THIS SCRIPT?

I believe that one of the major concepts of school theatre programs is to stretch the students. The characters in this play are from a completely different era, geography and class of people. The stretch for the actors will be to find these characters. The technicians will be stretched to create a unit set that portrays the characters accurately and that helps move the story forward, to design costumes appropriate to the characters and to find the music and props appropriate to the show.

WHAT ARE THE DRAWBACKS (IF ANY) TO DOING THIS PRODUCTION AT YOUR SCHOOL?

This is a small show, with only seven actors total, and there are 75 students heavily involved in the theatre program at Derby. If I choose to set this play in the late 1930's, I will have some difficulty in costuming this show.

PLEASE GIVE A BRIEF SYNOPSIS OF THE SCRIPT ON A SEPARATE SHEET OF PAPER AND ATTACH.

PLEASE INCLUDE A COPY OF THE SCRIPT FOR THE THESIS COMMITTEE TO REVIEW.

SUBMITTED BY: (Printed Name) Richard Shultz _____ Date Submitted: July 1, 2008

(Signature) _____

Thesis Chair Approval: _____ **Date Approved :** _____

Thesis Committee Members Approval: _____ **Date Approved :** _____

Graduate Coordinator Approval: _____ **Date Approved :** _____

Please note:

This signature has been redacted due to security reasons.

Play
Budget

Derby High School
2009 - 2010

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Play: Blithe Spirit
Production Dates: Nov, 2009
Facility: DHS Black Box
Seating: 120

Ticketing \$5 All Seats

Scripts

	Needed	Cost	Total
Scripts	24	\$7.50	\$180.00
S F/X CD	1	\$60.00	\$60.00
Royalties	6	\$75.00	\$450.00

Costumes

	Needed	Budgeted	Total
Charles	2	\$100.00	\$200.00
Ruth	3	\$100.00	\$300.00
Elvira	1	\$100.00	\$100.00
Mrs. Bradman	2	\$100.00	\$200.00
Dr. Bradman	2	\$100.00	\$200.00
Edith	2	\$100.00	\$200.00
Madame Arcati	1	\$100.00	\$100.00

Costume Total \$1,300.00

Settings & Properties

Sets	1	\$1,000.00	\$1,000.00
Properties	1	\$350.00	\$350.00

Greenware	Runs	Pieces	
	9	20	\$300.00

Total Pieces 180

Grand Total \$3,640.00

Ticketing

Performances	Tickets	Cost	Total
6	120	\$5.00	\$3,600.00



Derby High School
920 N. Rock Road
Derby, KS 67037

To Whom It May Concern:

Richard Shultz has administrative approval to continue with his planned production of Blithe Spirit on October 15 – 24, 2009. I am aware that this production is part of his Master's Thesis Project for Central Washington University, and he has permission to use the facilities at Derby High School to complete this project.

Sincerely,

Dr. Kris Sherwood
Principal
Derby High School.

Please note:

This signature has been redacted due to security reasons.

(316) 228-2555 or visit derbyschools.com or fax (316) 228-2555

Evaluation of Blithe Spirit as a Production Vehicle

The audience for the Derby High School Repertory Theatre class production of Blithe Spirit will consist primarily of student and adult supporters of Derby High School Theatre. The students will be mostly senior high and college age, either current students at Derby High School or recent graduates. The adults will consist mostly of the family of the cast and crew augmented by teachers and community members. Blithe Spirit, with its colorful characters, witty repartee and interesting subject matter will both captivate and entertain audiences. This comedy uses humor to explore its themes and slyly prods the audience members to examine – or reexamine – their place in the world.

The foremost idea in this play is that of the afterlife: where does one go and what happens when one dies? Some of the current ideology in America avers that there is no afterlife. We live, we die. In Blithe Spirit the spirit of Charles' first wife, Elvira, is called back from "the other side" (Coward 30) and takes up residence with Charles and Ruth, his second wife. Death and life-after-death is explored through humor, hijinks, and sophisticated wordplay. It is a subject that is timeless; in fact, it is just as current and appropriate now as when it was first performed in Manchester in June of 1941.

When Blithe Spirit was written, England was in the middle of the London Blitz of World War II. German rockets were falling daily in and around London, and the death toll was severe. Everyone in the country was losing relatives and friends and neighbors to these bombs. Blithe Spirit gave its audiences a chance to make light of death. Today America is embroiled in a war in Iraq and Afghanistan. America's death toll is mounting and audiences are desperate for a diversion. McConnell Air Force Base, located in Wichita, is barely seven miles from Derby High School. Base Housing is part of the Derby school district. This particular audience will all

have known someone who is either currently fighting in this war or has recently returned from an overseas deployment. Derby High School has had several former students killed in the current war. To say this war has directly impacted this community is an understatement. The catharsis of viewing Blithe Spirit and the thinking that the show provides will be welcome.

This production of Blithe Spirit will present several interesting challenges. Dialect, set design, audience proximity and costuming will all combine to push the student/actors and student/crew to their limits.

Blithe Spirit is set in Kent, England. While the year is not specified, it can be inferred from the text as pre World War II. No mention of this war is found in the text but references to music of the late 1930's occur at several places. Therefore, the actors need to develop a believable upper-crust British dialect. The director must function as a dialect coach for the actors prior to and during rehearsals. This process will be aided by the fact that the Repertory Theatre class will be performing this play, and the director (as the teacher of record) will have time during class to teach the dialect. While the entire class will not be acting in Blithe Spirit, all will be involved in producing the play, and all will learn the dialect.

Production of the play will be in the Derby High School Black Box Theatre. The room is approximately thirty six feet deep by fifty feet wide. Audience seating will occupy approximately fourteen feet of this depth by the entire fifty foot width of the room. The backstage area will need to measure at least six feet deep to allow the crew to perform their duties in terms of special effects. This allows sixteen feet for the actors and set pieces: a couch, two chairs, a piano, a table, and a Victrola. This will force the actors to play right up to the audience, frequently within two or three feet. This proximity will challenge the actors to truthfully execute their actions. On the main stage at Derby High School, the audience is at least

fifteen feet from the actors and frequently more. From this distance, the actors' attention has some latitude to wander. This sometimes can lead to stage whispering and small-scale fakery that the actors think slips by the audience. When the audience can literally reach out and touch the actors, this is not an option. The director is excited to challenge the actors, and to reap the benefits of both the immediate and long-term effects it will have on the actors.

At several places in Blithe Spirit, the two sets of double doors will magically open and close. This opening and closing must be done invisibly, to indicate that a spirit has entered or exited the room. Several options exist to make this a reality. A dowel rod attached to the door will serve to initiate the opening of the door. If the door is not set plumb, but rather leans into the room just a bit, gravity will do the rest. Fishing line attached to the door is excellent for pulling the door closed. Another option is to rig a curved armature that will open and close the door from offstage. Further investigation by the director and technical director will be needed to solve this problem.

Another challenge of this play is the finale. Charles tells the two spirits that he is leaving in the last scene, and the two spirits respond by destroying the room. Vases are thrown, books tossed, and every kind of mayhem available occurs. The set will need to have a large number of poke holes built into it, so that the cast and crew can, from backstage, knock things off the shelves and send things flying. The fireplace will hopefully have the capability of shooting sparks, as if someone had kicked the logs. The design will also include a large painting, preferably two feet by three feet, hanging over the fireplace that will spin during the finale.

Costuming the cast will create a new set of challenges. The director and student costumer will be researching 1940's-era English attire. At the beginning of the school year, the student costumer for this show has a class period as an intern, which will allow her to research

the time period under the tutelage of the director. The director's vision for this play also includes costuming the house, box office and concession crewmembers in 1940's-era garb appropriate for their positions.

Set construction for Blithe Spirit will also present numerous challenges. The Black Box Theatre is a classroom. Therefore, the set must allow for classes to continue meeting from the commencement of construction to the conclusion of the play. This will probably mean dismantling the audience seating platforms from the beginning of construction until the week that the play is presented. This will allow enough space for the classes to meet without students sitting on the set during their class.

Meeting the challenges presented by Blithe Spirit will serve to elevate the Theatre Arts Department at Derby High School to a higher level of excellence than previously seen and will leave the department stronger.

Blithe Spirit Concept Statement

Blithe Spirit presents a number of challenges to a director. The usual challenges, which include costuming, set design, lighting design and sound design, will tax any production team. Blithe Spirit adds the elements of sound and lighting special effects, doors opening on their own, books and various items flying off of shelves, accents, music playing and the appearance of the shade of Elvira.

The set design for Blithe Spirit will be the drawing room of a comfortable English country home, circa 1930. A large fireplace dominates one side of the set and its large mantel will offer a launching pad for some flying items. Other set pieces include a set of bookshelves for knickknacks, a sofa, a side table with four chairs, a small piano, a Victrola, and two sets of French-style doors, one upstage and one opposite the fireplace. One set of doors leads to the rest

of the house and the other leads to the garden.

Sound design will include thirty minutes of music (recorded from Michael Smith's Victrola), giving the show an authentic 1930's and 1940's soundscape for pre-show and in-show music. All blackouts and scene changes will include Victrola music, including the song "Always," which is a key to Elvira's appearance. This will need to be practical, utilizing a speaker in the Victrola rather than the general reinforcement speakers for the room.

The lighting design for Blithe Spirit will require a general lighting plot, as well as a number of special effects. During the séance, the lights need to dim, as if Madame Arcati has willed it so. Red and blue filters will be used to heighten the otherworldly aspects of the séance. A tightly focused red light will be aimed on the table to further elevate tension. When Elvira first appears, the entire set will be flooded with an abundance of blue light, which will serve to give Elvira's already light beige makeup a look from beyond the grave. Scenes featuring Charles and Madame Arcati trying to return the spirits to the other side will require more red and orange lighting, further emphasizing the feverish mood. The final scene will take on more of a blue-tinged look, showing the despair that Charles has faced, fading to a clean white as Charles delivers his parting speech, showing the lightness and happiness he has finally found.

The appearance of Elvira presents another challenge. I want to give Elvira a spectral aura without the gray makeup often favored by low-budget zombie movies. Elvira should be a live, viable character. This will be accomplished by costuming the actress in dull but pale colors, so that the character seems to absorb light rather than reflect it. The makeup will have a bleached appearance, unlike the "living" characters, whose makeup will be vibrant.

The special effects will provide a fun creative challenge. The double doors to the garden will swing open seemingly by their own volition on two separate occasions. This will be done

through the use of two actuators and two curved push rods, connected through relays to the light board. This will allow the light board operator to control these doors, and open and close them as needed. The soundboard operator, feeding the various speakers as needed, will control the music from the Victrola. The last scene, when Charles leaves, is one of chaos. Books and knickknacks will be flung off shelves through the use of carefully placed and camouflaged poke holes. I envision a large painting above the fireplace. It will hang on a pin through the center of the painting, thus enabling it to spin on its axis. A vase of flowers will fly across the room, smashing into a wall. This will be done with monofilament line through the set, so that someone backstage simply gives a great tug and away it flies. I want the fireplace to explode, as if kicked. This will be accomplished by the use of several red- and orange-gelled lights in the fireplace, along with silk streamers and a fan blowing “ash” out of the fireplace.

Costuming is probably the most straightforward of the designs. Charles and Dr. Condomine will each wear suits and ties. Charles will need four different suits: two dark, and two light. Dr, Condomine will need two suits: one dark and one black. The maid will need a gray and white servant’s uniform and a large housecoat. Mrs. Condomine will be dressed in the fashion of the 1940’s, the time frame of the play. Ruth will also need 1940’s-era costuming. In addition, she will need a copy of one of her dresses in gray and white, for her reappearance as a ghost. Elvira is going to be dressed in a light-colored dress, cream colored rather than white or gray. This will be a sheath-type dress, with a wrap that prevents her from reaching out and physically touching anyone else.

The driving image of this production will be the Victrola. Through this set piece, the scenes will be linked together with music. Every scene change will include music from the Victrola. Ambient music will be used to set the mood for some scenes, but will not be used

during the action, only during scene changes.

			Rehearsal Time	
Day	Date	Plan		Time
Tuesday	08-Sep-09	Read Act 1, focus on seeing the lines flow		3
Wednesday	09-Sep-09	Read Act 2, focus on seeing the lines flow		2
Thursday	10-Sep-09	Read Act 3, focus on seeing the lines flow		3
Friday	11-Sep-09	Dialect work, specific line readings		3
Monday	14-Sep-09	Act 1, Table work, character building		3
Tuesday	15-Sep-09	Act 2, table work, character building		3
Wednesday	16-Sep-09	Act 3, table work, character building		2
Thursday	17-Sep-09	A 1 blocking		3
Friday	18-Sep-09	A 2 blocking		3
Monday	21-Sep-09	A 3 blocking		3
Tuesday	22-Sep-09	A 1 rehearse and improvise blocking		3
Wednesday	23-Sep-09	A 2 rehearse and improvise blocking		2
Thursday	24-Sep-09	A 3 rehearse and improvise blocking		3
Friday	25-Sep-09	Review Trouble Spots of blocking		3
Monday	28-Sep-09	A 1 rehearse and improvise blocking		3
Tuesday	29-Sep-09	A 2 rehearse and improvise blocking		3
Wednesday	30-Sep-09	A 3 rehearse and improvise blocking		2
Thursday	01-Oct-09	Rehearse and improvise blocking A 1 & A 2		3
Friday	02-Oct-09	Rehearse and improvise blocking A 2 & A 3		3
Monday	05-Oct-09	Solidfy Blocking - Final Blocking - A 1		3
Tuesday	06-Oct-09	Solidfy Blocking - Final Blocking - A 2		3
Wednesday	07-Oct-09	Solidfy Blocking - Final Blocking - A 3		2
Thursday	08-Oct-09	Solidfy Blocking - Final Blocking - Review A 1 & A 2		3
Friday	09-Oct-09	Solidfy Blocking - Final Blocking - Review A 2 & A 3		3
Monday	12-Oct-09	Lock in blocking - Act 1		3
Tuesday	13-Oct-09	Lock in blocking - Act 2		3
Wednesday	14-Oct-09	Lock in blocking - Act 3		2
Thursday	15-Oct-09	Touch up work on blocking - All Acts		3
Friday	16-Oct-09	Touch up work on blocking - All Acts		3
Saturday	17-Oct-09	Cue to Cue - Full Show		8
Monday	19-Oct-09	Full Run (All runs include notes and touchup work)		3
Tuesday	20-Oct-09	Full Run		3
Wednesday	21-Oct-09	Trouble Spots Run		2
Thursday	22-Oct-09	Full Run		3
Friday	23-Oct-09	Full Run		3
Monday	26-Oct-09	Full Run		3
Tuesday	27-Oct-09	Full Run		3
Wednesday	28-Oct-09	Trouble Spots Run		2
Thursday	29-Oct-09	Full Run		3
Friday	30-Oct-09	Full Run		3
Saturday	31-Oct-09			
Monday	02-Nov-09	Dress		3
Tuesday	03-Nov-09	Dress		3
Wednesday	04-Nov-09	Dress		3
Thursday	05-Nov-09	Show		
Friday	06-Nov-09	Show		
Saturday	07-Nov-09	Show		
Sunday	08-Nov-09	Show		
Monday	09-Nov-09			
Tuesday	10-Nov-09	PickUp Rehearsal		3

Production Schedule
Blithe Spirit

Derby High School
2009 - 2010

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Wednesday	11-Nov-09	
Thursday	12-Nov-09	Show
Friday	13-Nov-09	Show
Saturday	14-Nov-09	Show
Sunday	15-Nov-09	

Total Hours 109.0

Total Rehearsal Hours 109.0

Given Circumstances for the play Blithe Spirit

- **Geographical Location**
 - Kent, England. (Coward 1) Noel Coward directed the first production of Blithe Spirit, thus all production notes are his. Further support of the location is given when Dr. Bradman mentions operating on a patient in Canterbury (25).
- **Date: year, season, time of day**
 - 8 o'clock on a summer evening. (1) July 29, 1941. Tuesday.
- **Economic environment**
 - Upper Class. Two live-in servants.
 - A maid:
 - Ruth: "Now go and get the ice."
 - Edith: "Yes'm." (2)
 - And a Cook:
 - Ruth: "...waiting for cook to open the kitchen door." (7)
- **Social environment**
 - Charles and Ruth Condomine are part of the British upper-class. The play opens at "8 o'clock" (1), and dinner is yet to be served. Edith, the maid, is being instructed on how to serve (1-2), while Charles makes a "dry Martini" (2) for himself and Ruth. The Bradmans are coming to dinner and have yet to arrive. When the party moves to dinner, a seating arrangement has been made – "Madame Arcati - you're on Charles's right..." (12) – showing that all details must be carefully considered.

- Religious Environment
 - Charles, Ruth and the Bradmans, being upper-class British Gentry, will be members of the Church of England. Charles is not particularly fond of the vicar and his wife, saying “...(a) they’re dreary, and (b) they probably wouldn’t have approved” [of the séance] (3).
- Previous Action
 - P. 2 Agnes (former housekeeper of Charles and Ruth) leaves their employ to get married.
 - P. 3 Charles gathers ideas for books from people he encounters.
 - P. 5 Ruth was married previously.
 - P. 6, 37 Charles and Elvira were married for five years.
 - P. 6, 45, 46 Elvira died seven years before the play begins.
 - Pp. 7, 9, 10, 11 Arcati rides a bicycle everywhere.
 - P. 7 Mrs. Bradman has seen Madame Arcati in the village.
 - P. 8 Madame Arcati was seen on a knoll on MidSummer’s Eve in Indian clothing.
 - P. 8 Madame Arcati was a professional psychic in London.
 - P. 8 Charles has been to séances before.
 - Pp. 9, 10 Dr. Bradman attended Madam Arcati for influenza the previous winter.
 - P. 9 Arcati writes children stories and biographies
 - P. 10 Arcati is wary of concoctions before “work”

- P. 10 Arcati lived in London. She did not care for London
- P. 13 Arcati had her first trance at age four.
- P. 16 As a girl, Arcati would get sick going into a trance.
- P. 16 Daphne was “rising seven” in 1884 when she died.
- P. 17 “Always” had special meaning to Charles and Elvira.
- P. 29 Charles and Ruth were married five years prior to the seance.
- P. 30 Charles is and was irascible. Charles was frequently unkind to Elvira, even hitting her with a billiard cue while in Cornwall.
- P. 30-31, 46 Charles and Elvira loved each other, rather disfunctionally.
- P. 35 Charles has always been dominated by the women in his life.
- P. 36, 46 Charles view of his marriage to Elvira is that it was “charming.”
- P. 37 Charles has been a rather heavy drinker for most of his life.
- P. 38 Ruth’s first husband died.
- P. 45 Madame Arcati has not had huge success previously, especially in materializations.
- P. 52 Elvira behaved badly while married to Charles.
- P. 53 Charles was passive-aggressive when married to Elvira.

- P. 60 When married to Elvira, Charles would hedge his way out of activities he did not wish to perform.
- P. 67 Elvira: “The silliest thing I ever did in my whole life was to love you [Charles]”
- P. 68 Charles was unfaithful to Elvira during their marriage.
- P. 68 Elvira was unfaithful to Charles during their marriage.

Significance of the Facts in the Total Meaning of the Play

Charles Condomine wants to be seen as a gentlemen and a creative author. The previous action reveals he is neither. For example, he treated Elvira poorly and was frequently unkind to her, once even hitting her with a billard cue (30). When Elvira confronts him with this, he responds that the blow was “very, very gently”(30) dealt. Charles admits to multiple affairs, and in Act III brings them out as an attack on Elvira.

When Ruth and Charles are discussing the coming evening’s entertainment early in the play, the talk turns to Charles’s writing. When asked about the idea for an earlier book, Ruth responds that “(s)uddenly seeing that haggard, raddled woman.” (3) inspired Charles. Charles uses the people around him for his story ideas. He will be using the séance of Madame Arcati as a research opportunity. Charles hoped to use Madam Arcati for “(j)argon, principally [and] a few tricks of the trade,” (8) because he had not been to a séance for years and wanted to refresh his memory. (8) Throughout his life, Charles has used the people around him and their stories for his books, rather than inventing his own characters and stories.

Elvira was also not faithful during her marriage to Charles. She was willing to lie to Charles about her whereabouts to spend time with a lover. (69) She abused Charles

during her life, and resumed the emotional abuse when she returned from the other side, even going so far as to say the “silliest thing I ever did in my whole life was love you.” (67)

Madame Arcati has been a psychic since she was a little girl, experiencing her first trance at age four. (13) She is devoutly convinced of her ability to speak with those who have passed on. This leads to the two biggest missteps, that of bringing Elvira from the other side, and the inability to send the two women back to the other side. Without the first mistake, the cases of mistaken identity in Act I Scene 2 and in Act II would not be possible. Madam Arcati’s inability to send the two women back to the other side results in Charles gaining a semblance of a backbone and walking out on both women at the play’s end .

Analysis of the Dialogue in the Play Blithe Spirit

Choice of Words

The words are proper English as spoken by cultured and cultivated members of British upper-class society. When Charles and Ruth are speaking in Act I Scene 1, Charles says “(i)f this evening’s a success, I shall start on the first draft tomorrow.” (3) “Shall demonstrates a more sophisticated knowledge of the language. Less refined English speakers might have used the word “will” in this instance. Madame Arcati uses the verb “leant” to describe how she has left her bicycle (9), which is a word chiefly used by the British.

The characters use multi-syllabic words on a regular basis. Ruth is “dreadfully ignorant.” (11) Madame Arcati speaks of the “beckoning finger of adventure.” (12) Charles speaks of Ruth being a woman of “perception and understanding.” (32) Elvira

uses “thoroughly worsted” and “seedy grandeur” to describe Charles. (69) These characters do not speak in the simple terms of the uneducated, but rather is the heightened tone that makes Blithe Spirit a comedy of manners as well as a spirited drawing-room farce.

Choice of Phrases and Sentence Structures

Ruth speaks to Edith as if her underling was a slow-witted child. While it becomes apparent that Edith has not been working long for the Condomines, Ruth asks her “did you get the ice out of the trays” and “you filled the little trays up again with water?” (1) Most adults do not need this level of management; therefore showcasing Ruth’s controlling nature. Ruth continues with directions about who will go where after dinner, concluding with the instruction to serve dinner “calmly and methodically.” (1) After dinner, when the séance is about to begin, Ruth instructs Edith to not disturb them, concluding with “Is that clear?” (14) Ruth’s sentences to Edith tend to be short, while she uses much longer sentences with others. She tells Charles that she “resent(s) that air of patronage,...I have behaved well, as you call it, because there was nothing else to do, but I think it only fair to warn you that I offer no guarantee for the future.” (57)

When told that Ruth and Elvira are in a duel for him, Charles’s response is that the women’s behavior is “melodramatic hysteria.” (58) Charles speaks like a poet, with every word carefully chosen for its meaning and sound. Later he tells Ruth that “(j)ealousy causes people to have the most curious delusions.”(58) Ever the lexophile, Charles ends the play by quoting the Bard, “(p)arting is such sweet sorrow.”(86) This is ironic because both plays, Blithe Spirit and Romeo and Juliet, end with two dead lovers.

Madame Arcati tends to begin a line of comment before losing her train of

thought and veering away. This shows a natural vapidness that reveals her to be a dilettante, and is necessary to show both the misconception and misapplication of her psychic powers. An example of Madame Arcati's scattered thinking occurs when the guests are going in to dinner and she asks about the meat:

MADAME ARCATI. No red meat I hope?

RUTH. There's meat, but I don't think it will be very red. Would you rather have an egg or something?

MADAME ARCATI. No, thank you. It's just that I make it a rule never to eat red meat before I work. It sometimes has an odd effect...

CHARLES. What sort of effect?

MADAME ARCATI. Oh, nothing of the least importance. If it isn't very red, it won't matter much. Anyhow, we'll risk it." (12)

This particular line of comment foreshadows Elvira's being called from the other side back to this plane. The risk is realized, the consequence shown, and the importance could not be greater.

Choice of Images

Perhaps the most interesting of the characters is Madame Arcati. When she and Charles are attempting to send the women back to the other side, she says "I might be able to materialize a trumpet if I tried hard enough." (77) What use a trumpet would be during a séance to send a spirit back to the other side is never expounded upon, but rather left as a question for the audience members. She also speaks of riding her bicycle and being "deafened by birdsong." (10) Arcati tells everyone about riding the hills: "just knock again. Down with your head, up with your heart, and your over the top like a flash

and skimming down the other side like a dragon-fly.” (11) These images indicate the fantastical mind of one of the plays most eccentric characters.

Charles tells of an aunt who would “go off into the most elaborate trances after dinner.” (8) He relates the:

occasion when we were all sitting around in the pitch dark with my mother groping her way through Chaminade at the piano, my aunt suddenly gave a shrill scream and said that she saw a small black dog by my chair. Then someone switched on the lights and sure enough there it was (8).

They were not in the dark, but in the pitch dark. Mother was groping through a song, not just playing. Coward uses specific and exacting words to convey his exact concepts, akin to the difference between calling an object blue or royal blue. A scream can have many varieties, but a “shrill scream” is very precise.

Choice of Peculiar Characteristics

Charles is the embodiment of a completely and utterly dominated man. His women control his every move, usually through a mix of passive-aggressive behavior and open abuse. They demand that he follow their every whim, and he complies. The first time that he actually stands up for himself, and does not back down, is when he leaves the house at the end of the play.

Ruth is a thoroughly modern woman who also wants all of the perks of the old system. She wants complete control of the household and it's the staff. She wants her husband to treat her as the weaker member of the marriage, but follow her desires in everything he does. She completely dominates Charles from the beginning of their marriage until he leaves the house at the close of the play. When Charles tries to assert

his independence in seeing Elvira, Ruth asserts that he was drunk, and reels off exactly how much he had to drink the night before. (33) Elvira is also the epitome of the “modern woman.” When Charles would not give her the attention she demanded, she had an affair, going with Captain Bracegirdle to the races. (83) Both women dominated Charles throughout their marriages.

Madame Arcati is the crazy aunt that seems to be present in every family. She is humored, but not respected, tolerated but not particularly welcomed. One never knows what she will say next or what odd, offbeat or silly concept will pop into her head and explode from her mouth. For this reason, every family tries to keep this kind of crazy aunt at a distance. Arcati is proud of her ability to talk to the spirits who have “crossed over” to the other side, and of the manifestations she has conjured. The scientific world is quite at odds with the spirit world, since the former can’t prove or disprove the latter. Thus, the educated Condomines and Bradmans feel free to ridicule Madame Arcati, even going so far as to mock her books as “(t)wo sorts... whimsical children’s stories...and enthusiastic biographies of minor royalties, very sentimental, reverent and extremely funny.”(9)

The Sound of the Dialogue

The dialogue sounds very natural. The sentences tend to be longer, because the main characters are upper class. The individual lines mimic everyday conversation, with most of the dialogue using lines of one or two sentences. Charles and Ruth discuss the apparition of Elvira in the following dialogue from Act II Scene 1:

CHARLES. I was not in the least drunk, Ruth. Something happened to me last night; something very peculiar happened to me.

RUTH. Nonsense.

CHARLES. It isn't nonsense. I know it looks like nonsense now in the clear remorseless light of day, but last night it was far from being nonsense. I honestly had some sort of hallucination.

RUTH. I would really rather not discuss it any further.

CHARLES. But you must discuss it. It's very disturbing.

RUTH. There I agree with you. It showed you up in a most unpleasant light. I find that extremely disturbing.

CHARLES. I swear to you that during the séance I was convinced that I heard Elvira's voice.

RUTH. Nobody else did.

CHARLES. I can't help that. I did.

RUTH. You couldn't have. (34)

This example shows how the dialogue in this play mirrors realistic everyday conversation. In reality, most conversations between two or more people use short lines of dialogue. Many conversations are built around each line of dialogue containing a single thought, or a thought and a supporting comment. When a line of dialogue contains too many thoughts, the audience members must focus on the dialogue just to hear all the lines. Coward set his dialogue to sound very natural to the audience, so that the audience members could focus on the images and concepts inherent in the play rather than just trying to hear all the lines.

Structure of Lines and Speeches

The speeches in Bliethe Spirit reflect everyday conversation. The long speeches

tend to be built around a significant amount to stage business. In Act I Scene 2, Madame Arcati starts the séance, and then spends most of page 19 being the only speaker. She is asking questions, seeking to discover if there is someone from the other side who wants to speak to those at the seance. While this seems a long monologue, it is broken up by significant stage business. The other long speech is the conclusion, starting on page 85. Charles informs the women he is leaving, and why he is leaving. Once again, his speech is interrupted by action, as the two spirits begin wrecking the house. In both cases, the speech is broken by the significant action.

Analysis of the Major Characters in the Play Blithe Spirit

Charles

- Desire
 - Charles's desire is to be best-selling author.
- Will
 - Weak.
- Moral stance
 - Charles has no morals. If it feels good to him, he does it.
- Decorum
 - *We must look proper. We must never be seen to be anything but proper.*
- Summary list of adjectives
 - Weak, whipped, dominated, unwillingly compliant
- Initial Character Mood Intensity at the scene opening expressed as:
 - docile
- Heartbeat
 - Slow, lethargic
- Perspiration: heavy, light etc
 - Act I Scene 1: Light
 - A I S 2: Light, until "My God!" (27): Heavy
 - A II S 1 – A III S 2: Heavy
- Stomach condition
 - Charles becomes uncomfortable at the "My God!" on page 27, and is increasingly more uncomfortable through the rest of the show.

- Muscle tension
 - Initially relaxed; however, once Madame Arcati chooses the song “Always.” Charles does not relax for the rest of the play.
- Breathing, rate, depth
 - Relaxed and normal, until he is under stress. During the séance, Madame Arcati chooses the record “Always” causing his breathing to become much deeper and much faster. When Elvira appears, his breathing becomes very shallow and erratic.

Ruth

- Desire
 - Be a good wife, and preside over a smooth running home.
- Will
 - Passively forceful and domineering
- Moral stance
 - Ruth will get her way regardless of Charles’s wishes or needs.
- Decorum
 - Prim and proper with everyone, including her husband. She is the epitome of appropriate behavior as befits one of her social status.
- Summary list of adjectives
 - Headstrong, willful, controlling
- Initial Character Mood Intensity at the scene opening expressed as:
 - In complete control, both of Edith and of Charles
- Heartbeat

- Smooth and slow. Very intense stress, such as Charles's behavior at the end of Act I, may cause a slight increase in temple.
- Perspiration: heavy, light etc
 - Ruth does not perspire. She will glisten, but only while horseback riding or playing lawn tennis.
- Stomach condition
 - Controlled
- Muscle tension
 - Calm and relaxed veneer, belied by tense muscles of she-who-must-be-obeyed.
- Breathing, rate, depth
 - Shallow and quick, always ready to make demands or deliver commands.

Elvira

- Desire
 - Be with her former husband.
- Will
 - Intensely strong, unbending, unyielding.
- Moral stance
 - What morals? *If I want to do it, I will.*
- Decorum
 - When alive, she appeared proper. Now that she is not, she doesn't care what others think of her.
- Summary list of adjectives
 - Deceitful, demanding, forward, pushy

- Initial Character Mood Intensity at the scene opening expressed as:
 - Strong willed, haughty, aggressive, assertive, smug
- Heartbeat
 - Slow and controlled
- Perspiration: heavy, light etc
 - She is a lady. She does not perspire. Ever.
- Stomach condition
- Muscle tension
 - Tense, worried
- Breathing, rate, depth
 - Slow and shallow

Madame Arcati

- Desire
 - To bridge the gap between the living and the “other side.”
- Will
 - Strong, flexible, willowy
- Moral stance
 - Superior to most, because of her ability to communicate with “the other side.”
- Decorum
 - Extremely proper, polite to a fault, eccentric
- Summary list of adjectives
 - Eccentric, odd, peculiar, deluded
- Initial Character Mood Intensity at the scene opening expressed as:

- Happy to be of service
- Heartbeat
 - Slow and pronounced
- Perspiration: heavy, light etc
 - Heavy, with the knowledge of the “other side”
- Stomach condition
 - Flat and empty, until a trance
- Muscle tension
 - Relaxed, but very tense as a séance approaches
- Breathing, rate, depth
 - Slow, deep, controlled

Edith

- Desire
 - To please Sir and Madam
- Will
 - Weak, malleable
- Moral stance
 - The Madam and Sir are always correct. Do exactly as they say.
- Decorum
 - Pleasant to everyone, obsequious to the Sir and Madam
- Summary list of adjectives
 - Quiet, servile, pliable, obedient, stressed
- Initial Character Mood Intensity at the scene opening expressed as:

- Subservient
- Heartbeat
 - Rapid!
- Perspiration: heavy, light etc
 - Heavy, due to intense rushing about
- Stomach condition
 - Tense, queasy
- Muscle tension
 - Tense, always ready to jump into action when Madame calls
- Breathing, rate, depth
 - Rapid, deep breaths, needed to maintain the breakneck pace she sets for herself

Polar Attitudes of the Major Characters

- Charles: I must submit to the women to get my way. (Beginning)
I can stand on my own. (End)
- Ruth: Elvira was a poor lost soul who clung to Charles. (Beginning)
Charles is a fiend who treats all women badly. (End)
- Elvira: I am finally reunited with my love, Charles. (Beginning)
The brute mistreated me throughout our marriage. (End)
- Madame Arcati: I see the metaphysical world clearly. (Beginning)
I have no real clue how the metaphysical world works. (End)
- Edith: I want to please Mistress and Master. (Beginning)
I am confused. What have I done to displease Master? (End)

Ideas of the Play and Main Idea of Blithe Spirit

For centuries, mankind has asked numerous questions about death. What happens when we die? Can we return to this plane from whatever astral plane to which we have been transported? If a wife dies, the husband remarries, and the wife returns in spirit form, how is she to be addressed? Husband and ex-wife? Widower and former wife? Would this man not be guilty of bigamy? Bliethe Spirit seeks to actively ponder these questions in a comedic manner.

The play centers on Charles Condomine, a writer, and his second wife Ruth. When the slightly off-kilter medium Madame Arcati performs a séance at the Condomine home, the shade of Elvira, Charles's first (and dead) wife appears. Unfortunately, Elvira can't provide many details about the "other side." She remembers playing backgammon with Genghis Khan, and remembers a child informing her that Charles wanted her. The next thing she knows, is that she is back in the house she and Charles shared, and which Charles now shares with Ruth.

In 1941 England, people were dying daily. Germany was trying to bomb England into submission, and it wasn't working. Churchill had said that the English people would fight, on the beaches and in the streets, and that surrender was not an option. The death toll was rising, and with it the question, where do we go when we die?

Coward's play prods the audience to ponder this question and then offers them a silly answer. Elvira describes what she was doing in the hereafter as playing backgammon. So, when we die, we go play board games for eternity? Church teaching does not include a celestial gaming parlor. The subtitle of the play, "an improbable farce in three acts," alludes to Coward's attitude towards this question.

Coward answers the second question, can we return to this plane, with the appearance of Elvira. However, she can't remember how this was accomplished. One moment she is at the backgammon board, and the next she is back in the living-room of her former house. This

crossing-back cannot be scientifically proven, since the event cannot be replicated. Hence, the audience is forced to ponder whether a crossing could happen, but aren't given any real answer.

How would one refer to Charles and Elvira? Since Elvira came back, is Charles still a widower? Since widower refers to the wife dying, does that change when the wife returns from the other side? Are they still married? Traditional wedding vows contain the phrase "til death do us part." This would seem to indicate that once Elvira died, her marriage to Charles was dissolved. Coward seems to ask: What if the marriage was not dissolved? Would Charles not be married to two women at the same time? Comedy is often born from the absurd, and this is certainly absurd.

Charles suddenly finds himself with two women, one who was married to him and one who is married to him. How does one deal with one visible wife and one invisible ex-wife? The combination of the two women, one visible to all and one visible only to Charles, presents great comic possibilities. Ruth misinterprets Charles, thinking his answers to Elvira are directed at her. The audience is left laughing at the irritation of Ruth and the complete discomfort of Charles.

Coward actually does provide possible answers regarding the afterlife, unlikely though there are. The audience members have the chance to ponder these answers while laughing at the chaos and confusion of the characters and the confusion. This would have been a welcome respite for audiences in 1941 England, at the height of the London Blitz, and can be just as pertinent to today's audience.

Summary of Previous Reviews of Blithe Spirit

Blithe Spirit has been played many times through the years, including four runs on Broadway. The Oak Park Festival Theatre, in Oak Park, Illinois, produced the show as part of

their 2008 season. The Festival website included several reviews from area critics. Catey Sullivan, writing for Oak Leaves, says the production ranges from “fizzy to flat.” She denounces some overacting, but she praises the play itself, calling it “brilliant,” and says that “Coward’s genius for sardonic, subversive turns of phrase gleam throughout.” When Elvira shows up “in all her ghostly glory, the moment is a terrific merger of just the right lighting, sound, costuming, makeup and most importantly – actor.” (Sullivan) Ms. Sullivan apparently enjoyed the show.

Ed Vincent, of the Oak Park Journal, also wrote of his experience with this production. His first sentence is “Highly recommended for all.” He writes of Edith, the maid, evolving in her movements from “new born impala” to “stilt walking hominid.” Madame Arcati reminded Mr. Vincent of a “wildly expressive art student from college bound for the unknown reaches of reality.” Mr. Vincent also writes that the “intimacy and settings are ideal for this small gathered audience, reminiscent of a rich Count entertaining his guests at the chateau.” (Vincent) This is the atmosphere that Derby High School is attempting to create, by playing Blithe Spirit in its Black Box Theatre.

The recent run of Blithe Spirit on Broadway, at the Shubert Theatre (IMDB) was reviewed by Harry Huan. Mr. Huan praised the show, the producers, the director, and the designers. Nowhere in his review is a negative brought forth. That honor was left to Scott Brown, writing the theatre review for New York Magazine. Mr. Brown asks if Blithe Spirit has “an urgent reason to rouse its ectoplasm and haunt again? . . . Blakemore’s answer is a resounding ‘kind of.’” (Brown) He is particularly unhappy with the performance of Rupert Everett, who plays Charles Condomine. Charles, Brown writes, has “chemistry only with himself, and it’s hard to see why anyone, living or dead, would fight for him.” Mr. Brown ends

his review with this gem: "This production has the same problem Only the ladies keep the night alive." This is ironic since the actresses were playing dead women.

Noel Pierce Coward

(16 December 1899 – 26 March 1973)

Noel Coward was born just before Christmas in 1899. The date of his birth inspired his name. His parents considered him a gift, as they had lost their first son the previous year. Noel was the child of a piano tuner and the family lived just above the poverty line. This was to be pivotal throughout Noel's life.

At the age of ten, Coward auditioned and won a part in a play called The Goldfish. While his mother played "Nearer My God To Thee" on a piano, Coward tap-danced violently and won the part. By fifteen, Coward had made his stage debut, and at twenty was a produced playwright. By the time of his death, he had written: sixty produced plays, more than three hundred songs, and a long list of short stories and screenplays. Coward's writing career rarely faltered, in part because he wrote plays with the leading man perfectly suited to his favorite actor: himself. Leading parts in Blithe Spirit (Charles), Design for Living (Leo), and Private Lives (Elyot) were all masterfully played by the playwright. His characters lacked any internal filter: what they thought came straight out of their mouths. The characters in Coward's plays were the upper class, rich and definitely sophisticated. His plays involved their foibles and the public ate it up. The combination made Coward a wealthy man.

Coward freely admitted he was a gifted actor. He is quoted as saying "I'm an enormously talented man, and there's no use pretending that I'm not." When Dick Cavett interviewed him in 1970, Cavett asked "You're, you...what is the word when one has such terrific, prolific qualities?" Coward replied "Talent." (Kenrick) Coward made his first stage

appearances at age seven. He loved to sing and dance, and “threw frightful tantrums if he was not summoned to perform for guests.” (Kenrick) From I Leave It To You in 1920 through a role in the 1968 movie The Italian Job Coward played parts large and small, but most of his roles were larger than life.

Coward’s parents struggled to support the family. His father was a failure at selling pianos, and eventually gave up trying, preferring to allow his wife to support them. She turned their home into a boarding house in 1918, and worked tirelessly to support a husband and a struggling-artist son. Coward sold short stories to help with finances. England was a very class-conscious society during this time, and the elite would snub any actor born poor. Coward rose above this through determination and charm. During World War I, Coward became friends with artist Philip Streatfield, who asked wealthy socialite Astley Cooper to help Coward. Coward became a frequent guest at her estate, and thrived in the atmosphere of servants and formal meals. He immortalized this first taste of elegance in many of his comedies. His early financial struggles pushed him to work harder to earn more. As a result, he owned homes in England and Jamaica. (Kenrick)

Coward maintained a workaholic pace throughout his life. During the run of The Constant Nymph in 1926, he collapsed on stage from overwork. His doctors insisted on an extended vacation, which took Coward to Hawaii. He spent the rest of his life traveling between Jamaica, New York and London, where he wrote and performed. Early in the morning of March 26, 1973, Coward suffered a stroke at his home in Jamaica. He was found by a servant on the bathroom floor and helped into bed. Coward insisted that his friends not be awoken, and he slipped away to the Other Side just before dawn.

Coward did not listen to the critics, and frequently verbally abused them. Two quotes

come readily to mind: “I have always been fond of them . . . I think it is so frightfully clever of them to go night after night to the theatre and know so little about it.” And this comparison: “Criticism and Bolshevism have one thing in common. They both seek to pull down that which they could never build.” (Kenrick)

The information for this section came from two sources. The website Musicals101.com featured a wonderful section titled “Noel Coward 101” that contained his life, his work and his quotes. The website Broadway.com contained a review of [Blithe Spirit](#) on Broadway that included a wonderful history of the playwright. I am indebted to both for their insights.

Learning Goals and Student Outcomes

Theatre, by its very nature, is creative and exploratory. Modern theatre is also collaborative, with each participant adding his or her own expertise and creativity to the troupe. This structure allows, and even forces the participants, to learn about themselves and the world around them in ways that would not otherwise be seen. My desire for my students, both cast and crew of [Blithe Spirit](#), is to expand their skill set in both their craft and their life. Upon referencing the CWU website thesis examples, I concluded that the student will:

- Understand the history of the world at the time the play was written and the time the play was set.
- Gain greater insight into black comedy and its cathartic effect on audience members during difficult times.
- Build upon existing skills in both acting and technical areas.
- Effectively use voice and body to create realistic and believable characters. This will include: identifying, understanding, and pursuing the characters objectives.
- Study and understand the script to create dynamic stage pictures that further the

story.

- Understand the need and the process of taking risks and making choices in character and performance.
- Further the students understanding of the power of movement. This will include: focal points, gestures, levels, and the disparity between staged and organic movement.
- Understand the place of characters in the overall mosaic of the play and the through-line of the play.
- Explore and enhance technical skills necessary to produce a play.
- Use lighting, sound, and physical effects to affect the atmosphere in the performance space.
- Identify and explore metaphors and images from the script that further the director's concept.
- Learn to formulate, provide and receive positive, constructive feedback on personal and ensemble performance.
- Extend their ability to work in small, collaborative groups.
- Extend personal and professional relationships with fellow cast and crew members.
- Extend leadership skills within the ensemble.
- Rediscover the joy, satisfaction, and excitement that arise when creating a new product.
- Learn to continually strive for excellence in rehearsal and in performance.
- Understand the challenges of truthful and honest character movement in a small

venue.

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Production Journal for Blithe Spirit

August 31, 2009

We discussed the casting in Repertory Theatre class today. The class was overall pleased with their parts. The cast is:

Role	Cast A	Cast B
Edith	Kimmy Deaver	Sarah Packard
Ruth	Jami Mumma	Ashley Lewis
Charles	Grady Hartman	Evan Jewell
Dr. Bradman	Jacob Ponte	Jordan Hill
Mrs. Bradman	Ciera Dockter	Misba Khan
Madam Arcati	Myriah Smith	Miranda Gibfried
Elvira	Lisa Prater	Lea Herdler

The double casting is not my idea of fun. I am going to have a hard enough time getting this show together due to a bit of a restriction on rehearsal time, and I am not looking forward to working with two casts. On the other hand, and we discussed this in class, I want the pairs of actors on a particular part to work together to research and prepare the part. They can help each other learn the part. If they do this, we should have a great show.

After school, cast A read through Act I. I am making a list of words they are mis-pronouncing. Amazing how long a cold read can take.

September 1, 2009

Cast A read Act II and Act III Scene 1 with Cast B following along. We will finish the Act III tomorrow with Cast A, and then read the entire thing with Cast B.

September 2, 2009

Cast A finished Act II, and Cast B started Act I. Managed to get through Act I Scene 2 today. I definitely have some non-readers in this cast. Lots of tripping on words and lines. Can't listen for flow and tempo yet.

September 3, 2009

Cast B read from Act II to the end. I was not there due to a conflict. My assistant, Tom Sherow, sat with them.

September 8, 2009

More table work. We started through the play listening to the lines and words. We were looking for the flow, tempo and rhythm. Managed to get through Act I, which surprised me. This was not a long rehearsal, and I thought the kids did a great job of listening and commenting. They are understanding the concept of tempo from class, and applying it here. Can't wait to see

tomorrow.

September 9, 2009

Act II, with the same listening to the tempo and the flow.

September 10, 2009

Wrap up the script listening for tempo and flow. When we finished, we spent a few minutes talking about music and its relationship to the tempo and rhythm of the words. They were to begin looking for a song for their character.

September 14, 2009

This was an interesting day. We discussed the characters in more depth, with everyone sharing how they saw different characters, not just their own. Most of them had their song, so we listened. Great songs, and I think they have grasped how the character needs to move. We will see.

September 15, 2009

We spent a bunch of time today on two main concepts: interruptions and pronunciations. We worked on finishing the sentences that were to be interrupted. When Ruth is telling everyone the dinner seating arrangements on p. 12, she really must continue talking until the lights are fading out or the entire group has left the stage. So we figured out the rest of the seating chart, so she would know what she had to say.

Pronouncing words correctly is a must for Coward. We had a rather long list, with everything from grandeur to jargon that was being butchered. I have kept this list for future reference. By the end of the day, I think we had all the words figured out and pronounced correctly.

September 16, 2009

Jordan quit the show today. I knew he was struggling, trying to balance school, the show and a job. OK, maybe I am glad I double cast this thing. Jake has committed to both weekends, so we have a Dr. Bradman all six nights.

We spent today wrapping the discussion on characters, and even got up and started moving. The set is not finished, but enough is there to give them the idea, and they need to start moving. I haven't really seen any memorization yet, so maybe movement will help. We improvised today, and just tried to find something that felt ok.

September 17, 2009

Worked our way through Act I today, playing with movement. Michael and Nike really showed me the importance of "playing" when you are on stage with a character, and we did just that.

to 3 and a half. Right where it has to be.

October 27, 2009

Hey, they took my notes and put them into the show! That's nice to see! This thing is going to work!

October 28, 2009

Cast B just ran the show in 3 hours. Cool! Myriah and Miranda have managed to make one character appear two completely different ways. Unfortunately, the other actors have not taken advantage of the opportunity to work together.

October 29, 2009

Cast B ran the full show from 12:30 to 3:30, and then Cast A came in and ran the full show from 5:00 to 8:30. My stage manager ran both rehearsals, since I had to be out in the commons at Parent Teacher Conferences. I would have preferred to be in rehearsal. Cheyenne (my stage manager) told me both rehearsals went very well, effects and all.

November 2, 2009

Dress Rehearsal! How can effects that have worked great for two weeks, and techies who have made them work great, suddenly malfunction? I have a big list of notes for everyone, and I think I will have my lab aide type them. Hope she can read my writing.

November 3, 2009

Ok, that I am proud of! I am willing to let the public see this show. The kids did a great job. Touchups should be fast.

November 4, 2009

We spent about 90 minutes touching up some minor stuff. We are ready!

November 9, 2009

Cast B Dress Rehearsal. When half your main characters stay the same, this is easy. Charles and Ruth behaved as if this was simply an extension of last weekend. They are a bit more comfortable with each other and with their roles, and it carries over to the rest of the cast.

November 10, 2009

This is the last rehearsal for Blithe Spirit. The entire cast and crew was a bit down at the beginning, but picked up when the show started.

**CENTRAL WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY
THEATRE ARTS GRADUATE PROGRAM**

Shultz 78

THESIS PROJECT/ PRODUCTION PERFORMANCE EVALUATION

STUDENT-

Richard Schultz

ID#-

UNDER CONSIDERATION IS DIRECTION OF: **Blythe Spirit**

EVALUATOR'S NAME:

Scott Robinson

TITLE: Professor

PLACE OF PERFORMANCE:

Derby High School

DATE OF VIEWING:

Nov 13, 2009

DESCRIPTION OF PERFORMANCE VENUE:

DESCRIPTION OF CONCEPT:

DESCRIPTION OF THE ACTUAL PRODUCTION DIRECTION AND/OR REALIZED DESIGN OF SETS, PROPS, COSTUMES, LIGHTING, SOUND:

Over all the design elements worked for the production but several were very strange choices for the period. It was interesting that Charles used a cell phone. Equally out of place were the 1970's looking record albums. Another small issue were the linking-in of the book cases. Real bookcases had wood texture behind the painted books they did not. This accentuated the artificialness of the painted books and did not lend to the production's concept nor did it allow the audience to understand the social status of the home owner. This is a heavy prop show and it seemed the actors were not comfortable with using the props. If your script says they have snapdragons they should hold snapdragons not some other kind of flower.

Lighting had some harsh choices. Several times the light intensity was brought up to abruptly that it "burn my retinas." In the second act they had some issues a light continued to flash on the garden door—Elvira?... Or a new spirit in the theatrical light fixture? It is unclear.

Costumes were appropriate yet you must remember that this is a well-to-do respected citizen. In the second act he appeared to have been sleeping in his suit. Small details should be considered. Hats for men coming from outside, not using white socks on Charles with a dark suit.

Music was very appropriate and in sync with the established period. I was expecting "Always" to come back as a book end to the production but missed that.

HOW DID THE PRODUCTION DIRECTION OR DESIGN IMPLEMENT THE IDEAS EXPRESSED IN THE CONCEPT STATEMENT?

The concept state focuses primarily on scenic elements of the play. The elements addressed in the concept did reflect in the production.

APPROPRIATENESS OF CHOICE OF SCRIPT FOR ABILITIES OF PERFORMERS, AUDIENCE, VENUE, AND/OR ACADEMIC SETTING?

I believe this was an excellent production for the space, community, and talent level of the performers. I had expected more technically simple because of the focus and expertise demonstrated in classroom environment by the director.

ADDRESS THE FOLLOWING IF APPLICABLE: CLEAR DELINEATION OF UNITS OF ACTION, MOTIVATED BLOCKING, VISUALLY INTERESTING COMPOSITION, VISUAL EXPRESSION OF METAPHOR, USE OF PICTURIZATION IN STORYTELLING, CLEAR AND BELIEVABLE CHARACTERIZATION, ADEQUATE USE OF BODY AND VOICE, UNITY OF PRODUCTION ELEMENTS, CREATIVE PROBLEM SOLVING.

Over all blocking was difficult. Semicircle pictures appeared on a regular basis in the first act. Much of this was caused by a lack of anything pinning the corners of the set. There really was nowhere to actors to go to create any picturization opportunities. This complicated the plot as it is difficult to believe Charles does not actually see Elvira.

Third act blocking was better.

Ruth and Charles had a hard time connecting even looking at each other. They also needed to use the obstacles in the home to help build the argument and conflict of the plot. In Act II a significant amount of action happened so far up stage the audience felt alienated which causes us to loss interest in what Charles is facing

Motivated action is often lost. Charles at one point states: "We must be going," and neglects to even move toward the door. Does he want to go or not? Actions need to have something to do with the dialogue; that is missing.

Diction was a problem that needed addressing throughout.

Pacing was an issue throughout which was accentuated in Act III change with every actor checking every prop over and over while we sat to watch.

WITHIN THE CONFINES OF THIS PARTICULAR PERFORMANCE VENUE, WAS THIS PRODUCTION SATISFACTORY OR UNSATISFACTORY?

Satisfactory

Final Evaluation of Blithe Spirit

The production of Blithe Spirit at Derby High School brought several challenges to the cast and crew. The students at Derby High School had never performed in such a small venue, nor had they focused so much on the text of a play. The students at DHS had also never focused on the historical period.

Setting a play in 1941 England posed several challenges. The students needed to understand the time period. England was in the middle of the London Blitz, and almost everyone in the first audiences would have lost someone they knew to the bombing. Most of the cast and crew have seen this during the current conflicts overseas. The cast relished the style of comedy of Blithe Spirit, and enjoyed playing the characters. They understood that black comedy can have a very cathartic effect of the audience, and held back to allow the comedy to show. The actors did an excellent job of seeing that the comedy came not from funny lines or silly movements but from the situation and the approach the character has to that situation. The actors played the characters honestly, and the situation truthfully, and allowed the laughs to come naturally. A local high school performed Blithe Spirit at the same time as Derby High School, and several of my cast members went to see a performance. This school chose to play the lines for laughs instead of for honesty, and the laughter was much less than ours. My students were very happy with our choice of approach.

Performing in the Black Box at Derby High School puts the actors virtually in the lap of the audience. When the actors realized how close the audience would be great consternation showed on their faces. Having an audience literally close enough to touch the actors is forced the actors to play every motion and emotion truthfully. The actors responded to this challenge, and cut the fakery from their work. I wanted this challenge for this group of actors, not only

because I thought they could rise to the challenge but because the acting corps at Derby High School needed to see actors that played a part honestly and fully. The actors found the characters objectives through the script, and brought those objectives to light through the movement they chose for the character. I was very pleased with the complete characters that each actor developed.

I wanted the actors that were portraying a particular character to work together to develop that character. This is exactly how Myriah and Miranda developed Madam Arcati. These two young ladies spent countless hours throughout the rehearsal process collaborating on the character. Each would carefully observe how the other was playing a particular section of the script, and give notes about the choices that were made. This led to the two women each developing their own unique character, but the two portrayals each were based in the script. I am very proud of the work these two women put into their character. Unfortunately, the other actors did not collaborate this closely. The two women playing Elvira did not talk to each other about the character, nor did the two women playing Mrs. Bradman. Grady and Jake, Charles and Dr. Bradman, respectively, worked closely with each other to produce movement that was believable as two upper class members of society. With the exception of the blasted white socks Grady wore, I was pleased with his work.

The set was designed to put the audience inside the drawing room at the Condomine's home. The colors were chosen to be neutral, rather than bright, reflecting the Condomine's place in society. I was pleased with the work our student artists did in creating a fireplace, bookshelves (and books) and other parts of the set. Unfortunately time was fleeting, and we were unable to texture the walls. While discussing the show with Scott Robinson, he asked why the space behind the books was painted as wall, not wood grained. I had not even seen that

feature until Scott mentioned it. I would have liked to have wooden chairs around the table, and even a real pouf, but finances prevented it. A significant budget cut this school year has made it necessary to keep expenditures as low as possible, and the chairs was an obvious cut.

The special effect proved a big challenge for one of the parents. Steve, the father of a cast member, took on the task of special effects. The candle flying, the pictures and the fireplace were his design and construction. The pictures were all in our stock at Derby High School, and minor modifications allowed them to be used for this show. The flying candle was an especially ingenious rig, using two small fishing poles to control the flying.

Lighting was challenging in this space. The grid is hung at 13 feet, which makes a 45-degree angle on lights difficult to achieve. I was not particularly happy with the backlighting, since I really could not keep it out of the eyes of the audience. I believe that barndoors for the Fresnels would have made this possible, and I have made obtaining some a priority for next school year. Mr. Robinson commented on the speed of the up fade from blackout after his visit. After the first weekend, I wanted a faster up fade time than the five seconds that is default time on the light board. I instructed the light board operator in how to change this, and asked her to change the times following a blackout. I thought I communicated a three second time but I apparently did not. This was fixed for the following night. I was very happy with the lighting effects on the fadeout at the end of Act I when Charles is lying on the couch and Elvira is playing with his hair. The audience was given only that picture by using a single instrument on that corner of the couch with the rest of the stage in darkness. I am also pleased with the effect achieved for the séance. Using a single ellipsoidal with a very dark blue gel aimed straight down upon the table and no other lights on stage gave a very ethereal look to the scene while still allowing the audience to see the action.

The cast and crew of Blithe Spirit enjoyed the process of creating this show. The students saw how with risks come rewards both internally and externally. Early in the rehearsal period Grady was struggling with the number of lines he had to learn. By the performance, he had learned them all, and had moved past the lines into the character. He received praise from audience members and cast members alike for his portrayal and characterization of Charles. Each night of performance the excitement backstage was palpable. The entire group was happy with the show, and looked forward to going out and performing again.

I was pleased with the performance of Blithe Spirit. The cast and crew did an excellent job, and I consider the show a great success. There are some changes I will make in future productions. First and foremost is rehearsal time. I scheduled our rehearsals, and then saw conflicts cut time from that schedule. Everything from Homecoming to Parent Teacher Conferences cuts into the time available to rehearse. It amazes me the amount of time that gets lost to outside interruptions. At the same time, eight weeks of rehearsal is about all you can realistically expect to get at Derby High School. I would also like to improve the costuming for our shows. I need to improve my work designing costumes, so that the costumer can focus on producing and procuring the needed costumes.

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Appendix A

The Derby High School Production of Blithe Spirit took place over two weekends, November 5-7 and November 12 – 14, 2010. Six different tickets were required, and are attached to this page. I did not reserve seats, because the Derby High School Black Box Theatre only seats 90, and every seat is very close to the action.

No Reserved Seating

DERBY HIGH SCHOOL
PERFORMING ARTS
in cooperation with
SAMUEL FRENCH
Proudly Presents

**Blithe
Spirit**
BY NOEL COWARD

AN IMPROBABLE
FARCE IN THREE ACTS

THURSDAY
NOVEMBER 5, 2009
7:30 PM

All Tickets \$5.00

No Reserved Seating

DERBY HIGH SCHOOL
PERFORMING ARTS
in cooperation with
SAMUEL FRENCH
Proudly Presents

**Blithe
Spirit**
BY NOEL COWARD

AN IMPROBABLE
FARCE IN THREE ACTS

FRIDAY
NOVEMBER 6, 2009
7:30 PM

All Tickets \$5.00

No Reserved Seating

DERBY HIGH SCHOOL
PERFORMING ARTS
in cooperation with
SAMUEL FRENCH
Proudly Presents

**Blithe
Spirit**
BY NOEL COWARD

AN IMPROBABLE
FARCE IN THREE ACTS

SATURDAY
NOVEMBER 7, 2009
7:30 PM

All Tickets \$5.00

No Reserved Seating

DERBY HIGH SCHOOL
PERFORMING ARTS
in cooperation with
SAMUEL FRENCH
Proudly Presents

**Blithe
Spirit**
BY NOEL COWARD

AN IMPROBABLE
FARCE IN THREE ACTS

THURSDAY
NOVEMBER 12, 2009
7:30 PM

All Tickets \$5.00

No Reserved Seating

DERBY HIGH SCHOOL
PERFORMING ARTS
in cooperation with
SAMUEL FRENCH
Proudly Presents

**Blithe
Spirit**
BY NOEL COWARD

AN IMPROBABLE
FARCE IN THREE ACTS

FRIDAY
NOVEMBER 13, 2009
7:30 PM

All Tickets \$5.00

No Reserved Seating

DERBY HIGH SCHOOL
PERFORMING ARTS
in cooperation with
SAMUEL FRENCH
Proudly Presents

**Blithe
Spirit**
BY NOEL COWARD

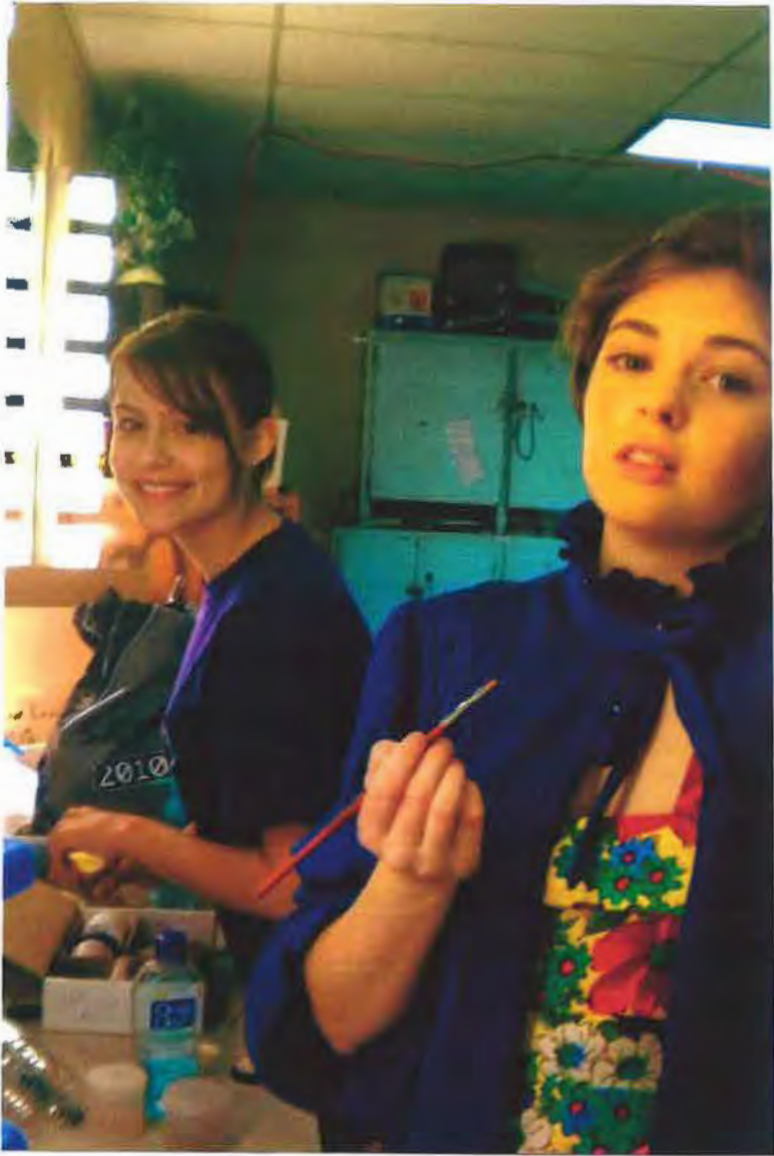
AN IMPROBABLE
FARCE IN THREE ACTS

SATURDAY
NOVEMBER 14, 2009
7:30 PM

All Tickets \$5.00

The following pages contain pictures from the Derby High School production of Blithe Spirit, November 5th, 6th, 7th, 12th, 13th, and 14th, 2009.

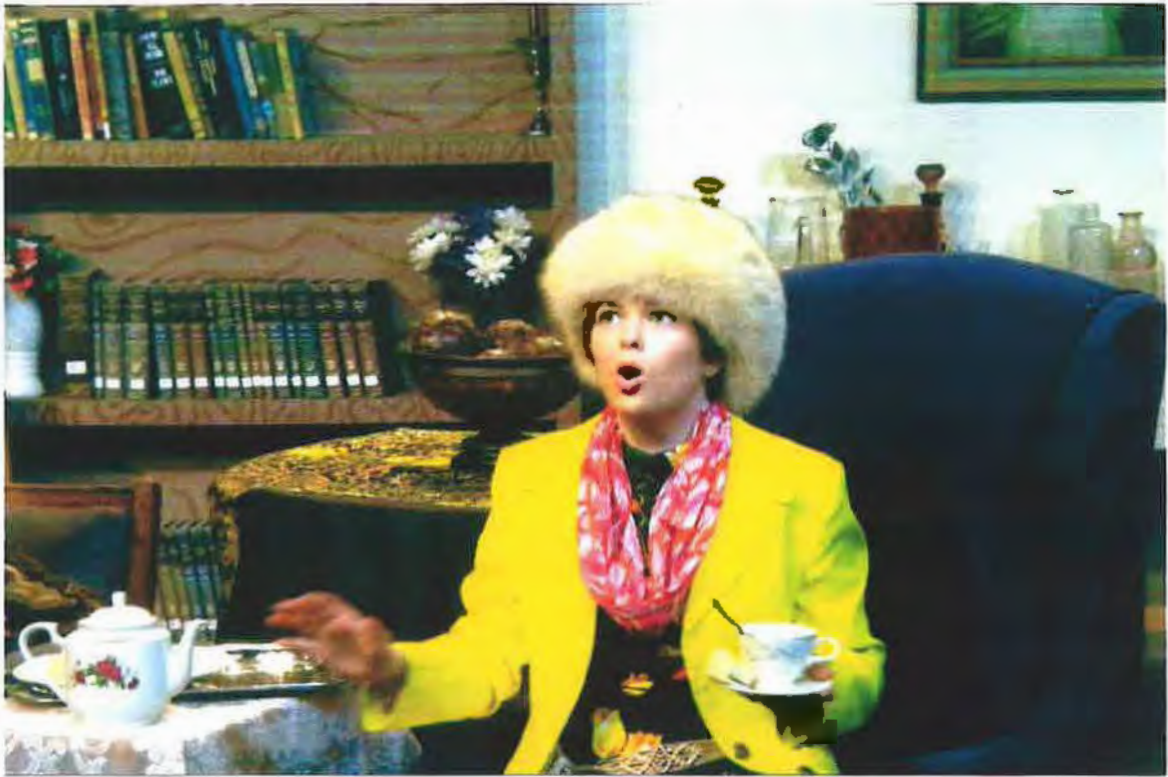












Upcoming Events

RENNASAINCE FEAST

DECEMBER 11TH - ADVANCE TICKETS ONLY

WIZARD OF OZ

MARCH 4TH, 5TH & 6TH

NIGHT OF THEATRE

A NIGHT OF STUDENT-DIRECTED ONE ACTS

APRIL 15TH



ACT WELL YOUR PART, THERE ALL HONOR LIES.

(C) 2009 DERBY HIGH SCHOOL PERFORMING ARTS

Derby High School Performing Arts
produced by special arrangement with
Samuel French Inc.
Proudly Presents



By Noel Coward

*Directed By
Richard Shultz*

November 12th, 13th & 14th
Derby High School Black Box Theatre

Derby High School Performing Arts
produced with special arrangements by
Samuel French Inc.
Proudly Presents



Director
Richard Shultz

Technical Director
Tom Sherow

November 12th, 13th & 14th
Derby High School Black Box Theatre

The Cast

Edith.....*Sarah Packard*

Ruth.....*Jami Mumma*

Charles.....*Grady Hartman*

Dr. Bradman.....*Jacob Ponte*

Mrs. Bradman.....*Misba Khan*

Madame Arcati.....*Miranda Gibfried*

Elvira.....*Lea Herdler*

Synopsis of Scenes

Act I

Scene 1 - Before dinner on a summer evening

Scene 2 - After Dinner

Act II

Scene 1 - The next morning.

Scene 2 - Late the following afternoon

Scene 3 - Early evening, a few days later.

Act III

Scene 1 - After dinner, a few days later.

Scene 2 - Several hours later.

Technical Crews

Director

Mr. Richard Shultz

Technical Director

Mr. Tom Sherow

Production Stage Managers

Cheyenne Queen

DeLynn Camp

Stage Crew

Michael Hammond

Avery Yoos

James Kovaleski

Alison Byrne

Michelle Ngo

Chauncey Fuller

Lights Crewhead

Keide Eller

Sound Crewhead

James Dillard

Publicity Crewhead

Ciera Dockter

Publicity Crew

Jami Mumma

Kimberley Deaver

T-Shirt Design

Lisa Prater

Props Crewhead

Jami Mumma

Props Crew

Kimberley Deaver

Jordan Hill

Costume Crewhead

Myriah Smith

Hair Design

Kimberley Deaver

Makeup Crewheads

Lisa Prater & Lea Herdler

House Crewheads

Julie Ngo & Naci Peters

House Crew

Zach Zuber

Sara Toney

Abbey Cox

Program

Lisa Prater & Kimberley Deaver

A note from our Director...

As many of you know, this show is the Thesis for the Master of Arts in Theatre Production that I have been working on at Central Washington University. I have been researching and planning this show over the last two years, and am proud of what has been created here at DHS. Mr. Scott Robinson, Theatre Department chair at CWU, will be here to observe my show. I will be defending my Thesis this spring.

As with any production, there are many thanks that need to be made. To the cast and crew: Thank you for putting your time and heart and soul into creating this living organism called theatre. Seniors Grady, Jami, Lisa, Myriah, Jake, Miranda and Misba: I have enjoyed the time we have worked together, and I look forward to the rest of this year. You have all grown tremendously, and worked diligently. To the rest of the cast: Lea, Sarah, Kimmy and Ciera, thank you for the work and time you have given. Cheyenne: every time I turn around, you have production questions. Thank you for keeping the details straight. I know when I answer a question from you that it will be taken care of. The cast members have worked for many weeks, putting in long hours to become these characters, and I thank them for it.

Numerous parents have helped bring this show to fruition. Steve Deaver: your fireplace, mantle and effects are amazing. Thank you for giving to our kids. Doris Vigil: Wow. A dress in a weekend! You (and the dress) are wonderful. To the parents who fed us: Yum!!! Michael, Regina, Cyndi, Randy, Sharon: you worked behind the scenes in lots of ways, and I appreciate. To all you you, Thanks just doesn't seem enough.

Tom Sherow has been my right hand. Friend, assistant, Technical Director. Amazing is way to soft a word. Fantastic. Unbelievable. Thanks.

I have probably missed someone. For that I am truly sorry. A show does not happen without huge effort from a ton of people. If you are that someone, know that I appreciate your help and work, even if I haven't managed to remember to write it down.

These students have done an amazing job, and I consider myself to be incredibly lucky to be called their Director. Thank you for coming tonight. Sit back and enjoy the show.

Skip

Cast Biographies

Grady Hartman, a Senior, is absolutely delighted to be playing Charles Condomine. Grady has been involved in Derby drama since second semester Freshman year. He was Hodgkins in Get Smart, Private Boone in MASH, a hobo in Paper Chase and was in various one-acts.

Miranda Gibfried, a Senior, will be playing the part of Madame Arcati. She has been involved in Drama all 4 years of high school, with roles in MASH, Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat, and various one act shows.

Lea Herdler, a Junior, is delighted to be playing the role of Elvira. Drama has controlled her entire high school life, and she wouldn't want it any other way. She has been given roles in MASH, Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat, Get Smart, multiple one acts, and had been given the opportunity to write and direct her first one act this year. She would like to send out a word of encouragement to everyone who has helped her to follow her dream of performing. Hang in there, daddy!!

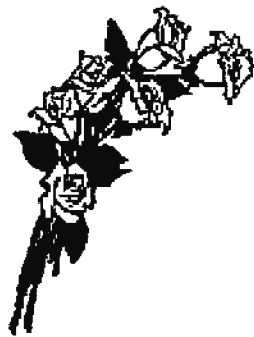
Jami Mumma, a Senior, is excited to be playing the part of Ruth. Over the last four years here at the high school she has played a law student in The Paper Chase, a Korean in MASH, Professor Zalinka in Get Smart and has been in countless one-acts as well as directing a few. She is also the Props Crewhead and is on Publicity crew. She would like to thank her family for supporting her and Skip for helping her grow as an actress.

Cast Biographies

Jacob Ponte, a Senior, is happy to be a member of the planet known as Earth. His home planet, Krypton, was destroyed. Luckily, he was put in a space pod and flew to earth. He was then raised by his Aunt & Uncle. When he was 17, he went on a visit to a spider lab, where he got bit by a radio-active spider. He now spends his days fighting crime at night, often seen wearing a black cape and bat-like mask.

Sarah Packard, a Junior, will be playing the roll of Edith. She has been involved in drama since freshman year, with roles in MASH, Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat, Get Smart, and various one acts.

Misba Khan, a Senior, will be playing the role of Mrs. Bradman. She enjoys hanging out in the craft room, penguin wars, and listening to music. She would like to thank her parents for being amazing, her family for being the best.



Crew Biographies

DeLynn Camp, a Sophomore, is happy to a Production Stage Manager for Blithe Spirit. She also recently had a role in the one-act Dinner with the MacGuffins.

Cheyenne Queen, a Junior, is thrilled to be a Production Stage Manager. She was also the Student Technical Director for Tintypes and PSM for Get Smart.

Kimberley Deaver, a Junior, is ecstatic to be a **BIG** part of Blithe Spirit. She is part of the Props crew, Publicity crew and is co-head of Costuming and Program Design. She is also the Hair Designer. , & will also be back stage during the show.

Lisa Prater, is also happy to be a **BIG** part of Blithe Spirit. She is the co-crewhead for Makeup Design & is the Program & Shirt designer.

Myriah Smith, finally a Senior, (or is it a Sophomore?) is happy to be the Costuming Crewhead for Blithe Spirit.

James Dillard, an aspiring trapeze artist, who lost his ability to hear at a young age, is happy to be the Sound Crewhead. He wishes he were Wonder Woman. Oh well. P.S- We beat him up! Again!

Keide Eller, a Junior, is getting involved in drama for the first time, as Lights crewhead for Blithe Spirit. She wishes she had the ability to fly. RAWR.



Thunderbird Bowl of Wichita

*Thanks you for your support of the
Derby Drama Department and cast of Blithe Spirit.
We hope you enjoy the play!*

Bring in this program to Thunderbird Bowl and receive half price admission for Friday night X-treme Bowling. (limit two persons per coupon; offer expires December 18th, 2009).

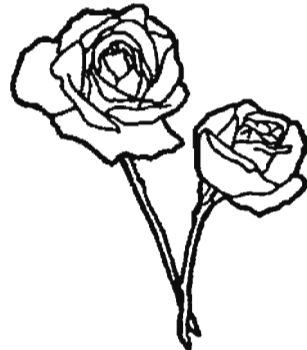


Thunderbird Bowl
2440 S. Oliver
Wichita, KS
684-5291

Live Well, Love Much, Laugh
Often.

WE LOVE YOU!!!

-Mom, Dad, & Tim



To all the Techies:

**You've done an awesome job!
Thank you for putting up
with my "CDO Status".**

Love,

Chey-Chey



To Jami Mumma
and the Cast and Crew
of Blithe Spirit ~

We predict a great
performance in
your future!

From Joel, Jodi, PJ &
Harley



To Lisa:

We knew all
those years of
practicing
being a drama
queen at home
would pay off
eventually!



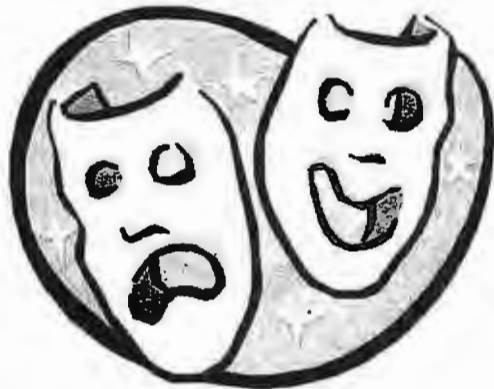
Break a leg!

Love,

Mom, Dad, "Studly" Amos &
"Squinky" Andy.

***Break a leg Kimmy and Ciera and
the rest of the cast. You guys are
awesome!***

-Mamma San



What's with this "good luck" business?

Theatre people do NOT say "good luck" to each other. Ever! We say "Break A Leg!" Why? Well, blame the Greeks. They believed that the gods walked among them, and that if they wished an actor "good luck" a god was sure to hear, and being the nasties they were, would visit misfortune on the poor actor during the show. So the Greeks wished actors "bad luck", so that the god, upon hearing, would do the opposite to the actor. So. Do it right. Say "Break A leg." or, as we at DHS say:

Bust A Bone!!!

Skip



Jami ~

*As you follow your dreams, remember
you are not alone.*

Because...

*"You can do all things through Christ,
who strengthens you."*

Phillipians 4:13

*Lots of love,
Mom & Michael*



Upcoming Events

RENNASAINCE FEAST

DECEMBER 11TH - ADVANCE TICKETS ONLY
316-788-8500 OR RSHULTZ@USD260.COM

WIZARD OF OZ

MARCH 4TH, 5TH & 6TH

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A note from our Director...

As many of you know, this show is the Thesis for the Master of Arts in Theatre Production that I have been working on at Central Washington University. I have been researching and planning this show over the last two years, and am proud of what has been created here at DHS. Mr. Scott Robinson, Theatre Department chair at CWU, will be here to observe my show. I will be defending my Thesis this spring.

As with any production, there are many thanks that need to be made. To the cast and crew: Thank you for putting your time and heart and soul into creating this living organism called theatre. Seniors Grady, Jami, Lisa, Myriah, Jake, Miranda and Misba: I have enjoyed the time we have worked together, and I look forward to the rest of this year. You have all grown tremendously, and worked diligently. To the rest of the cast: Lea, Sarah, Kimmy and Ciera, thank you for the work and time you have given. Chyenne: every time I turn around, you have production questions. Thank you for keeping the details straight. I know when I answer a question from you that it will be taken care of. The cast members have worked for many weeks, putting in long hours to become these characters, and I thank them for it.

Numerous parents have helped bring this show to fruition. Steve Deaver: your fireplace, mantle and effects are amazing. Thank you for giving to our kids. Doris Vigil: Wow. A dress in a weekend! You (and the dress) are wonderful. To the parents who fed us: Yum!!! Michael, Regina, Cyndi, Randy, Sharon: you worked behind the scenes in lots of ways, and I appreciate. To all you you, Thanks just doesn't seem enough.

Tom Sherow has been my right hand. Friend, assistant, Technical Director. Amazing is way to soft a word. Fantastic. Unbelievable. Thanks.

I have probably missed someone. For that I am truly sorry. A show does not happen without huge effort from a ton of people. If you are that someone, know that I appreciate your help and work, even if I haven't managed to remember to write it down.

These students have done an amazing job, and I consider myself to be incredibly lucky to be called their Director. Thank you for coming tonight. Sit back and enjoy the show.

Skip

Derby High School Performing Arts
produced with special arrangements by
Samuel French Inc.
Proudly Presents



Director
Richard Shultz

Technical Director
Tom Sherow

November 5th, 6th & 7th
Derby High School Black Box Theatre

The Cast

Edith.....Kimberley Deaver

Ruth.....Jami Mumma

Charles.....Grady Hartman

Dr. Bradman.....Jacob Ponte

Mrs. Bradman.....Ciera Dockter

Madame Arcati.....Myriah Smith

Elvira.....Lisa Prater



Technical Crews

Director	Mr. Richard Shultz
Technical Director	Mr. Tom Sherow
Production Stage Managers	Cheyenne Queen DeLynn Camp
Stage Crew	Michael Hammond Avery Yoos James Kovaleski Alison Byrne Chauncey Fuller Michelle Ngo
Lights Crewhead	James Dillard
Sound Crewhead	Keide Eller
Publicity Crewhead	Ciera Dockter
Publicity Crew	Jami Mumma Kimberley Deaver
T-Shirt Design	Lisa Prater
Props Crewhead	Jami Mumma
Props Crew	Kimberley Deaver Jordan Hill
Costume Crewhead	Myriah Smith
Hair Design	Kimberley Deaver
Makeup Crewheads	Lisa Prater Lea Herdler
House Crewhead	Julie Ngo
House Crew	Naci Peters Zach Zuber Sara Toney Abbey Cox
Program	Lisa Prater Kimberley Deaver

Cast Biographies



Grady Hartman, a Senior, is delighted to be playing Charles Condomine. Grady has been involved in Derby drama since second semester Freshman year. He was Hodgkins in Get Smart, Private Boone in MASH and a hobo in Paper Chase. He has also been involved in multiple one-acts.



Lisa Prater, a Senior, is happy to be playing the part of Elvira. She is also Makeup Crewhead, so she can make everyone look b-e-a-utiful, and the Program & T-Shirt designer. Lisa has been in a billion shows and is President of the drama club. She would like to thank Skip, for giving her the role of a dead person. Happy birthday Fabio!



Jami Mumma, a Senior, is excited to be playing the part of Ruth. Over the last 4 years, she has played a law student in Paper Chase, a Korean in MASH, Professor Zalinka in Get Smart and has been in countless one-acts as well as directing a few. She is also the Props Crewhead and is on Publicity crew. She would like to thank her family for supporting her and Skip for helping her grow as an actress.



Myriah Smith, finally a Senior, (or is it a Sophomore?) is proud to be doubling as Costume crewhead and Madame Arcati.

Cast Biographies



Jacob Ponte, a Senior, is happy to be a member of the planet known as Earth. His home planet, Krypton, was destroyed. Luckily, he was put in a space pod and flew to earth. When he was 17, he went on a visit to a spider lab, where he got bit by a radio-active spider. He now spends his days fighting crime at night, often seen wearing a black cape and bat-like mask.



Kimberley Deaver, a Junior, is excited to be playing the role of Edith. She has been involved in theatre all 3 years of high school with roles in Get Smart and several one act shows, as well as doing tech for all shows. She is currently co-head of the Costume Crew, Program Design, on Props Crew and is the Hair Designer. Kimberley is also the Historian of the drama club. She would like to thank everybody who supported her and continues to support her. :)



Ciera Dockter, a Junior, will be playing the role of Mrs. Bradman. She is Vice President of the drama club and has been involved in theatre since middle school. She directed Oprah Made Me Do It this fall and some of her other high school acting roles were in MASH, Get Smart & many one-act shows.

To Jami Mumma
and the Cast and Crew
of Blithe Spirit ~

We predict a great
performance in
your future!

From Joel, Jodi, PJ &
Harley



To Lisa:

We knew all
those years of
practicing
being a drama
queen at home
would pay off
eventually!



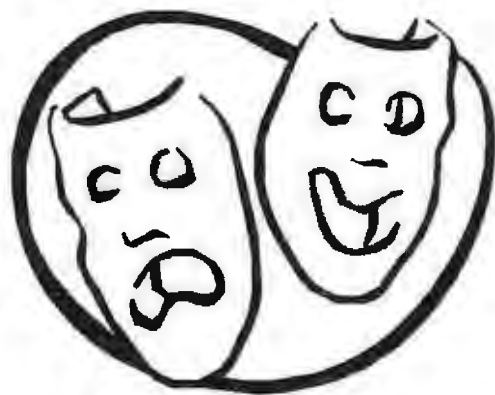
Break a leg!

Love,

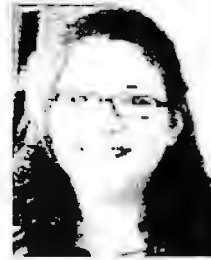
Mom, Dad, "Studly" Amos &
"Squinky" Andy.

**Break a leg Kimmy and Ciera and
the rest of the cast. You guys are
awesome!**

-Mamma San



Crew Biographies



Cheyenne Queen, a Junior, is thrilled to be a
Production Stage Manager. She was also the
Student Technical Director for Tintypes and PSM for Get
Smart.

DeLynn Camp, a Sophomore, is happy to a Production Stage Manager
for Blithe Spirit. She also recently had a role in the one-act Dinner with
the MacGuffins.



James Dillard, an aspiring trapeze artist, who lost his
ability to hear at a young age, is happy to be the Sound
Crewhead. He would like to say that Matt Bradley is the
shiz-nizzle.

Keide Eller, a Junior, is getting involved in drama for the first time, as
Lights crewhead for Blithe Spirit. She wishes she had the ability to fly.

To all the Techies:

**You've done an awesome
job! Thank you for putting
up with my "CDO Status".**

Love,

Chey-Chey



Jami ~

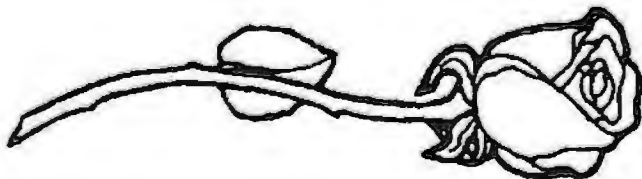
*As you follow your dreams, remember
you are not alone.*

Because...

*"You can do all things through Christ,
who strengthens you."*

Phillipians 4:13

*Lots of love,
Mom & Michael*



Thunderbird Bowl of Wichita

*Thanks you for your support of the
Derby Drama Department and cast of Blithe Spirit.*

We hope you enjoy the play!

Bring in this program to Thunderbird Bowl and receive half price admission for Friday night X-treme Bowling. (limit two persons per coupon; offer expires December 18th, 2009).



Thunderbird Bowl
2440 S. Oliver
Wichita, KS
684-5291

We see great success in your future!



*We love you, Myriah!
Mom, Dad, Home and Teddy*

DERBY HIGH SCHOOL

BLACK BOX THEATRE

ROAD

34

40
39
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37

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37
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26
H

28-32
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25-28
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31
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13-16
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21

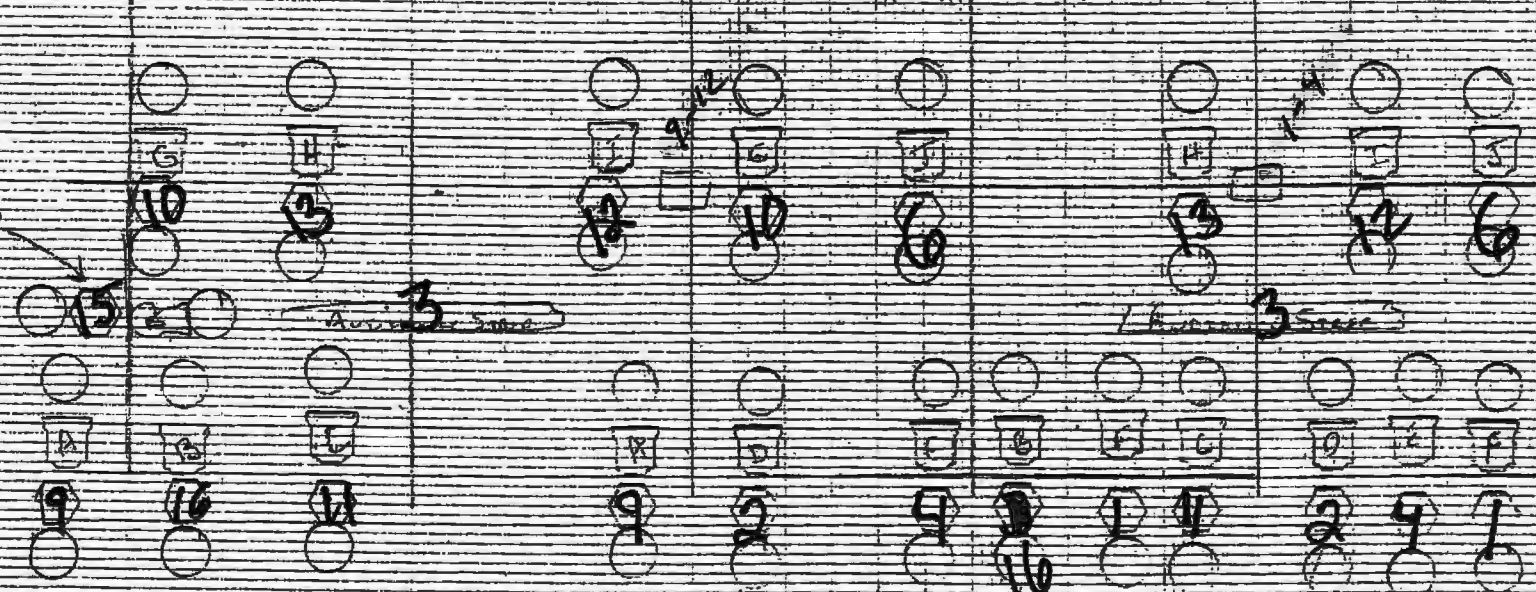
5-8
5-8
5-8

RESERVE

STAGE

Door

Door



BLITHE SPIRIT EXTENSION CABLES

Dimmer -	Two Fer -	Length -	End
✓3	yes	.25'	Pin, Pin
✓6	yes No	.8', 16'	Pin, Pin, Pin (make a 2 fer)
✓10	yes	.14'	Pin Edison F
✓12	yes	.16'	Pin
✓13	No	.9', 21'	make a 2 fer, Pin
✓22	No	10'	Pin F
2320	No	.12'	Pin F
✓25	No	.12'	Edison Pin
✓26	No	<u>NO</u>	adaptor, Pin to Edison F
✓29	No	.16'	Edison F
✓30	No	.9' ←	Edison F
<u>31</u>	No	<u>NO</u>	
<u>32</u>	No	<u>NO</u> -	
✓37	No	.15'	Edison male to Edison F Edison male to Edison F
38	No	.15'	
39	No	.35' (25')	Edison male
40	No	.35' (25')	Edison male

B LITHE SPIRIT EXTENSION CABLES

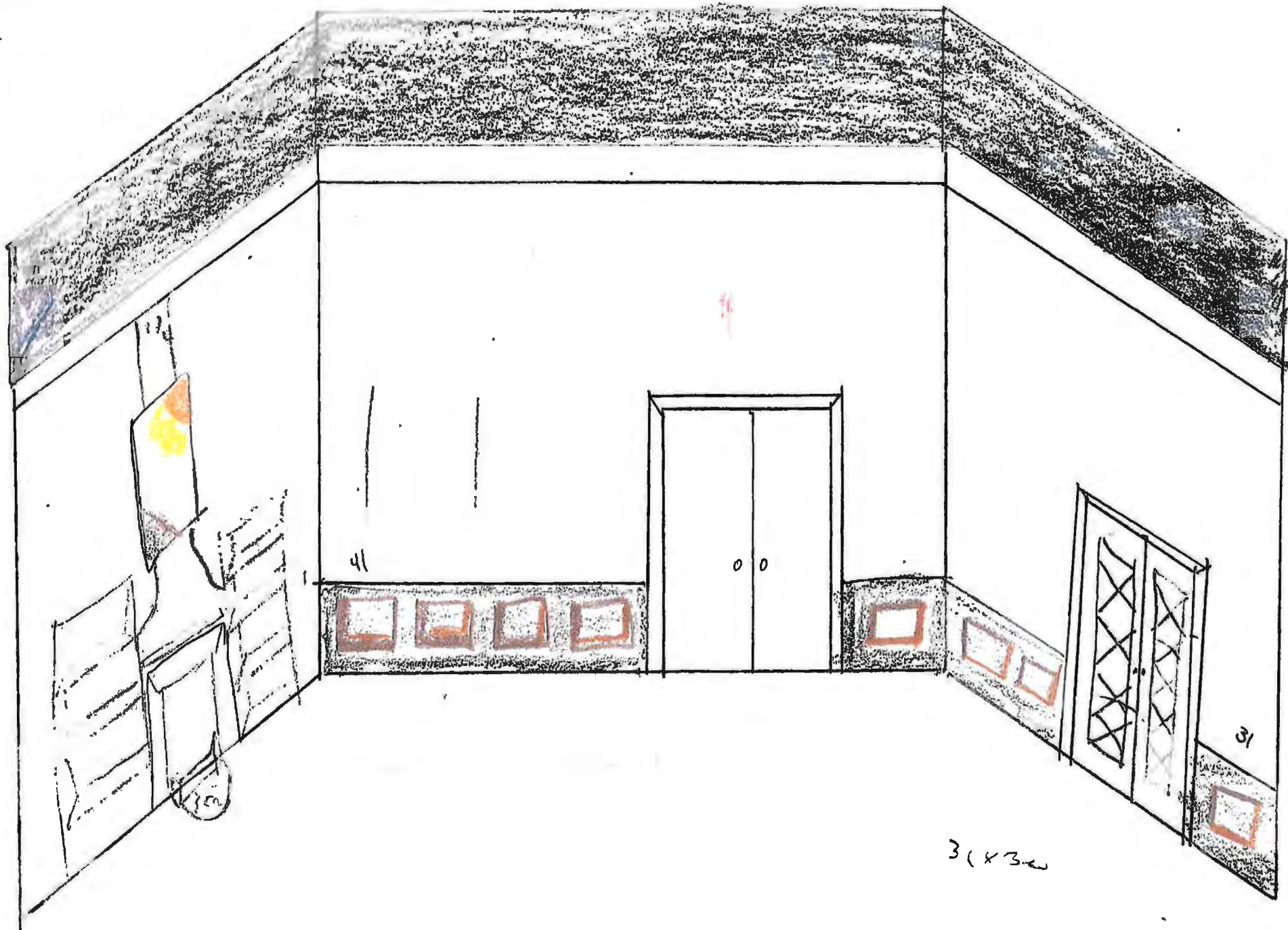
Dimmer	Two Fer	Length	End
✓3	yes	.25'	Pin, Pin
✓6	yes No	.8', 16'	Pin, Pin, Pin (make a 2 fer)
✓10	yes	.14'	Pin Edison F
✓12	yes	.16'	Pin
✓13	No	.9', 21'	make a 2 fer, Pin
✓22	No	.10'	Pin F
✓20	No	.12'	Pin F
✓25	No	.12'	Edison Pin
✓26	No	<u>NO</u>	adapter, Pin m to Edi F
✓29	No	.16'	Edison F
✓30	No	.9' ←	edison F
✓31	No	<u>NO</u>	
✓32	No	<u>NO</u> -	
✓37	No	.15'	Edison male to Edi F Edison male to Edi F
✓38	No	.15'	
✓39	No	.35' (25')	Edison male
✓40	No	.35' (25')	Edison male

8 in
6 in F

12 Pin

B LITHE SPIRIT DIMMER LIST

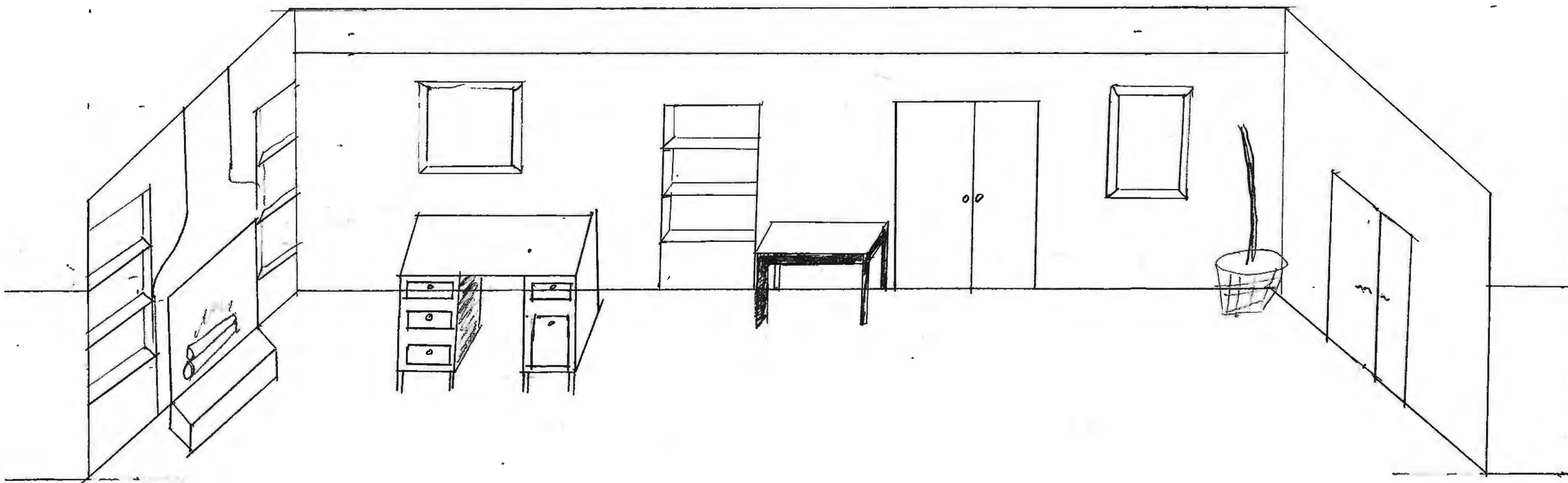
- 11 - F
- 22 - D
- 33 - Audience Seating Right & Left
- 44 - E
- 55 - French Door
- 66 - J
- 7
- 8
- 99 - A
- 810 - G
- 911 - C
- 1012 - I
- 1113 - H
- 1214 - ~~Pi~~ Door
- 1315 - Couch
- 1416 - B
- 17 - ~~Footstool~~
- 18 - ~~Footstool~~
- 19 seance light
- 20 F back
- 21 - ~~Footstool~~
- 22 - E back
- 23 - F back
- 24
- 25 - G back
- 26 - H back
- 27
- 28
- 29 - D back
- 30 - C back
- 31 - B back
- 32 - A back
- 33 - Garden Surprise
- 34 - Garden
- 35 - Hallway Lights
- 36 - Red safety lights
- 37 - I Back
- 38 - J back
- 39 - Blue work lights
- 40 - ~~Blue work lights~~
Fire place
- 41 - red log is back stage



Mix blu



Blithe Spirit
Nov 5-7, 12-14, 2009



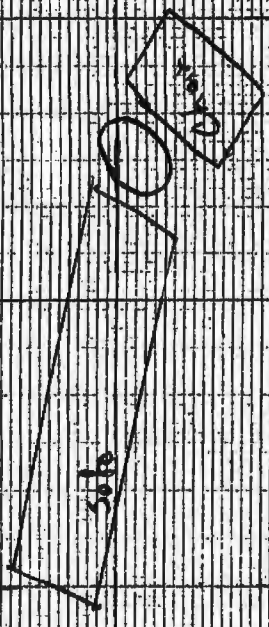
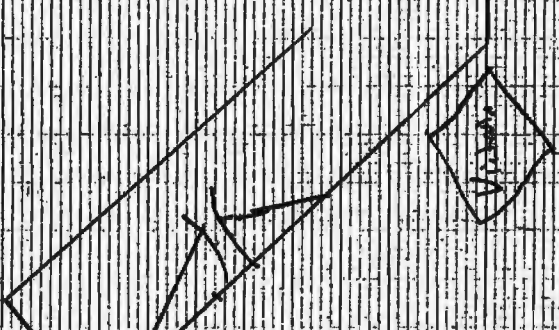
DERBY HIGH SCHOOL
BLACK BOX THEATRE

Blithe Spirit
Nov 5-7, 12-14, 2009

Door

Door

Door



Wardrobe