

CIVIC THEATRE

LEEDS LEISURE SERVICES



PROGRAMME

CIVIC THEATRE

LEEDS LEISURE SERVICES

Civic Theatre, Cookridge Street, Leeds LS2 8BH

Welcome to the Civic Theatre!

We hope that you will enjoy tonight's performance

In addition to the Leeds Civic Arts Guild productions, we are fortunate in being able to present a full programme of concerts and shows by national and international artistes and companies.

Full details are given in our brochure which is available in the Theatre Foyer or from the Tourist Information Centre.

We look forward to seeing you again.

Geoffrey Mogridge

Geoffrey Mogridge
General Manager

General Manager & Licensee	Geoffrey Mogridge
Assistant Managers	Vivien Simpson Shirley Tarran
Resident Stage Manager	Anthony McManus
Deputy Stage Manager	Pauline Mower
Theatre Electrician	Peter Waddicor



LEEDS ARTS CENTRE

presents

BLITHE SPIRIT

an hilarious haunting

by

Noel Coward

Directed by

Anne Robinson

at the

Civic Theatre, Leeds

14 - 18

APRIL

1987

NOEL COWARD was born at Teddington on 16th December 1899. His talents for singing, dancing and acting were quickly recognized and he made his first professional appearance at the age of eleven, being reviewed as “a promising young talent in a star cast of wonder children ” (including Michael MacLiammóir and Ninette de Valois).

He began writing and composing whilst still in his teens, starring in his own play in the West End for the first time in 1919.

By the age of twenty-four he had succeeded in establishing himself as an actor, playwright, director, lyricist, composer and comedian. He became the darling of society, adored equally for the wit of his lyrics and dialogue, the sparkle of his music and the polish of his performance. The next ten years saw a run of glittering successes, both dramatic and musical, including *Bitter Sweet*, *Private Lives*, *Cavalcade*, *Hay Fever* and the revue *Words and Music*, which introduced, among other songs, *Mad Dogs and Englishmen*.

After the war he continued to act (on stage and in films), compose and write (plays, lyrics and stories) until the 1960s, by which time his earlier plays were beginning to be revived.

He was knighted in 1970 for services to the theatre just after his seventieth birthday. Terence Rattigan described him as “simply a phenomenon and one that is unlikely to occur ever again in theatre history”. He died in March 1973 and was buried at Firefly Hill, his home in Jamaica, but his “talent to amuse” continues to delight audiences the world over.

BLITHE SPIRIT was written in only five days. In 1941 Noel Coward decided he must make some “lasting contribution” to the war effort and that this contribution should be one really good song (*London Pride*), one really patriotic film (*In Which We Serve*) and one really good play “to make the nation laugh”. Amazingly he managed all three in four months, writing *Blithe Spirit* between 4th and 9th May. The original production starred Fay Compton, Cecil Parker, Kay Hammond and Margaret Rutherford and ran for four years.

In 1955 he cut its running time to an hour and a half for an American television production and in 1964 produced a musical version, *High Spirits*, which ran successfully on Broadway for over a year, although its success was not repeated in London.

An all-girl cast once played *Blithe Spirit* in Tokyo; had he known, Coward said, he would have flown to Tokyo ‘just to see Dr. Bradman played by a geisha’.

Blithe Spirit shows Noel Coward at his brilliant best; no doubt it will continue to ‘make the nation laugh’ as often as it is performed.

CAST in order of appearance

EDITH, a maid
RUTH CONDOMINE
CHARLES CONDOMINE
DOCTOR BRADMAN
MRS. BRADMAN
MADAME ARCATI
ELVIRA

Jean Blundell
Margaret Savage
David Scott
George Westmoreland
Betty Triggs
Jacky Ball
Pam Wilson

The action of the play passes in the living room of Charles Condomine's house in Kent.

ACT I

Scene 1: Before dinner on a summer evening.
Scene 2: After dinner

Interval of 15 minutes

ACT II

Scene 1: The next morning
Scene 2: Late the following afternoon
Scene 3: Early evening, a few days later

Interval of 10 minutes

ACT III

Scene 1: After dinner a few days later
Scene 2: Several hours later

BACKSTAGE

STAGE MANAGER
ASSISTANT STAGE MANAGERS

Trevor Money
Martyn Drake
David Mallinson
Peter Waddicor

LIGHTING
SPECIAL EFFECTS & SOUND

Laurie Ball, Jim Marshall, Jim Young,
Michael Crowley, Shirley Broadbent

PROPERTIES

Doreen Parker
Dorothy Money
Shirley Hamer

PROMPT
BOX OFFICE
FRONT OF HOUSE MANAGER
WARDROBE

John & Dorianne Pemberton
Monica Brown
Margaret Rhodes and
LAC Wardrobe Team

Leeds Arts Centre would like to thank Keep Electrical Ltd.,
King Edward Street, Leeds for the loan of wall lights.

NEXT WEEK: WEST RIDING OPERA
present
VERDI'S 'ERNANI'

LEEDS ARTS CENTRE

Leeds Arts Centre was formed in 1945 as an amateur Society to encourage and foster interest in the arts.

The Drama Group mounts five productions — usually including a musical or revue type show — at the Civic Theatre.

The Green Room Group puts on plays and other forms of entertainment in the rehearsal rooms to give members valuable experience of acting and producing before tackling major parts or productions in the Civic Theatre. Season ticket holders are welcome to attend these performances.

The Fine Arts Group meets twice each week throughout the year for drawing, painting and other creative work.

In addition there is a variety of social activities for members, such as theatre visits, outings, parties, etc.

New Members are always welcome so if you are interested in acting, drawing, painting (pictures or scenery), set building, making costumes, helping back stage, front of house or even with publicity and think you might like to join the Centre, or would like more information please write to:

*The Secretary, Leeds Arts Centre, Stansfeld Chambers,
Great George Street, Leeds 1.*

costume hire

You may not realise that the costumes you have seen tonight and countless others from different periods are available for hire from the Leeds Arts Centre costume collection at reasonable rates.

If you are interested please telephone Leeds 756796 and discuss your requirements with Mrs. Margaret Rhodes, our wardrobe mistress.

General Information

Theatre Bar and Buffet

Good food and drinks are always available in the comfort of the Civic Theatre Bar.

The Bar is open from

11.30am—2.30pm (Mon—Fri)

6.15pm—10.30pm (Mon—Thurs)

6.45pm—11.00pm (Fri—Sat)

And from 7.00pm on Sundays **when there is a performance**

Facilities for Disabled People

We are pleased to accommodate patrons in wheelchairs. The Theatre has special toilet facilities and there is a ramp entrance to the building in Vernon Street. Please book in advance as space is limited. Telephone 456343 for further details.

Free Mailing List

If you would like to receive regular details of future events, please write to: **The Mailing List, Civic Theatre, Cookridge Street, Leeds LS2 8BH.**

Interval Drinks

Avoid the interval rush by placing your drinks order at the bar before the performance commences.

In accordance with the requirements of the Licensing Sub-Committee of Leeds City Council:

- (a) The public may leave at the end of the performance by all exit and entrance doors, and such doors must at that time be open.
- (b) All gangways, passages and staircases must be kept entirely free from chairs or any other obstruction.
- (c) Persons shall not be permitted to stand or sit in any of the intersecting gangways, or stand in any unseated space in the auditorium, unless standing in such a space as been specially allowed by the Licensing Committee. A notice is exhibited in that part of the auditorium in which standing has been sanctioned.
- (d) The safety curtain must be lowered and raised once immediately before the commencement of each performance so as to ensure it being in proper working order.

The Leeds Civic Theatre shares the Institute Buildings with the Leeds College of Music. This may mean that occasionally performances may be subject to slight acoustic problems. Whilst both parties do everything within their power to keep this to a minimum, we cannot prevent it completely. We apologise, therefore, for any inconvenience which may be caused.

STRICTLY NO SMOKING IN THE AUDITORIUM
The Taking of Photographs in the Auditorium is prohibited.



CIVIC THEATRE COOKRIDGE STREET LEEDS LS2 8BH
TEL 456343