



# Adelaide Theatre Guide

[www.theatreguide.com.au](http://www.theatreguide.com.au)

Supporting live theatre in South Australia

PO Box 738  
MODBURY SA 5092

[info@theatreguide.com.au](mailto:info@theatreguide.com.au)  
ABN : 93 297 960 525

---

## **BLITHE SPIRIT**

### **University of Adelaide Theatre Guild**

The Little Theatre  
Until 21 August 2021

Review by Helen Karakulak

Directed by Megan Dansie, the University of Adelaide Theatre Guild's production of "Blithe Spirit" is an enjoyable comedy offering some light-hearted relief in these unpredictable times.

The production had been delayed due to the unfolding pandemic, but persistence of cast and crew allowed for an energetic performance to be delivered despite these unavoidable setbacks. "Blithe Spirit", written by Noël Coward, follows a married couple, Charles and Ruth Condomine, as they cynically dabble in the art of séance.

The séance was delivered by the eccentric Madame Arcati, played by Jean Walker, who has been communicating with spirits and practicing her craft for many years. Walker is fabulously captivating in this role. Decked out in flowing clothing, she approaches the mystical elements of tough trances, concentrated crystal gazing and defending Arcati's craft with passionate ease.

The couple invite their friends Dr and Mrs Bradman, played by Steve Marvanek and Esther Michelsen, to attend the séance with them, as a means of entertainment and a source of research for Charles' next book. Both Marvanek and Michelsen bring sophistication to their roles. This is certainly aided by the costumes by Gilian Cordell and cast as their elegant outfits paint a picture of the 1950s.

The couple are greeted by Edith, the Condomine's eager and clumsy maid, played by Ashlee Scott. Scott's delivery of Edith's blunders are convincing and endearing, sure to garner a giggle at her heavy-footed naivety.

Ruth (Miriam Keane) is the second wife of Charles (Brad Martin) and the two have strong chemistry and a bouncy rapport before chaos ensues as they summon Charles' first wife, Elvira. Both Martin and Keane approach the dialogue of the production with the wit it deserves and capture the sophisticated tone of the time nicely.

Elvira is a spirited and understatedly cunning character delightfully played by Emily Currie. Currie's playful delivery made it clear to audiences why Charles is so easily enamoured by her character despite his initial resistance to her arrival. Sound and lighting by Ellen Demaagd and Tony Stankiewicz is effective and particularly valuable to Elvira's stunts as Currie prances around the stage to music, enjoying the frights she delivers to Ruth and Edith.

The set was era-appropriate, and not too distracting or cluttered. Incredibly effective and amusing was the use of books falling off their shelves and flicking lights capturing the supernatural elements of the story.

The University of Adelaide Theatre Guild's "Blithe Spirit" is a lengthy production, but it's enjoyable storyline and impressive performance makes it certainly worth sitting through to support local theatre.