

# Ahmanson Theatre 48th 2014/15 Season



#### FIRST SEASON PRODUCTION

Cicely Tyson  
Vanessa Williams  
Blair Underwood in

### **The Trip to Bountiful**

By Horton Foote  
Directed by Michael Wilson.  
September 17 – November 2, 2014

#### SECOND SEASON PRODUCTION

### **Noël Coward's Blithe Spirit**

Directed by Michael Blakemore.  
December 9, 2014 – January 18, 2015

#### THIRD SEASON PRODUCTION

### **Dame Edna's Glorious Goodbye: The Farewell Tour**

Directed by Simon Phillips.  
January 24 – March 15, 2015

#### FOURTH SEASON PRODUCTION

### **Rodgers and Hammerstein's Cinderella**

Music by Richard Rodgers  
Lyrics by Oscar Hammerstein II  
A New Book by  
Douglas Carter Beane  
Original Book by  
Oscar Hammerstein II  
Music Adaptation, Supervision and  
Arrangements by David Chase  
Orchestrations by Danny Troob  
Choreography by Josh Rhodes  
Directed by Mark Brokaw.  
March 17 – April 26, 2015

#### FIFTH SEASON PRODUCTION

### **Matilda The Musical**

Based on the Novel by Roald Dahl  
Book by Dennis Kelly  
Music and Lyrics by Tim Minchin  
Sets and Costumes by Rob Howell  
Choreography by Peter Darling  
Directed by Matthew Warchus.  
May 29 – July 12, 2015

# Inspiring Our Future

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This list includes gifts made to Center Theatre Group between  
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in associaton with  
Ken Davenport Kathleen K. Johnson Jam Theatricals  
present

**Angela Lansbury** **Charles Edwards**  
**Jemima Rooper** **Charlotte Parry**

in

NOËL COWARD'S  
**BLITHE SPIRIT**

with

**Simon Jones**  
**Susan Louise O'Connor** **Sandra Shipley**

Designed By  
Simon Higlett

Lighting By  
Mark Jonathan

Sound By  
Ben and Max Ringham

Angela Lansbury's Costumes By  
Martin Pakledinaz

Casting  
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Directed by

**Michael Blakemore**

December 9, 2014 – January 18, 2015  
Ahmanson Theatre

The Los Angeles engagement of *Blithe Spirit* is generously supported in part by  
Artistic Director's Circle member Misty Widelitz.

**CAST**

(in order of appearance)

Edith .....	<b>SUSAN LOUISE O’CONNOR</b>
Ruth.....	<b>CHARLOTTE PARRY</b>
Charles .....	<b>CHARLES EDWARDS</b>
Dr. Bradman.....	<b>SIMON JONES</b>
Mrs. Bradman.....	<b>SANDRA SHIPLEY</b>
Madame Arcati .....	<b>ANGELA LANSBURY</b>
Elvira .....	<b>JEMIMA ROOPER</b>

**STANDBYS**

Standbys never substitute for the listed players unless a specific posting or announcement is made at the time of the performance.

*For Charles, Dr. Bradman:* **MARK CAPRI**

*For Ruth, Mrs. Bradman:* **REBECCA DINES**

*For Madame Arcati:* **SANDRA SHIPLEY**

*For Edith, Elvira:* **TONI SMITH**

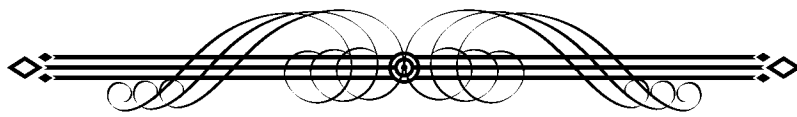
Interlude Vocals by Christine Ebersole.

**SETTING**

The living room of the Condomine’s house in Kent, England.

There will be one 15-minute intermission.

Charles Edwards and Jemima Rooper are appearing with the support of Actors’ Equity Association pursuant to an exchange program between American Equity and UK Equity.



CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT: (L-R) Charles Edwards, Angela Lansbury and Susan Louise O'Connor in Noël Coward's *Blithe Spirit*. • Angela Lansbury in Noël Coward's *Blithe Spirit*. • Charles Edwards, Jemima Rooper and Charlotte Parry in Noël Coward's *Blithe Spirit*.  
PHOTOS BY JOAN MARCUS.



CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT: *Blithe Spirit* Playbill: © The Noël Coward Collection, Special Collections, Birmingham University; (L-R) Mildred Natwick and Leonora Corbett in the U.S. premiere of *Blithe Spirit* on Broadway, photo from Vandamm Studio / The New York Public Library; Noël Coward: © NC Aventales AG Private Collection; Clifton Webb in in the U.S. premiere of *Blithe Spirit* on Broadway, photo from Vandamm Studio / The New York Public Library.

==== Noël Coward ====

# The Impossibility of Love

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It all began with the actress Joyce Carey. On May 2, 1941, she took a train for Portmeirion in North Wales. She'd had one of her plays, *Sweet Aloes*, produced in the West End and was now working on another based on Keats and Fanny Brawne. As a travelling companion, she took her great friend Noël Coward. When they returned to London six days later, Joyce was still wrestling with Fanny Brawne. Coward had the completed manuscript of *Blithe Spirit*.

"For some time past an idea for a light comedy had been rattling at the door of my mind," said Coward, "and I thought the time had come to let it in and show it a little courtesy.... Beyond a few typographical errors, I made no corrections, and only two lines of the original script were ultimately cut."

The play opened only a month later on June 16 in Manchester, and then at London's Piccadilly Theatre on July 2. It ran for 1997 performances, outlasting World War II (a West End record until *The Mousetrap* overtook it).

Some early critics were skeptical of the subject matter. How could audiences be expected to find death amusing in the middle of a war? Yet, clearly they did. The Daily Mail summed it up as "fantastic fun" and, paraphrasing Shelley, concluded:

*Hail to thee, Blithe Spirit,  
Bird thou'll never get.*

And it never has, even though it's one of the most revived of his plays.

Coward gave the play the subtitle "*An Improbable Comedy*" but Harold Pinter sensed a deeper meaning, common to many of Coward's major plays. When he directed a revival of *Blithe Spirit* at The National Theatre in 1976, Pinter insisted to his cast at the start of rehearsals that he considered the play to be neither improbable nor a

comedy. He had already realized from a study of *Private Lives* that "a character could stand on a stage and say one thing and the audience would know he actually meant something else!" Pinter would elaborate on that insight in his own work ever after.

Comedy was always Coward's way of making a serious point. "I am light-minded. I would inevitably write a comedy if – God help me! – I wanted to write a play with a message." Perhaps it was his deliberate intention to appear trivial, never to wear his heart anywhere near his sleeve. What he might have said was that he realized that comedy and tragedy are essentially two sides of the same coin. With the 20-20 clarity of hindsight, however, it becomes clear that beneath the brittle carapace of witty words, much of his work had as its unifying theme the tragic impossibility of love.

In *Private Lives*, Elyot and Amanda cannot live with each other or without each other. In their struggle, which will go on after they steal away and the play ends, they leave the debris of everyone who comes near them, and will go on doing so, for this is not an ending but an intermission. They are unconscious killers.

The same thing happens in *Design For Living* for Gilda, Otto and Leo. The secondary characters who cross their paths are irrelevant to their selfish needs and casually discarded as they work out the variations in their romance-à-trois. Others must clean up the emotional mess. In *Fallen Angels*, Julia and Jane have settled for predictably boring marriage until the prospect of a visit from the Gallic lover they had once shared suggests the possibility of an old flame rekindling the odd ember.

In *Blithe Spirit*, Charles Condomine is, for the purposes of the play, a bigamist. As played by Cecil Parker in the original production, he is a conventional middle-aged man, comfortable, if not ecstatic, in his second marriage to Ruth. Then the shade of his first wife, Elvira, returns,

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# If Love were all, I should be lonely

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–Bitter Sweet

reminding him of the lows and also a few of the highs of what once was. But *Blithe Spirit* is only incidentally about ghosts and the hereafter. It's really about marital discord in the present continuing for all time. The impossibility of love, doubled.

Coward's expressed view of love and marriage was consistent from very early on. It may end in tragedy as in *The Astonished Heart* or *Bitter Sweet*, or in futility, as in *Easy Virtue*. At its most romantic, love is something that nearly but never was and now never will be, as in *Brief Encounter*. Never was and therefore able to endure as romance unsoiled in the minds of Laura and Alec. In the minds of the audience too, which is presumably why The Guardian recently placed *Brief Encounter* at the top of its poll for the most romantic film of all time. *Casablanca* and *Gone With The Wind* were second and third respectively.

Over the years and through his plays, poems and songs, Coward conducted a constant debate about love through his characters.

"Tell me, tell me, tell me, what is Love?" asks the young Sari in *Bitter Sweet*. "Is it some consuming flame / Part of the Moon, part of the Sun / Part of a dream barely begun?"

Later in the same 1929 play, Manon, the café chanteuse, expresses what has come to be seen as Coward's considered conclusion:

*I think if only -  
Somebody splendid really needed me,  
Someone affectionate and dear,  
Cares would be ended if I knew that he  
Wanted to have me near.  
But I believe that since my life began  
The most I've had is just  
A talent to amuse.  
Heigh, ho, if love were all.*

A later verse captures a more realistic, if more disappointing, realization.

*I am no good at Love.  
My heart should be wild and free  
I kill the unfortunate golden goose,  
Whoever it may be,  
With over-articulate tenderness  
And too much intensity.  
I am no good at Love.  
I betray it with little sins,  
For I feel the misery of the end  
In the moment that it begins  
And the bitterness of the last good-bye  
Is the bitterness that wins.*

In *Blithe Spirit*, Charles Condomine lives to love again. But what are his chances? Does anyone in a Coward play live happily ever after?

In a late life television interview, Coward is asked to sum up his life in one word. "Well, now comes the terrible decision as to whether to be corny or not. The answer is one word. Love. To know that you are among people you love and who love you. That has made all the successes wonderful – much more wonderful than they'd have been anyway. And that's it, really."

So perhaps the answer is not romantic love, but loving. ●

Barry Day  
Editor of *The Letters of Noël Coward*

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Barry Day has written and compiled a number of books on Noël Coward including *Star Quality: The Treasures of Noël Coward* (Andre Deutsch), *The Letters of Noël Coward* (Knopf/Methuen) and *The Complete Lyrics of Noël Coward* (Overlook/Methuen).



## Who's Who



### ANGELA LANSBURY

(*Madame Arcati*) has enjoyed an unprecedented career of over 70 years beginning as a star of motion

pictures before continuing as an award-winning stage actor in New York and beyond. This production of *Blithe Spirit* began in London in January 2014, and in 2013 she toured Australia in *Driving Miss Daisy* with James Earl Jones and Boyd Gaines. Other recent Broadway appearances are Gore Vidal's *The Best Man* (2012), *A Little Night Music* (2010), her first appearance as Madame Arcati in a 2009 revival of *Blithe Spirit*, winning her a fifth Tony Award, and in Terrence McNally's *Deuce* (2007). Her 1957 Broadway debut was as Bert Lahr's wife in *Hotel Paradiso*. In 1960, she returned as Joan Plowright's mother in Shelagh Delaney's highly acclaimed *A Taste of Honey* and in 1964 she starred in her first musical, *Anyone Can Whistle*. Lansbury returned to Broadway in triumph in 1966 in *Mame*, for which she won her first Tony Award. She received others for *Dear World* (1968), *Gypsy* (1974) and *Sweeney Todd* (1979). From 1984-1996 she starred as Jessica Fletcher, mystery-writing amateur sleuth, on *Murder, She Wrote*, the longest-running detective drama series in television history, winning her four Golden Globe Awards. A three-time nominee, she received an Oscar for Lifetime Achievement in 2013. A member of the Theater and Television Halls of Fame, a Kennedy Center Honors and National Medal for the Arts recipient, in 2014 Queen Elizabeth II named her a Dame of the British Empire.



### CHARLES EDWARDS

(*Charles Condomine*) plays Lady Edith's publisher lover Michael Gregson in *Downton Abbey*. As well as *Blithe Spirit*,

recent performances in London's West End include Bertie in the original stage play *The King's Speech*, and Benedick in *Much Ado About Nothing* at Shakespeare's Globe; he was nominated as Best Actor at the Evening Standard Awards for both of these. On Broadway he led the Tony-winning production of *The 39 Steps*, having originated the role of Richard Hannay in London, where it won the Olivier Award for Comedy. Work at London's National Theatre includes Marsden in Eugene O'Neill's *Strange Interlude*, for which he won the 2014 Clarence Derwent Award, and *This House*, for which he was again nominated by the Evening Standard. For television he recently completed work on *Arthur and George*, a new series about Sherlock Holmes author Arthur Conan Doyle, and on *Ripper Street* for the BBC. He played Michael Palin in the BAFTA-nominated TV film *Holy Flying Circus* (BBC). Films include *Philomena*, *Batman Begins* and *Mansfield Park*.



### JEMIMA ROOPER

(*Elvira*). Most recently Jemima has been seen on the West End stage in *Breeders* and *Blithe Spirit*. Other theatre credits

include *One Man, Two Guvvors* (NT, Tour, West End, Broadway), *Me and My Girl* (Sheffield Crucible), *All My Sons* (West End), *The Power of Yes* (NT), *The Great Game: Afghanistan* (Tricycle), *Her Naked Skin* (NT), *A Respectable Wedding* (Young Vic), *Us*

and *Them* (Hampstead Theatre), *Where Do We Live* (Royal Court). Film: *What If, One Chance, The Black Dahlia, Kinky Boots, A Sound of Thunder*. Television: *Blandings, Lucky 7, Atlantis* (Series 1 & 2), *Frankenstein's Wedding, A Bouquet of Barbed Wire, Poirot: The Third Girl, Lost in Austen, Hex, As If, The Railway Children*. Jemima was nominated for Best Supporting Actress for *What's On Stage Awards 2011 (One Man, Two Guvvors)*, 2010 (*All My Sons*) and for Best Performance in Musical for Theatre Awards UK 2011 (*Me And My Girl*).



### CHARLOTTE PARRY

(*Ruth Condomine*) was a member of the inaugural year of Sam Mendes' Bridge Project, performing *The*

*Cherry Orchard* and *The Winter's Tale* at BAM, in the West End and internationally. Broadway: *The Winslow Boy, Coram Boy, The Real Thing, The Importance Of Being Earnest*. Off Broadway: *Equivocation* (MTC), *Bluebird* (Atlantic), *Look Back In Anger* and *Howard Katz* (Roundabout). For Sir Peter Hall Company at BAM, Center Theatre Group and London: *As You Like It* and *The Importance Of Being Earnest*. Regional: Eliza Doolittle in *Pygmalion* (Old Globe), world premiere of John Patrick Shanley's *Pirate* (New York Stage and Film), world premiere of Albee's *Me, Myself & I*, and *The Birthday Party* (McCarter Theatre). In the U.K. - West End: *The Colby Sisters, The Real Thing, The Cherry Orchard, The Winter's Tale*. TV: *The Safe House* (ITV), *Extreme Ghost Stories* (ITV). Film: *The Park Bench, The Importance Of Being Earnest*. Charlotte has narrated over 50 audiobooks.



**SIMON JONES** (*Dr. Bradman*). Broadway: *The Real Thing*, *Benefactors*, *Getting Married*, *School for Scandal*, *Real Inspector Hound* and *Fifteen-*

*Minute Hamlet*, *Herbal Bed*, *Ring Round the Moon*, *Private Lives*, *Waiting in the Wings* and *Blithe Spirit* (with Angela Lansbury, also in London). Off-Broadway includes *Death Takes a Holiday*, *Home*, *Privates on Parade*, *Cocktail Party*, *Long Island Sound*. Television includes *Brideshead Revisited*; *Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy*; *Blackadder*; *Newhart*; *Oz*; *Murder, She Wrote*; *Cosby Mysteries* and *Law & Order*. Films include *Brazil*, *Twelve Monkeys*, *Miracle on 34th Street*, *Devil's Own*, *Club Paradise*, *American Friends*, *Privates on Parade* and *Monty Python's Meaning of Life*. Other work includes 12 years as Co-Artistic Director of TACT (off-Broadway); award-winning work on radio; audio books. Details at [www.simonjonesinfo.com](http://www.simonjonesinfo.com).



**SUSAN LOUISE O'CONNOR** (*Edith*) made her Broadway debut in *Blithe Spirit* with Angela Lansbury, receiving a Theatre World Award, the Dorothy

Loudon Fellowship and an Outer Critics Circle nomination. Her other theatre credits include productions with Rattlestick Theatre, Urban Stages, Huntington Theatre, Premiere Stages, Cincinnati Playhouse, St. Louis Rep, Abingdon Theater, La MaMa, Collaboration Town and Barrington Stage. Susan recently guest-starred on *Law & Order: SVU* and *Orange is the New Black*. Additional film, TV and web credits include *Boardwalk Empire*,

*Law & Order: CI*, *Doomsdays*, *Flying Scissors*, *Coming Up Roses*, *Acts of Worship*, *Front Cover*, *Project Beth* and *Wallflowers*. She stars in, co-wrote and co-produced the web series *Lucy Knows Love*. [www.susanlouiseoconnor.com](http://www.susanlouiseoconnor.com).



**SANDRA SHIPLEY** (*Mrs. Bradman*, *standby Madame Arcati*). Broadway: *The Importance of Being Earnest*, *Blithe Spirit*, *Equus*, *Pygmalion*, *Retreat*

*From Moscow*, *Vincent in Brixton*, *Indiscretions*. Off-Broadway / Tour: *Anything Goes* (tour), *Gentlemen Prefer Blondes* (Encores), *Suddenly Last Summer*, *Deep Blue Sea* and *Arms and the Man* (Roundabout), *Kindertransport* (MTC), *Stuff Happens*, *Venus* (Public). Regional: ART, Humana, Hartford, Huntington, La Jolla, Long Wharf, Old Globe, Williamstown, Guthrie. U.K.: RSC, Royal Court, West End. Film / TV: *Monument Ave*, *Law & Order: SVU*, *Third Watch* and *Lipstick Jungle*. Elliot Norton Award Medal for Theatre Excellence.



**MARK CAPRI** (*standby Charles, Dr. Bradman*). Broadway: *Private Lives*, *Blithe Spirit*. Roundabout: *On Approval* (Theatre World Award).

West End: *Man and Superman* Metropolitan Opera: *Iphigenie En Tauride*. Mark Taper Forum: *Arcadia*. Leading roles at Shakespeare Theatre D.C., McCarter, South Coast, Berkeley and Seattle Reps, Pasadena Playhouse, Old Globe, others. Film: *The Empire Strikes Back*, *Titanic*, others. Royal Academy of Dramatic Art.



**REBECCA DINES** (*standby Ruth, Mrs. Bradman*). Recent roles include Margie in *Good People* and Sarah in *Time Stands Still*.

Favorite roles include Liz in *Present Laughter* and Pamela (et al) in *The 39 Steps*. Critics Circle Awards for Ruth in *The Homecoming*, Alexa Vere de Vere in *As Bees In Honey Drown* and Lorraine Sheldon in *The Man Who Came To Dinner*. Southern California appearances include The Laguna Playhouse and South Coast Rep. A native of Australia, Rebecca appeared in the cult TV drama *Prisoner Cell Block H* in its final year.



**TONI SMITH** (*standby Edith, Elvira*) received her BFA from NYU and her MFA from UCLA. Representative Roles: Elizabeth

Benning, *Young Frankenstein*; Claudia Nardi, *Nine*; Cathy, *The Last Five Years*; Electra, *Electra*; Bobbi, *Some Girls*; The Young Wife, *Hello Again*; Helena, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*; Catherine, *Pippin*; Ghost of Christmas Past / Belle, *A Christmas Carol*.

**NOËL COWARD** (*Playwright*). Born in 1899 in Teddington, England, Noël Coward maintained an illustrious and multifaceted career as actor, director, producer, playwright, songwriter, cabaret artist and author. Following his first adult role in *Charley's Aunt*, and the writing of his first song, "Forbidden Fruit," in 1915, he went on to produce and star in many of his hit plays and musicals, including *The Vortex*, *Hay Fever*, *Bitter Sweet*, *Private Lives*, *Design for Living*, *Tonight*

at 8:30, *Present Laughter*, *This Happy Breed*, *Sail Away* and *Suite in Three Keys*. He became a huge star in the U.S. following his appearance in cabaret in Las Vegas in 1955 and subsequent TV specials for CBS. His film work includes *Cavalcade* (Academy Award, Best Picture), *In Which We Serve*, *Brief Encounter* and *The Scoundrel*. He published collections of short stories, verse, a novel *Pomp and Circumstance* and his two-part autobiography, *Present Indicative* and *Future Indefinite*. Coward was knighted in 1970 and died in his beloved Jamaica in 1973.

**MICHAEL BLAKEMORE** (*Director*) is the only director ever to win Tony Awards for both a play, *Copenhagen*, and a musical, *Kiss Me, Kate*, in the same year. Other accolades include three Drama Desk Awards and Tony nominations for *Joe Egg*, *Noises Off*, *City of Angels*, *Lettice and Lovage* and *The Life*. Recent Broadway: *Democracy*, *Deuce* and *Is He Dead?* Off-B'way: *Death Defying Acts*. In England, he was Laurence Olivier's associate at the National Theatre, directing him in *Long Day's Journey Into Night*. NT productions include *Afterlife*, *The National Health*, *The Front Page*, *Macbeth*, *The Cherry Orchard* and *After the Fall*. West End successes include *Three Sisters*, *Design for Living*, *Benefactors*, *Uncle Vanya* and *The Sisters Rosensweig*. RSC: *Privates on Parade* (also film). Royal Court: *Don's Party* and Shaw's *Widowers' Houses*. Film: *Country Life* and *A Personal History of the Australian Surf*. Books: *Next Season* and his memoir, *Arguments With England*, and, most recently, *Stage Blood*. He is the recipient of an Order of the British Empire, and, from Australia, the Order of Australia.

**SIMON HIGLETT** (*Designer*). Simon has designed numerous productions in London's West End, for the Royal Shakespeare Company, Donmar, Royal Court, Almeida, Old Vic, most major U.K. theatres and opera worldwide. His credits at the Shakespeare Theatre, Washington D.C include *Lady Windermere's Fan* for which he won the Helen Hayes Award for Best Design.

**MARK JONATHAN** (*Lighting Design*). Mark has created drama, opera, ballet and musical lighting designs at LA Opera, Washington National Opera, ABT, Houston Ballet, Broadway and Charleston and in the UK, Belgium, Canada, China, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Israel, Italy, Japan, Mexico and South Africa. He received a Drama Desk nomination for *Prometheus Bound*. [www.markjonathan.com](http://www.markjonathan.com).

**BEN and MAX RINGHAM** (*Sound Design*). Recent credits include *Richard III* (Trafalgar Studios), *Adler and Gibb* (Royal Court), *Boeing Boeing* (Sheffield Crucible), *I Can't Sing* (London Palladium), *Blithe Spirit* (Gielgud Theatre), *Perfect Nonsense* (Duke of York's Theatre), *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Michael Grandage Company), *The World of Extreme Happiness* (National Theatre Shed) and *Tartuffe* (Birmingham Rep).

**MARTIN PAKLEDINAZ** (*Angela Lansbury's Costumes*). Broadway: *Nice Work If You Can Get It* (Tony nomination), *The Normal Heart*, *Anything Goes* (Tony nomination), *The Pajama Game* (Tony nomination), *Lend Me a Tenor* (Hewes Award, Tony and Outer Critics nominations), *Thoroughly Modern Millie*, (Tony Award winner), *Kiss Me, Kate* (Tony Award winner), *Blithe Spirit*, *Chaplin*.

**JOHN M. ATHERLAY** (*Production Stage Manager*). Broadway: *Fela*, *Xanadu*, *Beauty and The Beast*, *A Small Family Business*, *The Seagull*, *Prelude To A Kiss*. National Tours: *The Gershwins' Porgy And Bess*, *Anything Goes*, *Fela*, *Young Frankenstein*, *The 101 Dalmatians*, *Fiddler on the Roof* with Topol, *Little Shop of Horrors*, *The Producers*, *Stardust* with Betty Buckley.

**LORA K. POWELL** (*Stage Manager*). Broadway/NY: *Annie Get Your Gun*, *Chicago*, *The Life*, *Annie*, *The Wizard of Oz*. LA: *Harmony*, *The Scottsboro Boys*, *Backbeat*, *Seminar*, *Follies*, *Parfumerie*, *Maurice Hines is Tappin' Thru Life*, *Wicked*, *The Producers*, *The Lion King*, *Disney's Aladdin—A Musical Spectacular*, *Scary Musical the Musical*. National Tour: *Wicked*.

**TYPE A MARKETING** (*Marketing & Press*) is an independent, full-service marketing company specializing in Broadway and national tours. Current/upcoming roster—Broadway: *It Shoulda Been You*, *Kinky Boots*, *Les Misérables*, *The Phantom of the Opera* and *Side Show*. Tours: *Anything Goes*, *Dirty Dancing*, *Flashdance – The Musical*, *I Love Lucy: Live on Stage*, *Nice Work If You Can Get It* and *Million Dollar Quartet*. [www.typeamktg.com](http://www.typeamktg.com).

**AURORA PRODUCTIONS** (*Production Management*). Current: *The Book of Mormon* (Broadway / National Tours), *Once* (Broadway / National Tour), *Matilda*, *Hedwig*, *This is Our Youth*, *Indian Ink*, *Amazing Grace*, *A Delicate Balance*, *The Real Thing*, *The River*, *The Elephant Man*, and *Honeymoon in Vegas*. Aurora has been providing technical supervision and production management to the entertainment industry since 1989. [www.auroraprod.com](http://www.auroraprod.com).

**TELSEY + COMPANY** (Casting). Broadway / Tours: *Honeymoon in Vegas*, *The Last Ship*, *Love Letters*, *This is Our Youth*, *If/Then*, *Pippin*, *Motown*, *Kinky Boots*, *Rock of Ages*, *Wicked*, *Newsies*, *Million Dollar Quartet*. Film: *The Intern*, *Ithaca*, *Focus*, *A Most Violent Year*, *Into the Woods*, *The Last 5 Years*, *Stage Fright*, *Song One*. TV: *Peter Pan Live!*, *Masters of Sex*, commercials. [www.telseyandco.com](http://www.telseyandco.com)

**GABRIELLE DAWES** (U.K. Casting Director) is a freelance Casting Director, and an Associate of Chichester Festival Theatre. Over 60 productions for London's West End, Chichester and U.K. regional theatres include *King Lear* (also BAM), *The Norman Conquests* (also Broadway), *Macbeth* (also BAM and Broadway). Television includes *Macbeth* directed by Rupert Goold, and Kwame Kwei Armah's *Elmina's Kitchen*. Films include *Perdie* (BAFTA award for Best Short Film) and *The Suicide Club*.

**RICHARDS/CLIMAN, INC.** (General Management). Founded in 1997 by David R. Richards and Tamar Haimes (formerly Climan). Current: *You Can't Take It With You*, *It's Only A Play*, *Rodgers + Hammerstein's Cinderella*. Past Broadway/Tours: *All The Way*, *Anything Goes*, *August: Osage County*, *The Gershwins' Porgy and Bess*, *The Glass Menagerie*, *Twelve Angry Men*, *Annie*.

**JEFFREY RICHARDS** (Producer) is honored to renew his association with Dame Angela Lansbury, having presented the Broadway production of *Blithe Spirit* in 2009, the London production of *Blithe Spirit* in 2014, and the 2012 Broadway production of *Gore Vidal's The Best Man*, in which she co-starred. This year Mr. Richards will be represented on Broadway with *You Can't Take It With You*, *The Heidi Chronicles* and *Wolf*

*Hall, Parts I and II*, the latter marking his 40th Broadway production. He is a graduate of Wesleyan University. A few decades ago.

**JERRY FRANKEL** (Producer) received Tony Awards for *All the Way* (2014), *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* (2013), *Glengarry Glen Ross* (2005), *August: Osage County*, *The Gershwins' Porgy and Bess*, *Hair*, *Spring Awakening* and *Death of a Salesman*. Past Broadway: *Lady Day at Emerson's Bar & Grill*, *The Glass Menagerie*, *Gore Vidal's The Best Man*, *Bonnie & Clyde*, *The Merchant of Venice*, *Race*, *Blithe Spirit*, *Reasons to Be Pretty*, *Will Ferrell's You're Welcome America*. Film: *Tracy Letts' August: Osage County*.

**STEVE TRAXLER** (Producer) founded Jam Theatricals with his partner Arny Granat 20 years ago. Today the company manages 30 subscription-series markets across the country. Steve has produced many shows on Broadway, working with playwrights including David Mamet, Harold Pinter, Will Eno and Tracy Letts. He also produced the movie *August: Osage County*, starring Julia Roberts and Meryl Streep and the HBO special *You're Welcome America*, starring Will Ferrell.

**LEE DEAN** (Producer) has over 100 producing credits winning 31 major awards. West End / Broadway: *End of The Rainbow*; *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?*; *The Goat, or Who is Sylvia?*; *Copenhagen*; *Democracy*; *Arcadia*; *The Invention of Love*; *blue/ orange*; *Dinner*; *Duet For One*; *All The Fun Of The Fair*; *Alarms & Excursions*; *Feelgood*; *Comic Potential*; *Things We Do For Love*; *Bedroom Farce*; *Damsels in Distress*; *Dead Funny*; *The Memory of Water*; *In Flame*; *Abigail's Party*; *Glorious!*; *Daytona*; *King Charles III*; *Blithe Spirit*.

**JOHN FROST** (Producer) is Australia's most prolific and successful theatre producer, responsible for the Australian productions of *The Producers*, *Chicago*, *Doctor Zhivago*, *The Phantom of the Opera* and *Wicked*. Recent successes include *South Pacific*, *Driving Miss Daisy* with Angela Lansbury and James Earl Jones and *An Evening with Julie Andrews*. Broadway credits include the Tony Award winning productions *The King and I*, *Hairspray* and *Exit the King*. West End credits include *Priscilla, Queen of the Desert*, *Lady Windermere's Fan*, *Blithe Spirit* and *The Bodyguard*.

**CHARLES DIAMOND** (Producer). West End Productions: *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?*, the Almeida productions of *Duet for One* and *King Charles III*, Complicite's production of *Endgame* with Mark Rylance, *Design for Living*, *End of The Rainbow*, *Long Day's Journey into Night*, *The Resistible Rise of Arturo Ui*, *The Duck House*, *Blithe Spirit* with Angela Lansbury. Touring Productions: *The Clean House*, *Basket Case*, *Ladies in Lavender*, *Wife After Death*, *The Dishwashers*, *King Lear* with Frank Langella at BAM.

**WILL TRICE** (Producer). Tony Awards for *All The Way*, *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf* and *Porgy and Bess* as well as nominations for *The Glass Menagerie* and *The Best Man*. Also this season on Broadway — *You Can't Take it With You*, *The Heidi Chronicles*, and *Wolf Hall*.

**KEN DAVENPORT** (Producer). It's *Only a Play*, *Kinky Boots*, *Mothers and Sons*, *The Bridges of Madison County*, *Macbeth*, *Godspell*, *Blithe Spirit* (Broadway/West End), *Altar Boyz*, *Awesome 80s Prom* and others. Created "Be a Broadway Star" board

game, and iPhone app AT THE BOOTH. For more, read his blog [TheProducersPerspective.com](http://TheProducersPerspective.com). Upcoming: *Gettin' the Band Back Together, Somewhere in Time*.

**KATHLEEN K. JOHNSON** (*Producer*). Broadway: *A Gentleman's Guide to Love and Murder* (2014 Tony Award), *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf* (2013 Tony Award), David Mamet's *Glengarry Glen Ross*, *Race* and *A Life in the Theatre*, Nicky Silver's *The Lyons*, Gore Vidal's *The Best Man*, Tracy Letts' *Superior Donuts*, Noël Coward's *Blithe Spirit*, *HAIR* (2009 Tony Award).

**JAM THEATRICALS** (*Producer*), founded by Arny Granat and Steve Traxler, manages 30 subscription-series markets throughout North America, and recently took over the management and programming of the National Theatre in Washington, D.C. They have produced over 40 Broadway shows, winning a total of seven Tony Awards for producing *All The Way*, *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf*, *Hair*, *August: Osage County*, *The History Boys*, *Glengarry Glen Ross* and *Monty Python's Spamalot*.

**ACTORS' EQUITY ASSOCIATION** (AEA), founded in 1913, represents more than 49,000 actors and stage managers in the United States. Equity seeks to advance, promote and foster the art of live theatre as an essential component of our society. Equity negotiates wages and working conditions, providing a wide range of benefits, including health and pension plans. AEA is a member of the AFL-CIO, and is affiliated with FIA, an international organization of performing arts unions. The Equity emblem is our mark of excellence. [www.actorsequity.org](http://www.actorsequity.org).

## FOR CENTER THEATRE GROUP

**MICHAEL RITCHIE** (*Artistic Director*) is in his 10th season as Center Theatre Group's Artistic Director, and has led over 174 productions to the Ahmanson, Taper and Douglas stages since his arrival in 2005. From 1996 to 2004 Michael was the Producer of the Williamstown Theatre Festival and prior to that he was a Production Stage Manager in NYC. At CTG, he premiered six musicals that moved to Broadway – *The Drowsy Chaperone* (which won 13 Tony Award nominations), *Curtains* (eight Tony nominations), *13, 9 to 5: The Musical*, *Bloody Bloody Andrew Jackson* and *Leap of Faith*. He has produced 39 world premieres including the musicals *Minsky's*, *Venice* and *Sleeping Beauty Wakes*, and the plays *Bengal Tiger at the Baghdad Zoo* (a Pulitzer Prize finalist that also moved to Broadway), *Water & Power* and *Yellow Face*, and he presented a broad range of plays and musicals ranging from *Dead End* to *The Black Rider* to *Edward Scissorhands* to blockbusters such as *God of Carnage*, *Mary Poppins*, *Jersey Boys* and *August: Osage County*. In addition, Michael inaugurated CTG's New Play Production Program, designed to foster the development and production of new work.

**EDWARD L. RADA** (*Managing Director*) returned to Center Theatre Group in 2011 after previously serving as CTG's Chief Financial Officer for 12 years (1996–2008). Rada spent three years (2008–2011) as President of the Music Center Foundation, a non-profit corporation that holds and invests the endowment and reserve funds for the Music Center and its resident companies (including CTG). Prior to his years at CTG, he was the Director of Finance at The Old Globe

in San Diego and principal of Rada & Associates, an accounting firm that specialized in entertainment-related non-profit organizations and theatrical productions. He is a graduate of Occidental College in Los Angeles with numerous post-graduate coursework and credentials. He currently serves on the board of directors for Entertainment Industry Foundation, Theatre @ Boston Court, and United Support of Artists for Africa/USA for Africa, among other affiliations. He also serves on the board of trustees for the pension, health and welfare and 401(k) plans of I.A.T.S.E. Local 33 Stagehands Union.

**DOUGLAS C. BAKER** (*Producing Director*) is now in his 25th season at CTG. Previously, he managed Broadway and touring productions including *Tru*, *Born Yesterday*, *The Gospel at Colonus*, *Annie*, *A Chorus Line*, *Working*, *The Wiz* and *Legends!*, which premiered at the Ahmanson Theatre in 1986 and starred Mary Martin and Carol Channing. Doug is a member of the Achievement Hall of Fame of Chagrin Falls Schools in Ohio and a graduate of Albion College. He is an active member of the Broadway League, the Independent Presenters Network and is a proud member of the Association of Theatrical Press Agents and Managers. In May 2013 Doug received The Broadway League's prestigious Outstanding Achievement in Presenter Management Award.

**JEFFREY UPAH** (*General Manager, Ahmanson Theatre*) has worked in management at Center Theatre Group since 2006 on more than 50 musicals, plays and special events including both pre-Broadway productions and Broadway tours. Some of his favorites include *Follies*,

*God of Carnage* and *The Black Rider* (having previously worked on Robert Wilson productions in Boston, Houston and São Paulo, Brazil). Prior to CTG, he was the marketing manager for the last two of his 11 seasons with The Santa Fe Opera, and worked in various capacities at Yale Repertory Theatre, American Repertory Theatre and Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival, among others. He graduated magna cum laude with his studies in film and theatre from

Washington University in St. Louis, and received an MFA in theatre management from the Yale School of Drama.

**GORDON DAVIDSON** (*Founding Artistic Director*) led the Taper throughout its first 38 seasons, guiding over 300 productions to its stage and winning countless awards for himself and the theatre — including the Tony Award for theatrical excellence, Margo Jones

Award, The Governor's Award for the Arts and a Guggenheim fellowship. *The Kentucky Cycle* and *Angels in America* (Part One) won the Pulitzer in consecutive years and, in 1994, three of the four plays nominated for the Tony Award for Best Play were from the Taper (*Angels in America* won). In 1989 Gordon took over the Ahmanson and, in 2004, he produced the inaugural season in the Kirk Douglas Theatre.



L-R: Susan Louise O'Connor, Sandra Shipley, Charles Edwards, Angela Lansbury, Charlotte Parry and Simon Jones in Noël Coward's *Blithe Spirit*.

PHOTO BY JOAN MARCUS.

STAFF FOR NOËL COWARD'S BLITHE SPIRIT

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Associate Costume Designer ..... Bich Vu  
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SPECIAL THANKS

Jo Allan PR, Alan Brodie, Robert Calley.

Rehearsed at Center Theatre Group.

BlitheSpiritThePlay.com

CREDITS

Set built and painted by Rocket Scenery, UK;  
Additional Set and Prop Modifications by F&D Scenic  
Changes, Calgary, Canada; Lighting Equipment  
from PRG Lighting; Sound Equipment from Sound  
Associates; Angela Lansbury's Costumes by  
Barbara Matera Ltd.; Ladies' Costumes made by  
Sasha Kier, Hilary Wili and Robert Gordon; UK  
Wigs Supervisor Matt George. In Los Angeles, wigs  
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RAMINE AMELI, ALLISON AOUN, CATHERINE AVILA, MARIBEL BARCENA, ERYN PIERCE BOLLIN, JAZMINE JONAS, OLIVIA JONES, POLINA MATVEEVA, YAZMINE MIHOJEVICH, MONA PIRNOT, MATTHEW QUINLAN, KIMBERLY WELCH

Center Theatre Group would like to thank its exceptional staff for their ongoing commitment, dedication and extraordinary efforts.