

NOVEMBER 2024

SEATTLE
DEEP

Noël Coward's

BLITHE SPIRIT

NOVEMBER 29 - DECEMBER 22, 2024

DIRECTED BY
**ALLISON
NARVER**

THE SKIN OF OUR TEETH | PRIMARY TRUST | **BLITHE SPIRIT** |
BLUES FOR AN ALABAMA SKY | MOTHER RUSSIA | LAUGHS IN SPANISH | DUEL REALITY

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20TH ANNIVERSARY PRODUCTION

DIRECTED BY GREG CARTER

ADAPTED FROM A CHRISTMAS CAROL BY CHARLES DICKENS

MUSIC BY AYAKO OKANO

DEC 5-23



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November 2024 | Volume 43, No. 3



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CREATIVE DIRECTOR
 Angela Fetherolf



From the Vault

FAT HAM (2024)

PICTURED: REGINALD ANDRÉ JACKSON
 PHOTO BY BRONWEN HOUCK

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For Our Patrons

Mission

Seattle Rep collaborates with extraordinary artists to create productions and programs that reflect and elevate the diverse cultures, perspectives, and life experiences of our region.

Vision

Theater at the heart of public life.

Values

Artistic Vitality
Sustainability
Generous and Inclusive Practices

We welcome you to take pictures of the set before and after the show.

Share Your Photos

#BlitheSpiritsREP
@seattlerep



Photography, recording, and use of cell phones are **strictly prohibited** during the performance.

Code of Conduct

Seattle Rep is committed to being a racially, culturally, and socially just organization. We promote equity, diversity, and inclusion in all aspects of the work we do, and uphold a safe environment wherein all people are welcome to our space and are treated with respect and dignity.

It is our expectation that all patrons and those affiliated with Seattle Rep will align with this code of conduct and we reserve the right to relocate or remove any person from our theater who disregards this expectation.

Land Acknowledgment

Seattle Rep acknowledges that we are on the traditional land of the Coast Salish people. We honor with gratitude the land itself and its innumerable stewards, past and present. We recognize Washington's tribal nations, all of the Tribal signatories of the Treaty of Point Elliott, and the urban Native communities who continue to live and thrive in this space. This acknowledgment does not take the place of authentic relationships with Indigenous communities, but serves as a first step in honoring the land we are on and the people and cultures it has nurtured.

Learn more about how Seattle Rep is working to support and build relationships with Native communities at seattlerep.org/land

Emergencies

In an evacuation, wait for an announcement for further instructions. Ushers will be available for assistance. Familiarize yourself with the exit route nearest your seat.

Accessibility

Seattle Rep is committed to accessibility for all and will work with patrons to accommodate requests. We offer a variety of options to help make our performances accessible.

Accessible Performances:

We offer select English and Spanish Open Captioned, Audio Described, ASL-Interpreted, Sensory-Friendly, and mask-required performances. Find dates at seattlerep.org/accessibility or contact the Box Office for more information.

Hearing Loop: Seattle Rep is equipped with hearing loops that transmit sound directly to t-coil enabled hearing devices. There are also receivers and headphones available to borrow at Coat Check. Look for the Hearing Loop signs which indicate coverage at performances, ticket windows, concierge, and concessions.



Wheelchair Spaces, Wider Seats (Bagley), Transfer Seats, and Additional Seating Options: Please see an Usher or House Manager to see what accessible seating options are available for your performance.

Sensory Guides & Kits: Scene-by-scene guides of the sensory impact of this show and kits containing headphones, fidgets, sunglasses, and communication cards are available at Coat Check.

Large Print & Braille Programs: Available at Coat Check. Access our

Encore+ digital program through the QR code above where font size can be enlarged.

All Gender Restrooms are located on the second floor of the Leo K. Theater and a single-stall restroom is located near the Bagley Wright Theater restrooms on the first floor.

Wellness Room is located near the Bagley Wright Theater restrooms on the first floor.

Learn more at seattlerep.org/accessibility

From the Vault

PRIVATE LIVES (2006)

PICTURED: ROB BRECKENRIDGE, SUZANNE BOUCHARD, NIKKI COBLE, ALLEN FITZPATRICK
PHOTO BY CHRIS BENNION

Noël Coward's BLITHE SPIRIT

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RUN TIME

Approximately 2 hours
and 10 minutes including
one 15-minute intermission.



PRODUCTION
ADVISORY

This production uses
strobe and flashing light
effects, theatrical smoke
and haze, e-cigarettes,
and sudden loud noises.

CONTENT
ADVISORY

Scan below to view.



DIRECTED BY

Allison Narver

CREATIVE

SCENIC DESIGNER

Carey Wong

COSTUME DESIGNER

Cathy Hunt

LIGHTING DESIGNER

Connie Yun

SOUND DESIGNER

Cricket S. Myers

VOCAL/DIALECTS

Judith Shahn

STAGE MANAGER

Jamie J. Kranz

ASSISTANT STAGE MANAGER

Quinn Chase

CAST

(in order of appearance)

Sophie Kelly-Hedrick.....Edith
Gin HammondRuth
Arlando Smith.....Charles
Nate Tenenbaum Dr. Bradman
Sara Waisanen Mrs. Bradman
Anne AllgoodMadame Arcati
Kirsten PotterElvira

The Actors and Stage Managers employed in this production are Members of Actors' Equity Association, the Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers in the United States.

First presented by H.M. Tennent, Ltd. and John C. Wilson at the Opera House, Manchester on June 16, 1941 (the following week the company played at Leeds)

Subsequently presented at the Piccadilly Theatre, London on July 2, 1941, transferred to the St. James's Theatre on March 23, 1942 and then to the Duchess Theatre on October 6, 1942 (1,997 performances)

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www.alanbrodie.com

November 29 – December 22, 2024 | Bagley Wright Theater



From the Artistic Director

Dear Friends,

Welcome to Seattle Rep! We're delighted to raise your spirits this holiday season with one of the most popular comedies of the past century, ***Blithe Spirit***. Written in 1941 by the legendary playwright-composer-actor-singer Sir Noël Coward, this play showcases his signature razor-sharp dialogue and a high-concept comic plot that's made it an enduring classic. Eighty-plus years since Coward was at the height of his career and popularity, audiences today may only know his work for its superficial trappings: clipped British accents, dry martinis, shimmering gowns, and smoking jackets. But his plays are also wickedly smart and express ideas that were ahead of their time, each containing a subversive streak.

I'm fascinated and inspired by the fact that Coward wrote *Blithe Spirit* in the throes of Britain's involvement in World War II, while his country was living through the sustained nightly

horror of German bombings during the Blitz. Yet the play contains no reference to the world at war. Even though any performance during those terrifying times could have ended in real-life tragedy, it would seem Coward wanted audiences to laugh together defiantly in the face of fear. He conjures a world with a hilarious afterlife, where spirits make deadpan quips and carry on. We are lucky to be in this theater today in relative safety, but the need to laugh together—and the need to connect as a community during the best and worst of times—remains timeless.

Today's production of *Blithe Spirit* was created especially for you, our local audience, and exemplifies Seattle Rep's more than sixty-year mission as a professional regional theater. In alignment with our new three-year strategic plan (see feature at right), it also reflects Seattle Rep's commitment to explore and develop a new producing model that increases our artistic impact and invests more of our resources in building world-class, locally made theater. Every element was **#BuiltBySeattleRep** here on site in collaboration with extraordinary artists and artisans who call Seattle home. With nationally renowned Seattle director **Allison Narver** (*Boeing Boeing*, *The Hound of the Baskervilles*, *Three Tall Women*) at the helm, an acclaimed **all-local cast** graces the stage in **Cathy Hunt**'s lushly detailed period costumes and on **Carey Wong**'s grand English country house scenic design. The countless creative

“The need to connect as a community during the best and worst of times remains timeless.”

Check Out Our New Strategic Plan

From shifts in theatergoing habits to new audiences and higher costs, the realities of running a not-for-profit theater have changed a lot since 2019. In response, Seattle Rep has launched a new **strategic plan** that will see us trying some new things over the next three years. Our plan is focused on three key initiatives to help us to better serve our community and pursue our mission, vision, and values in the future:

ARTISTIC IMPACT

Exploring and developing a new producing model.

PATRON LOYALTY & GROWTH

Working to build a larger, more representative, more loyal Seattle community to sustain and grow the Theater.

TEAM CULTURE

Pioneering sustainable, efficient theater work practices to optimize performance.

In three years, we plan for Seattle Rep to be even closer to our vision of **Theater at the Heart of Public Life**. But we can't do it without our community of theatergoers, donors, volunteers, and artists. **Thank you** for your belief and participation!

choices they made together have been brought to life here in this theater for a one-of-a-kind interpretation of this classic built just for our community.

We're so glad that you made plans to join us at Seattle Rep today. As we look to the future, another key element of our strategic plan reflects our commitment to building stronger relationships with audiences and delivering a thoroughly enjoyable theatergoing experience from start to finish. With every performance we share together, we hope to inspire you to return again and again to Seattle Rep to connect with local artists and your local community for a limitless variety of stories and shared theater experiences. Today, let's laugh together. Cheers!

Until next time,

Dámaso Rodríguez
Artistic Director

Learn more about what we seek to achieve at



**seattlerep.org/
strategicplan**

Cast



Anne Allgood
Madame Arcati

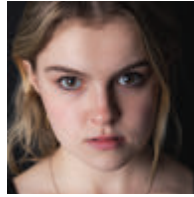
Anne Allgood has played Broadway, national tours, and regional theaters coast to coast. CORE Company Member at Seattle's ACT, starring in many productions (most recently *POTUS*; notably *Sweat*, *The Women*, *Old Times*, *Mary Stewart*, *Das Barbecü*, *Rock 'n Roll*, *Tribes*, *Miss Witherspoon*, *Vincent in Brixton*, *The Clean House*, many *Christmas Carols*). At The 5th Avenue Theatre, she's led dozens of shows: *Sweeney Todd*, *Candide*, *Oklahoma*, *Memphis*, *Sunday in the Park with George*, many others. At Seattle Rep: *You Can't Take It With You*, *Luna Gale*, *The Constant Wife*, *Bad Dates*, *Boeing Boeing*. Thanks for coming!



Gin Hammond
Ruth

Gin is an award-winning Harvard University/Moscow Art Theatre graduate, most recently seen in *POTUS* at ACT. Gin has been awarded National Endowment for the Arts grants for multiple plays, and her book, *Returning the Bones*, is a National Indies Excellence Finalist and an INDIES Book of the Year Gold Award-winner. She is also co-founder of the

Meditations for Actors mobile app. Gin's recent solo show, *Living IncogNegro*, will be released as a feature-length film in 2025. She couldn't be happier to be part of this spirited extravaganza!



Sophie Kelly-Hedrick
Edith

Sophie Kelly-Hedrick (she/her) is thrilled to be back at Seattle Rep! She was last seen at Seattle Rep during the 2017/18 Season in *MAC BETH* (also produced Off-Broadway at Red Bull Theatre and Hunter Theatre Project). Sophie earned her B.F.A. in Drama at New York University's Tisch School of the Arts. Recent TV/Film credits include *Pretty Little Liars: Original Sin* (MAX), *How (Not) to Get Rid of a Body*, and the upcoming *Perfect Love*. sophiekelly-hedrick.com, [@sophiekellyhedrick](https://www.instagram.com/sophiekellyhedrick)



Kirsten Potter
Elvira

Kirsten has performed with Seattle Rep, the Mark Taper Forum, South Coast Repertory, ACT, and Milwaukee Repertory Theater, among others. Favorite roles at Seattle Rep include *Photograph 51*, *Or*, and *A View from the Bridge*. As a narrator, she has recorded numerous audiobooks and articles and

voices the role of Mara Sov in the *Destiny* video game series. As a playwright, her first play, *Rubicon*, received its premiere in 2024 at Denver Center for the Performing Arts and was honored as Best New Play by the Colorado Theater Guild. Always and everything for C, M, & W.



Arlando Smith
Charles

Arlando is so happy to return to Seattle Rep after working on *The Skin of Our Teeth* this season and *Fat Ham* in the last. Elsewhere locally, his work has been seen at ACT, Book-It Repertory Theatre, Seattle Opera, Seattle Public Theater, Seattle Shakespeare Company, Spectrum Dance Theater, and Village Theatre. Further afield, he has performed at the Edinburgh Fringe Festival, the Kennedy Center, the Los Angeles Theatre Center, and The Public Theater in New York. He has also worked extensively in voiceover, commercials, film, and television. arlandosmith.com



Nate Tenenbaum
Dr. Bradman

Nate Tenenbaum's (he/him) pre-pandemic credits include *Indecent* (Seattle Rep), *Urinetown* (ACT/The 5th Avenue Theatre),

CELEBRATING 125 YEARS OF NOËL COWARD

This production of *Blithe Spirit* coincides with #Coward125, a two-year celebration of the enduring legacy of Sir Noël Coward (1899–1973) leading up to Coward's 125th birthday. Stay up to date with #Coward125 by keeping an eye on the official Noël Coward socials and visiting noelcoward.com



Scan to learn more about Coward's incredible life and work and explore further recommended reading.

- @noelcowardauthor
- @sirnoelcoward
- @sirnoelcoward

Boeing Boeing (TheatreO), *The Pillowman* (ActOne). During quarantine: Baked one strawberry cheesecake, sewed one shirt (unwearable), and played his vinyl. Post-quarantine: *The Wiz* (The 5th Avenue Theatre); *Cowboy Bob* (The Alley Theatre, Houston); *A Case for the Existence of God* and *Mrs. Loman is Leaving* (ACT). Love to my dolls and my baby boys.



Sara Waisanen
Mrs. Bradman

Sara Waisanen has enjoyed working with theaters like Arena Stage, Dallas Theater Center, Cal Shakes, and Perseverance Theatre, to name a few. Here in Seattle, Sara has been seen on stage at ACT and Seattle Shakespeare Company. Sara wants to send so many thanks and love to Dick and Sharon Waisanen.

Creative

Noël Coward
Playwright

From humble beginnings, Sir Noël Coward (1899–1973) would achieve international recognition for his work as a playwright, composer, director, actor, and singer, as well as for his incomparable wit and effortless style. Coward continues to enthral and delight audiences. 50 years after his death, his popularity endures with his work constantly staged around the world. noelcoward.com

Allison Narver
Director

Allison Narver is an award-winning stage director whose work has been seen at theaters across the country. Regional: Seattle Rep, ACT, Seattle Children’s Theatre, Intiman, The 5th Avenue Theatre, Book-It Repertory Theatre, New Century Theatre Company, Seattle Shakespeare Company, Portland Opera, Portland Center Stage, Oregon Shakespeare Festival, Yale Repertory Theatre, Studio Theatre, City Theatre Company (Pittsburgh), REDCAT. New York: The New Victory Theater, Ars Nova, The Public Theater, Cherry Lane Theatre, New Dramatists, Kirk Theatre, and WP Theater, among many others.

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Carey Wong

Scenic Designer

Theater credits: Berkeley Repertory Theatre, Portland Center Stage, Arizona Theatre Company, Baltimore Center Stage, Syracuse Stage, Alliance Theatre, Indiana Repertory Theatre, The 5th Avenue Theatre, Seattle Children's Theatre, ACT, Village Theatre, Marin Theatre Company, Prince Music Theater, Hey City Theater, Spain's Nearco Producciones. Resident Designer for Portland Opera, Opera Memphis, Wildwood Park for the Performing Arts. Opera credits: Seattle Opera, Spoleto Festival USA, New York's Valhalla Wagnerfest, Pittsburgh Opera, Beijing and Macao Music Festivals. careywang.com

Cathy Hunt

Costume Designer

Cathy Hunt has designed costumes for 100+ theater and opera productions. Her work has been seen at Seattle Rep, Hartford Stage, San Diego Repertory Theatre, Syracuse Stage, New Victory Theater, Cincinnati Opera, Pittsburgh Opera, Seattle Opera, The 5th Avenue Theatre, Seattle Children's Theatre, Intiman, ACT, Village Theatre, L.A. Theatre Works, Childsplay, and Clarence Brown Theatre. Cathy has been a guest lecturer at the University of Washington and Cornish College of the Arts. She holds an M.F.A. from the University of California, San Diego.

Connie Yun

Lighting Designer

Connie (she/her) is excited to return to Seattle Rep. Recently, she has designed *POTUS*, *STEW*, *A Case for the Existence of God*, and *Wolf Play* (ACT); *The Boy Who Kissed the Sky*, *Red Riding Hood*, and *Snow White* (Seattle Children's Theatre); *Beauty and the Beast* (The 5th Avenue Theatre); *Samson and Delilah* and *The Marriage of Figaro* (Seattle Opera). Upcoming productions include *Dial M for Murder* (Village Theatre), *La Boheme* (Opera Colorado), and *Tosca* (Seattle Opera). Connie is a member of USA-829 and mentor with the ETC Fred Foster Mentorship Program. connieyun.com

Cricket S. Myers

Sound Designer

On Broadway, Cricket earned a Tony Award nomination and Drama Desk Award for her design of *Bengal Tiger at the Baghdad Zoo*. Regional: Steppenwolf Theatre, La Jolla Playhouse, Geffen Playhouse, Milwaukee Rep, Arizona Theatre Company, Pasadena Playhouse, and the Ahmanson Theatre, Mark Taper Forum, and Kirk Douglas Theatre at Center Theatre Group. Select LA theaters: East West Players, Ghost Road Company. Winner of The Ruth Morley Design Award from the League of Professional Theatre

Women and a proud member of USA-829 and the Theatrical Sound Designers and Composers Association. cricketsmyers.com

Judith Shahn

Vocal/Dialects

Judith (she/her) began working at Seattle Rep almost 40 years ago and has coached dozens of productions including *Private Lives*, *A View from the Bridge*, and *Road to Mecca*. She just finished playing Aiofe in *Outside Mullingar* at Bainbridge Performing Arts. Judith has also coached at ACT, Intiman, Seattle Opera, and most Seattle theater companies, and Oregon Shakespeare Festival, Utah Shakespeare Festival, and Shakespeare & Company. She taught at the University of Washington's School of Drama for 26 years and in the School of Law for 8 years. vibrantspeaking.com

Jamie J. Kranz

Stage Manager

Jamie J. Kranz (she/her) is delighted to be back at Seattle Rep where she last stage managed *What the Constitution Means to Me* and *Teenage Dick*. Locally, Jamie has worked with The 5th Avenue Theatre, Seattle Opera, ACT, Village Theatre, and Seattle Children's Theatre. Regional credits include productions with Guthrie Theater, Utah Shakespeare Festival, Everyman Theatre, Children's Theatre Company, Park Square Theatre, Goodspeed Musicals, and Maine State Music Theatre. Jamie is a proud member of Actors' Equity Association and American Guild of Musical Artists.

Quinn Chase

Assistant Stage Manager

Quinn is a stage manager and technical theater artist from the East Coast who has a passion for original work and devising creative solutions to unique problems. Quinn is a proud member of the unions AEA and AGMA. Previously at Seattle Rep: *Sanctuary City*, *Selling Kabul*, *Teenage Dick*. Other local credits include Seattle Opera: *Jubilee*, *X: The Life and Times of Malcolm X*, *A Thousand Splendid Suns*, *The Barber of Seville*, *Pagliacci*, *Das Rheingold*, *Orfeo and Euridice, il Trovatore*; ACT: *A Christmas Carol*; Seattle Children's Theatre: *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz*.

Additional Staff

Lauren Dong

Directing Apprentice

Charlotte Emrys

Assistant Scenic Designer

Ian Evans

Lighting Apprentice

Adam Michard

Drafter

Dave Misner

A2

Madelyn Salvucci

Stage Management Apprentice

Steffan Soule

Magical Consultant

Jim Westerland

First Hand

Special Thanks

A Touch of Magic, Inc.

Brian Ledbetter

For Seattle Rep

Dámaso Rodríguez

Artistic Director

Artistic Director at Seattle Rep since July 2023, Dámaso Rodríguez is a director of new and classic plays with over 100 credits at theaters across the country. Most recently, he concluded a nine-year tenure as Artistic Director of Artists Rep in Portland, Oregon. In prior years, he co-founded LA's Furious Theatre and served as Associate Artistic Director of the Pasadena Playhouse. He is a recipient of awards from LA Drama Critics Circle, Back Stage, and the NAACP. Dámaso serves on the Directors Council of the Drama League and the Latinx Theatre Commons Steering Committee and is a member of the Stage Directors and Choreographers Society.



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Jeffrey Herrmann
Managing Director

In May 2014, Jeffrey Herrmann was appointed as the fifth Managing Director in Seattle Rep's history. Prior to his arrival in Seattle, Jeff served as Managing Director of Washington D.C.'s Woolly Mammoth Theatre Company and Producing Director at Perseverance Theatre in Juneau, AK. Jeff started his career in arts administration with the Albany Berkshire Ballet in Pittsfield, MA. Born in upstate NY and raised in West Hartford, CT, Jeff received his B.A. in English at Vassar College and his M.F.A. in Theatre Management at the Yale School of Drama.

Seattle Rep

Seattle Rep puts theater at the heart of public life. Founded in 1963 and winner of the 1990 Tony Award for Outstanding Regional Theatre, Seattle Rep is currently led by Artistic Director Dámaso Rodríguez and Managing Director Jeffrey Herrmann. Over a season and throughout the year, Seattle Rep collaborates with extraordinary artists to create productions and programs that reflect and elevate the diverse cultures, perspectives, and life experiences of the Pacific Northwest.



Seattle Rep is a member of the League of Resident Theatres, a nationwide association of not-for-profit theaters.



The Director is a member of the Society of Stage Directors and Choreographers, Inc., an independent national labor union.



This theater operates under an agreement between the League of Resident Theatres and Actors' Equity Association, the Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers in the United States.



The scenic, costume, lighting, sound, and projection designers in LORT Theatres are represented by United Scenic Artists, Local USA-829 of the I.A.T.S.E. Scenery Construction and Operations performed by employees represented by I.A.T.S.E. locals 15 and 488. Wardrobe services are performed by employees represented by TWU Local 887.



Seattle Rep operates under an agreement with AFM, the American Federation of Musicians.



Seattle Rep is a member of NAMT, a not-for-profit organization serving the musical theater community.



Seattle Rep is a constituent of Theatre Communications Group (TCG), the national service organization for the nonprofit professional theater.



Seattle Rep is a member of Theatre Puget Sound.

**SEATTLE
 OPERA.**

Photo © Philip Newton



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A Seattle Rep season ticket package is the perfect gift and brings together the ones you love.

From the stunning classic drama *Blues for an Alabama Sky* by Pearl Cleage to two standout new comedies—Lauren Yee's world premiere *Mother Russia* and Alexis Scheer's *Laughs in Spanish*—plus the cirque phenomenon *Duel Reality* by The 7 Fingers, resolve to make 2025 your best year of theater yet.

This season is just getting started. Share the gift of togetherness and join us again in the New Year for more memorable moments!

seattlerep.org



Tickets
On Sale Now!

JAN 30 – FEB 23

BY PEARL
CLEAGE

DIRECTED BY
VALERIE
CURTIS-NEWTON

Lyrical and deeply moving, *Blues for an Alabama Sky* will immerse you in the resilience and joy of 1930s Harlem, a society on the brink of change.

BLUES FOR AN ALABAMA SKY



MAR 6 – APR 6

BY
LAUREN
YEE

DIRECTED BY
JOSHUA KAHAN
BRODY

Two average guys dream of joining the KGB—but when the fall of the Soviet Union puts hiring on hold, they find jobs spying on a former pop star instead.



MOTHER RUSSIA

APR 17 – MAY 11

BY ALEXIS
SCHEER

DIRECTED BY
DÁMASO
RODRÍGUEZ

Mari is about to open a career-defining art exhibition when all the paintings are stolen. This hysterical new play is part telenovela, part whodunnit, and all heart.

LAUGHS IN SPANISH



MAY 29 – JUN 22

BY THE 7 FINGERS

DIRECTED &
CHOREOGRAPHED BY
SHANA CARROLL

Incredible physical feats, theatricality, and music come together to tell this epic love story inspired by Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*.



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At HD Fowler Company, we believe the arts improve our ability to respond to an ever more complex world with different views and perspectives. Supporting Seattle Rep ensures that our corporate family and many other families have the opportunity to enjoy great theater and foster an appreciation and understanding of the cultures and communities that make up our region.

We are proud to sponsor Seattle Rep and hope that you and your family enjoy this performance of *Blithe Spirit*. Filled with sparkling wit and hysterical hauntings, this irreverent classic comedy will appeal to anyone who ever longed to see "Downton Abbey" go completely off the rails.



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Emily Kuroda and Carlos Lacámara in *The Skin of Our Teeth* (2024).

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In this season of giving, we invite you to celebrate the memories we've made together and the relationships we've cherished over the last 61 years at Seattle Rep by naming a seat in the Bagley Wright Theater. This once-in-a-generation opportunity allows you to honor a loved one, commemorate a special occasion, or surprise the theater enthusiast in your life with a truly unique gift!

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Cultivating the Next Generation of Theater Fans

Each year Seattle Rep's youth education and access programming engages more than 9,000 educators, students, and teens, encouraging the next generation of theatergoers and theater makers! Check out opportunities throughout our 2024/25 Season below.

Teen Nights

In partnership with TeenTix, Seattle Rep offers Teen Nights for every Bagley Wright Theater show in our 2024/25 Season. Held on select Friday nights, these events feature a pre-show reception with activities, snacks, and more. TeenTix members can attend these events (and bring a friend or family member of any age) for just \$5 each!

Check out seattlerep.org/teennights for more info and join us for Teen Nights at 6:30 p.m. on the following Fridays:

- *Blithe Spirit*: December 13, 2024
- *Blues for an Alabama Sky*: February 14, 2025
- *Laughs in Spanish*: May 2, 2025
- *Duel Reality*: June 13, 2025

Next Narrative Monologue Competition

Open to any high school student in Washington state, the Next Narrative Monologue Competition™ features works from fifty of America's leading contemporary Black playwrights that engage students of all backgrounds in exploring 21st-century themes, while instilling confidence to find their voices. Winners of our Seattle regional competition participate in the National Finals, receiving an **all-expenses-paid trip to New York City!**

Applications are due **January 5, 2025**. Learn more and sign up at seattlerep.org/nmmc

Student Matinees

Seattle Rep's Student Matinee program connects young audiences in Seattle and the surrounding areas with our mainstage productions. By providing arts-based knowledge that meets academic standards, we create multiple entry points for students to experience live theater, supported by in-school residencies, Youth Guides, and post-show actor talks. At just \$10 per student, with additional discounts available for schools in need, we keep this opportunity affordable for all.

Student Matinees are available for every show this season but are filling quickly! Get your school signed up by visiting seattlerep.org/studentmatinees

Our Vision for the Future

As part of Seattle Rep's new three-year strategic plan (see p. 7), throughout the season ahead our staff will be assessing and developing a new model for sustainable theater programming. This involves studying education programs at other regional theaters to understand their opportunities, challenges, and best practices around both free and paid programs for youth and adults. **Our goal is to design sustainable programs that align with Seattle Rep's mission and community needs.** Together, let's continue to make theater a space for everyone to learn, grow, and be inspired!



For more information about these programs, schedules, and how to get involved, check out seattlerep.org/education or contact education@seattlerep.org

Lelena Moore performs in the Next Narrative Monologue Competition (2023).

A Light COMEDY about DEATH



We sat down with director **Allison Narver** to talk about all things *Blithe Spirit*, playwright Noël Coward, and the legacy of producing comedies during challenging times.

Seattle Rep: One of your past standout productions directed at Seattle Rep was Marc Camoletti's *Boeing Boeing* (2013), also an uproarious and smart comedy. As a director, what draws you to working with comedic stories?

Allison Narver: The fun thing about directing comedy is that there are rules to follow and rules to break. Comedy depends on rhythm, meter, precision, and pace—particularly with Noël Coward. His language requires both discipline and accuracy and is so fast that the actors can feel like they're playing a game of ping pong with their scene partners. Their reflexes need to be quick and they must always keep their eyes on the ball.

The rules you get to break are equally fun and can feel like taking a dare. Is it ludicrous enough to be funny, or is it just dumb? Should we go further, or should we pull back? Something that might make us laugh in rehearsal won't necessarily work on stage. It's a game of risk, which can feel scary but also thrilling.

There's a long history of comedies being produced during dark times—and to put it mildly, we're living through a really difficult one right now. But being able to laugh and find joy anyway can be a powerful force of resistance in the face of it all.

SR: *Blithe Spirit* has been called "one of Coward's indisputable comic masterpieces" (*The Daily*

Telegraph). How do you see this play speaking to audiences today? Why this play, now?

AN: Brilliant writing is always relevant, but I think this will resonate with contemporary audiences because one of the themes of *Blithe Spirit* is trying to keep up appearances in the face of disruptive forces.

Noël Coward has created a world with a polished, elegant veneer populated by hyper-articulate people. Their glittering and exorbitant speech creates a shield that allows his characters to avoid the messy complications of their inner lives and their deepest feelings—not even death derails this façade! Occasionally, this veneer is pulled aside and briefly exposed by great bursts of passion, jealousy, anger, and spite. When these outbursts erupt, they are quickly and neatly tucked away so that the characters can revert to the exquisitely maintained façades that have served them well for so many years.

Similarly, in the version of ourselves we curate for our followers online, the façade we present to the world is often shiny, beautiful, and exciting, but doesn't necessarily represent the complications of our lives or our truest feelings. What is the truth about how we present our lives to the world at large? What do we show, and what do we hide?

“There's a long history of comedies being produced during dark times... being able to laugh and find joy anyway can be a powerful force of resistance.”



SAYED ALAMY

Arlando Smith and Nate Tenenbaum in rehearsal for *Blithe Spirit*.



SAYED ALAMY

Gin Hammond and Kirsten Potter in rehearsal for *Blithe Spirit*.

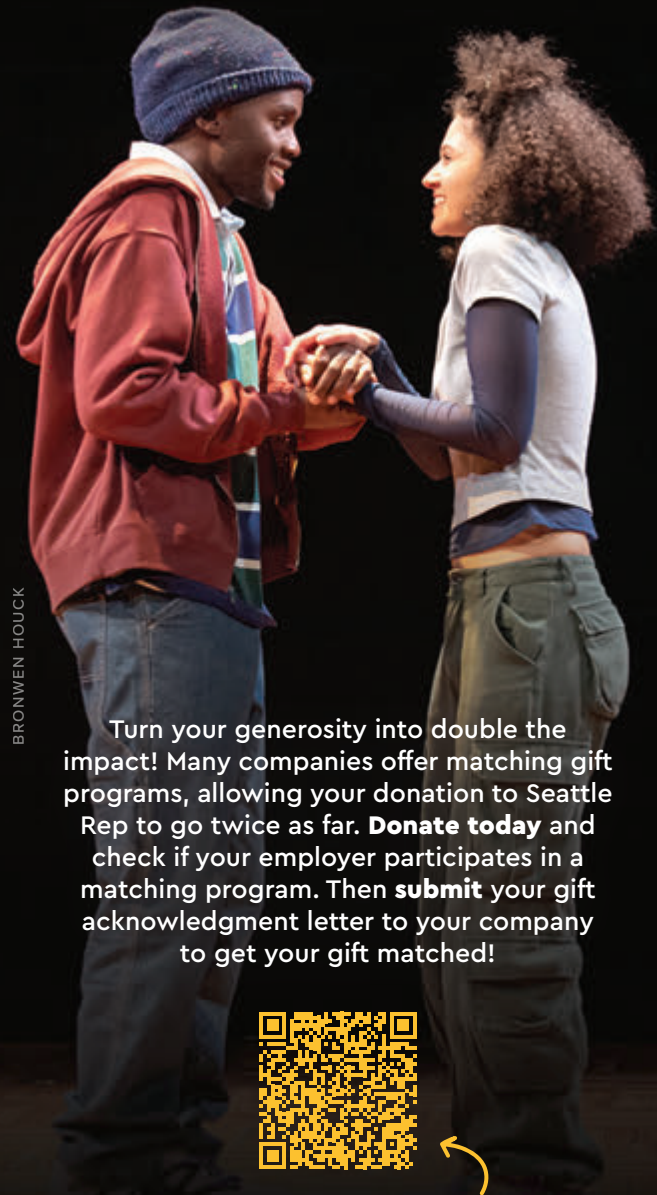
SR: What do you hope audiences take away from the show?

AN: I hope that Seattle Rep audiences walk away remembering that life can still be fun; discovering the joy in Noël Coward's language; and entering a world that seems familiar, but is not, can be a delight.

SR: Anything else you want audiences to know?

AN: Working with these gifted designers and actors has been a joy. I think the design is breathtaking—it has been such a pleasure to watch them create a beautiful world that metamorphizes by the end of the play. The entire Seattle Rep company has put both muscle and heart into the production, and I'm very grateful for their extraordinary work. 🐦

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Junior Nyong'o and Emilie Maureen Hanson in *Sanctuary City* (2024).

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THE WOMAN IN BLACK (2019)

PICTURED: ADAM WESLEY BROWN
PHOTO BY ROGER MASTROIANNI

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Learn more at seattlerep.org/volunteer

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