



As you are watching our performance tonight . . .

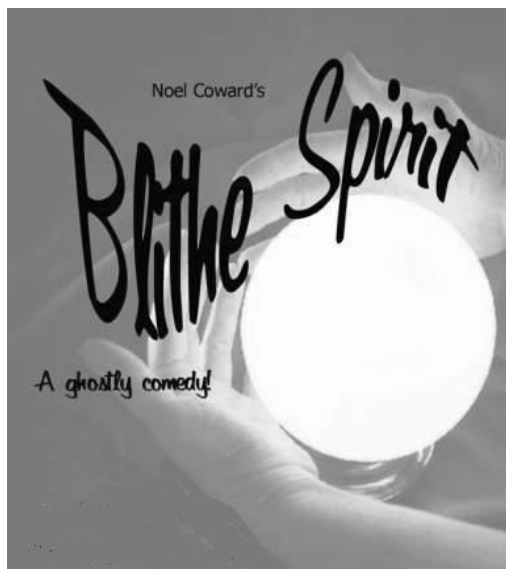
Alison Steadman is Madame Arcati at the Cambridge Arts Theatre.



The title of the play is taken from Shelley's poem "To a Skylark".



The play was first seen on the West End in London in 1941 and set a new long-run record for non-musical British plays of 1,997 performances. It also did well on Broadway later that year, running for 657 performances.



The play was adapted for film in 1945, starring Rex Harrison and in 1964 there was a musical adaptation, High Spirits on Broadway. It was also adapted for television in the 1950s and 1960s and for radio.



After his London office and apartment had been destroyed in The Blitz he wrote Blithe Spirit in 1941 during a holiday on the coast of Snowdonia in Wales. He wrote Blithe Spirit straight through from beginning to end and claimed that he wrote it in five days.



The Noël Coward Society
- the International Society
for students, admirers and
experts, in the world of
Noël Coward - the master!

<http://www.noelcoward.net/home.html>



"Noël Coward is simply a phenomenon, and one that is unlikely to occur ever again in theatre history."

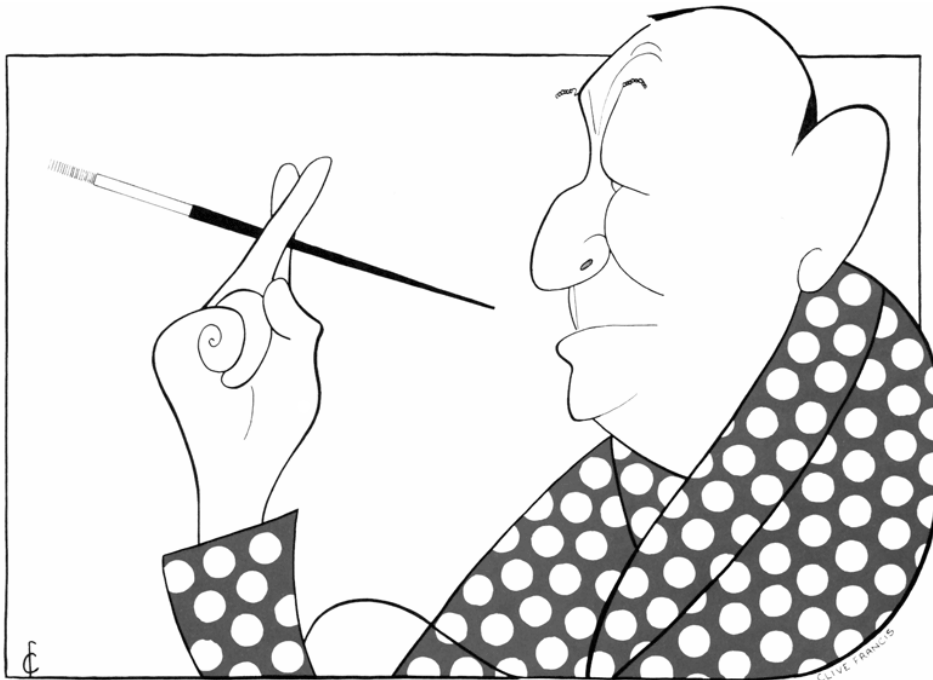
Terence Rattigan

NOËL COWARD

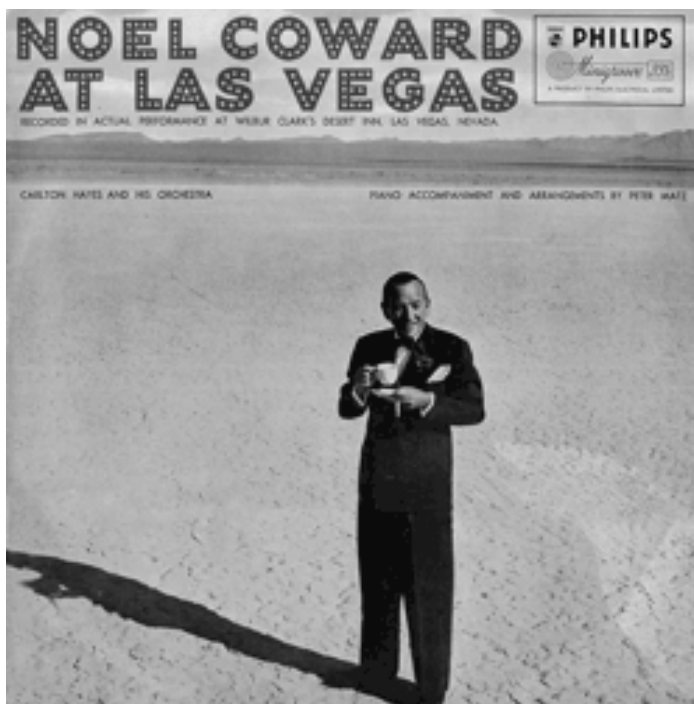


"Even the youngest of us will know, in fifty years' time, precisely what is meant by 'a very Noël Coward sort of person'."

Kenneth Tynan



"Consider his dialogue: smooth, hard, swift pebbles of thought thrown disdainfully against the glass windows of the house in which we have ensconced ourselves." Beverley Nichols



"Noel's life is almost passed in a prolonged procession through applauding parties."

Hesketh Pearson



*"As one gets older,
one discovers
everything is going to
be exactly the same
with different hats
on."
Noël Coward*

*I believe that life is for
living, don't you?...
It's difficult to know
what else one could do
with it!"* *Noël Coward*

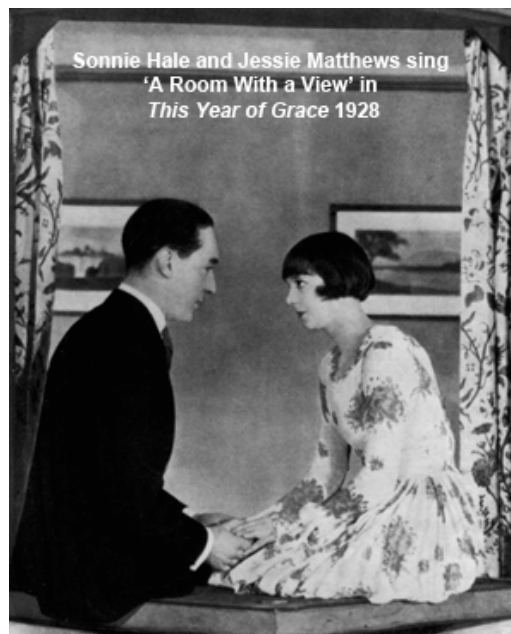


Noël Coward said, "the only thing that really saddens me over my demise is that I shall not be here to read the nonsense that will be written about me and my works and motives....."



"When the storm clouds are riding through a winter sky, sail away - sail away" Noël Coward

There will be lists of apocryphal jokes I never made and gleeful misquotations of words I never said. What a pity I shan't be here to enjoy them!



You do not produce some 50 plays and musicals and over 400 songs and lyrics from stylish reclining on a chaise longue!



Statue of Noel Coward on the grounds of Firefly.



Noel Coward's desk and typewriter

In 1948 he went over to Jamaica, building a house at Roundhill near Port Maria: Blue Harbour. He bought a second house uphill: Look Out (which he renamed Firefly). This he used as a refuge from too many visitors. In 1959 he settled, a tax exile, at Les Avants, in Switzerland; but it was at Firefly that he died, and was buried, on 26 March 1973



Noël Coward was knighted in 1970 and that year his entry in Who's Who listed 43 plays and other stage or film productions including Present Laughter, Blithe Spirit, This Happy Breed, The Vortex, Private Lives, In Which we Serve and Brief Encounter.