



NOEL COWARD'S

Blithe Spirit



Friday 9 – Saturday 31 May 2014

IN CONVERSATION

MARK FISHER COMMUNICATES WITH CLAIRVOYANT/MEDIUM JULIE CRYER

How did you become a clairvoyant and what are your gifts?

I was born with the gift. From around the age of three I started seeing my grandparents who had died when I was a baby, and friends of my father who had lost their lives when they worked together down the pit.

In my teens I started to get much more frequent and stronger communication from spirits, which allowed me to explain to people what I was experiencing.

I am a medium/clairvoyant, which enables me to see and talk with people who have passed over. I am also psychic, which means I have vision of events relating to the future.

Do you have to get into a particular state for this to happen?

No. I need a quiet room if I'm doing a reading for someone because you want privacy and to show respect for their circumstances. Spirits communicate with me on a regular basis. I use the example of Sam and Oda Mae in **Ghost** when he's talking to her and no one else can hear. For myself they do a lot of pre-emption: "The train will be cancelled as you arrive at the station." It's really strange but amusing too as I've always got company around me.

We could sit in a room full of people having coffee and you wouldn't realise I was talking to spirits.

What has been your involvement in the Theatre Royal's production of Blithe Spirit?

I know director Damian Cruden through visiting the theatre to see many of his productions, and was introduced by my very close friends who have acted for him. **Blithe Spirit** came up in casual conversation and I said I would be very happy to talk to the cast from a real medium's perspective. We also had a tour of the theatre and I discussed the very interesting 'presence' throughout the building. I describe the theatre as a spiritual hologram as it is made up of so many different rooms and extensions from different eras of which I am able to see. We had an experience where we entered a room and I said, "I've stepped down four feet - I feel like I'm in muddy water looking up at you." They explained that there had been building work that went down four feet and showed me pictures on a wall in the next room of men working as I had just described.

Noël Coward presents Madame Arcati as a bit of an eccentric - is that a fair representation of your profession? Do you mind her being a figure of fun?

I consider myself eccentric but in a modern way. This is set in the 1930s when there was a different attitude to mediums. I've tried to instill humour throughout the whole of my work; I've had to laugh at myself. I've had

all the ridiculous things said to me: "Can you walk through walls?", "You'd have known that anyway", "Who will win the Grand National?" In the afterlife, spirits have great humour, and love to bring laughter into the readings. Now and again someone would try to humiliate me, but that doesn't come across in the play. **Blithe Spirit** doesn't make sense unless you buy into the idea that the afterlife exists.

Although Blithe Spirit is a comedy, it was first produced during the Second World War when the serious subject of death was on everyone's minds. What does the play tell you about people's need to come to terms with the loss of loved ones?

Death became a blanket over everybody. No one could escape it because it could affect anyone. We all know someone will die in our lives today, but in the war it was every day. It was a very clever play for Noël Coward to have written at a time when people were communicating about death - and then, suddenly, life after death. What I take from the play is that you never get over grief. When Charles Condomine's first wife Elvira comes back, it becomes apparent that he hasn't got over her; he still loves her and, through that moment of communication, all those feelings are heightened again. What I've found doing readings is that when people are bereaved,

the feelings are still there, they just have to try and repress them.

So do you predict Blithe Spirit is going to be a hit?

I have a feeling it's going to do well. The cast are excellent and they gel wonderfully together. Damian puts lovely productions on and the theatre's got an element of the right atmosphere for the play. I don't doubt it will do well.

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