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SERVING AMATEUR THEATRE SINCE 1899

CHELTENHAM OPERATIC AND DRAMATIC SOCIETY

'BLYTHE SPIRIT'
Director: ROD MORRIS

THE PLAYHOUSE SEPT 09
Report by: MALCOLM WHITE

When you are going to see a Noel Coward play, you are guaranteed quick wit, well defined characters a glimpse of 1940's middle class Britain. 'Blythe Spirit' is my favourite. The set for this production was superb. Painted in a relaxing, classic green and cream, and beautifully dressed. The props and furniture had been carefully chosen, and even the glow in the fireplace looked realistic and warming. I would have liked to see the time change on the mantelpiece clock to show the different times of day for each scene, particularly as the time was mentioned in the last scene and the clock was wrong. The costumes looked correct for the period; however I did feel that Elvira should have been in a far lighter material and a very light pastel colour to make her float more ghost like. She might not have fiddled with quite so much then. The subtle lighting design truly made us feel that we were observers of someone's drawing room, and the cues were carried out smoothly. The sound effects of the knocking during the séance could have been quieter. It did sound as if Elvira was trying break in, rather than make her presence known. There were some excellent performances from this talented cast. JASON BLACKBURN gave a strong, believable portrayal as Charles Condomine and delivered Cowards wit and humour with perfect timing. He was complimented well by KATE BENNETT (Ruth) and PAULINE MILLER (Elvira). HELEN LANDAU made a wonderful Madame Arcani. It would have been so easy to go over the top with this role, but it was beautifully underplayed. Congratulations to Director ROD MORRIS and his team on a very entertaining production.

*Kindest regards,
Malcolm*

National Operatic and Dramatic Association

Patron: The Lord Lloyd-Webber

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