

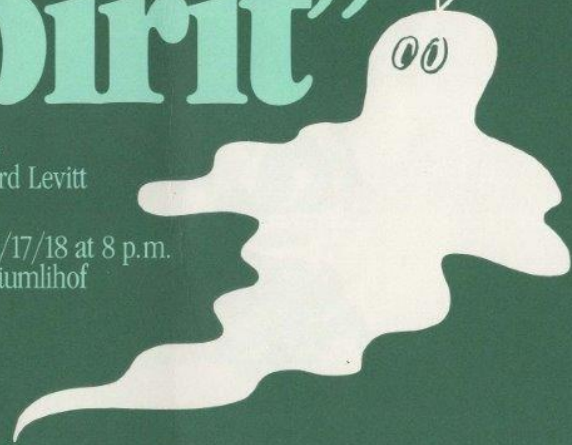
The Semi-Circle
proudly presents
the best of
Noël Coward's comedies

"Blithe Spirit"

witty, weird
and
worthwhile
seeing!

Director: Richard Levitt

February 15/16/17/18 at 8 p.m.
Gymnasium Bäumlhof



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Put some *DRAMA* in your life!

by Dianne Dicks

Expressive body and facial movements can be very useful talents if you want to say something in a foreign country to people who do not speak your language. Considering the number of foreigners in Switzerland and the different languages used here, one would expect to observe mime and drama in daily life. However, this is certainly not the case.

Gesticulations and outlandish facial expressions are most conspicuous in Switzerland solely because of their rarity. In a country where one is expected to demonstrate composure and neutrality in even the most provoking situations, the slightest outbreak of dramatic expression that might be quite acceptable -back home- can put you uncomfortably in Swiss spotlights and make people quite suspicious of you. Finding yourself in these spotlights may not be particularly gratifying, in fact, burst out in loud laughter in a tram and you may feel like you have been cast against your will as a repulsive character in a horror scene.

How we -act- effects us continually in our daily lives. Learning to -put on a show- to hide a bad mood may often save your reputation, your job or keep a friend. Most of the -roles- we play require no conscious effort but living in a foreign country puts you on stage whether you want the role or not. The better you play your part, the better your stay here will be. As the saying goes, -If you can't beat them, join them!-

Nothing against dealing with serious matters in serious ways, but there are quite a few English-speaking residents of Switzerland carrying on their gesticulations in laughter, frivolity, joy and humour as they like it. They are not only NOT being met with suspicion by the Swiss, the Swiss themselves are getting the most out of it. This is made possible by the English drama groups in most major Swiss towns which fulfil a great need.

This year's production in February by an amateur drama group in Basle, the Semi-Circle, demon-



-Blithe Spirits- in real life -from left to right- Back row: Cynthia Barr, Joan Kasser, Ruth Meyer, Lesley Stockreiser, Barbara Clark; front row: Richard Levitt, Tony James and Graham Simon

strated the great value drama in English can bring to life in Switzerland.

The Semi-Circle produced -Blithe Spirits- the -improbable farce- by Noël Coward for 4 nights to a filled school auditorium. Seeing those we have around us in our normal daily situations transformed into fictitious and bizarre figures can be a most enriching experience, not only for the actors involved but for the audiences hungry for drama.

Making spirits bright with -Blithe Spirits-

Take a woman whose career is in pharmacological research (Barbara Clark) and give her the role of an eccentric medium who should conjure up spirits. Barbara carried it off so well with her deep voice, vivid gestures and her respectably controlled speech that one could believe the spirits of Margaret Rutherford herself had come over her.

As a computer programmer, Tony James in real life is unlikely

to face the thrills and tribulations of having to cope with two sensuous and beautiful wives competing for his affection. His role as a successful novelist planning a plot for a story involving spiritualism was carried out so perfectly one can only wonder about the fantasies at loose and uncontrollable after all in our computer world!

Cynthia Barr is an editorial assistant whose previous acting experience came as she says from teaching English. In her role on stage she had to act out the fears, indignation, understanding and determination of a loving wife trying to hang on to her husband who is tempted by the charms of another woman. What could at first glance be treated as a humorous role on some stages was played so well and so naturally that her serious revelations about human nature could bring the whole improbable and hilarious situation down to earth and give it some serious touches. Lesley Stockreiser was given the role requiring the most dramatic transformation from her real life responsibilities as a busy dedi-