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MATHILDE 253 WITH ISHMAEL WADADA LEO SMITH  
(CORK AND DUBLIN, IRELAND: MARCH 2011)



(Cork, Ireland—Feb 6 2011) Expect powerful and inventive musical interactions as internationally renowned composer-improviser Ishmael Wadada Leo Smith performs with the virtuosic, cross-idiomatic ensemble Mathilde 253 (Charles Hayward, Han-earl Park and Ian Smith) in Cork and Dublin, Ireland in March 2011. This two-date tour marks Ishmael Wadada Leo Smith's first appearance in Ireland, and the Irish debut of Mathilde 253.

Hailed as “one of the most vital musicians on the planet today” (Bill Shoemaker, Coda), legendary composer, multi-instrumentalist, improviser and educator **Ishmael Wadada Leo Smith** has been active in creative contemporary music for over forty years. He is creator of Ankhrasation, a systemic music language, and his music traverses traditions as diverse as the delta blues, creative world musics, American experimentalism and live-electronics. His current ensembles include the Golden Quartet (currently with Vijay Iyer, John Lindberg and Pheeroan akLaff), Silver Orchestra (with J.D. Parran, Lindberg, Okkyung Lee, Harris Eisenstadt and others), Organic (with Nels Cline, Lee, Lindberg, akLaff and others), and his compositions have been performed by ensembles including the Kronos Quartet, Da Capo Chamber Player, New Century Players, San Francisco Contemporary Music Players, Del Sol String Quartet and New York New Music Ensemble. He is faculty member, and director of the African-American Improvisational Music program, at The Herb Alpert School of Music at the California Institute of the Arts, a Guggenheim Fellow, and a longtime member of the Association for the Advancement of Creative Musicians.

**Mathilde 253** consists of the pioneering avant-rock drummer **Charles Hayward** (This Heat, Camberwell Now, Massacre), rising Cork-based guitarist and improviser **Han-earl Park** (Paul Dunmall, Kato Hideki, Stet Lab), and Irish trumpeter and mainstay of the London improvised music scene, **Ian Smith** (Derek Bailey, The London Improvisers Orchestra, The Gathering). Mathilde 253 was formed to explore the spontaneous mashup of avant-rock, African-American creative musics, European free improvisation and noise, and collaborates with noted improvisers such as Lol Coxhill and Pat Thomas. Guillaume Belhomme described the music of the ensemble's eponymous debut CD, released in 2011 by Slam Productions (SLAMCD 528), as “ordered and entwining... a tapestry of choice: that of another Mathilde, of a complete beauty”.

The Dublin event will open with a solo performance by the Dublin-based **Paul G. Smyth**, one of Ireland's foremost free-improvising pianist.

The events take place: Wednesday, **30 March, Half Moon Theatre** (Cork Opera House, Emmet Place, Cork), 8:00 pm; and Thursday, **31 March, Kevin Barry Room** (National Concert Hall, Earlsfort Terrace, Dublin) 8:30 pm.

Ishmael Wadada Leo Smith will also speak on ‘Ankhrasation: A Systemic Music Language for Creative Music’ as part of the **UCC Music Research Seminar Series**. The talk is **free**, open to the public, and takes place at the UCC Music Building (Sundays Well, Cork) at 2:00 pm on 30 March.

Presented with funding from the Music Network Performance and Touring Award, and support from UCC School of Music, Note Productions, the National Concert Hall and the Cork Opera House.

## further information

[www.busterandfriends.com/mathilde-ireland-2011](http://www.busterandfriends.com/mathilde-ireland-2011)

Ishamel Wadada Leo Smith: [www.wadadaleosmith.com](http://www.wadadaleosmith.com)

Mathilde 253: [www.busterandfriends.com/mathilde](http://www.busterandfriends.com/mathilde)

Charles Hayward: [www.charleshayward.org](http://www.charleshayward.org)

Han-earl Park: [www.busterandfriends.com](http://www.busterandfriends.com)

Ian Smith: [www.efi.group.shef.ac.uk/musician/msmithi.html](http://www.efi.group.shef.ac.uk/musician/msmithi.html)

Paul G. Smyth: [www.paulgsmyth.com](http://www.paulgsmyth.com)

## images



Ishamel Wadada Leo Smith:  
[bit.ly/az5Owj](http://bit.ly/az5Owj)  
more images: [bit.ly/i3t8bD](http://bit.ly/i3t8bD)



Mathilde 253:  
[www.busterandfriends.com/mathilde/mathilde.jpg](http://www.busterandfriends.com/mathilde/mathilde.jpg)



Charles Hayward:  
[www.busterandfriends.com/mathilde/charles-hayward.jpg](http://www.busterandfriends.com/mathilde/charles-hayward.jpg)



Han-earl Park:  
[www.busterandfriends.com/mathilde/han-earl-park.jpg](http://www.busterandfriends.com/mathilde/han-earl-park.jpg)  
more images: <http://bit.ly/h2lyI8>



Ian Smith:  
[www.busterandfriends.com/mathilde/ian-smith.jpg](http://www.busterandfriends.com/mathilde/ian-smith.jpg)

## event summary

### **talk: Ishmael Wadada Leo Smith, 'Ankhrasmation: A Systemic Music Language for Creative Music'**

Date: Wednesday, 30 March 2011.

Time: 2:00 pm.

Venue: Ó Riada Hall, UCC Music Building, Sundays Well, Cork, Ireland.

Admission free.

More info from: [www.music.ucc.ie](http://www.music.ucc.ie) +353 (0)21 490 4530

Presented by the UCC Music Research Seminar Series.

### **concert: Mathilde 253 with Ishmael Wadada Leo Smith**

Date: Wednesday, 30 March 2011.

Time: 8:00 pm.

Venue: Half Moon Theatre

Cork Opera House, Emmet Place, Cork, Ireland.

Performers:

Mathilde 253:

Charles Hayward (drums, percussion and melodica),

Han-earl Park (guitar)

and Ian Smith (trumpet and flugelhorn)

with Ishmael Wadada Leo Smith (trumpet).

Tickets: €11 (€6 concessions)

from [corkoperahouse.ie](http://corkoperahouse.ie) or +353 (0)21 427 0022.

Presented with funding from the Music Network Performance and Touring Award, and support from UCC School of Music and the Cork Opera House.

### **concert: Mathilde 253 with Ishmael Wadada Leo Smith, plus Paul G. Smyth**

Date: Thursday, 31 March 2011.

Time: 8:30 pm

Venue: Kevin Barry Room, National Concert Hall, Earlsfort Terrace, Dublin 2, Ireland.

Performers:

Mathilde 253:

Charles Hayward (drums, percussion and melodica),

Han-earl Park (guitar)

and Ian Smith (trumpet and flugelhorn)

with Ishmael Wadada Leo Smith (trumpet),

plus support: Paul G. Smyth (piano).

Tickets: €12 (€10 concessions)

from the National Concert Hall Box Office

10:00 am–7:00 pm Mon to Sat, 2 hours before concerts on Sunday and Holidays

telephone +353 (0)1 417 0000, fax +353 (0)1 475 1507

online: [www.nch.ie](http://www.nch.ie), email: [info@nch.ie](mailto:info@nch.ie)

no booking fees

Presented with funding from the Music Network Performance and Touring Award, and support from Note Productions and the National Concert Hall.

## the performers

**Ishmael Wadada Leo Smith** ([www.wadadaleosmith.com](http://www.wadadaleosmith.com)): trumpeter and multi-instrumentalist, composer and improviser has been active in creative contemporary music for over forty years. His systemic music language Ankhramation is significant in his development as an artist and educator.

Born in Leland, Mississippi, Smith's early musical life began in the high school concert and marching bands. At the age of thirteen, he became involved with the Delta Blues and Improvisation music traditions. He received his formal musical education with his stepfather Alex Wallace, the U.S. Military band program, Sherwood School of Music, and Wesleyan University. Smith has studied a variety of music cultures: African, Japanese, Indonesian, European and American. He has taught at the University of New Haven, the Creative Music Studio in Woodstock, NY, and Bard College. He is currently a faculty member at The Herb Alpert School of Music at California Institute of the Arts. He is the director of the African-American Improvisational Music program, and is a member of ASCAP, Chamber Music America, and the Association for the Advancement of Creative Musicians.

Smith's awards and commissions include: Fellow of the John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation, Other Minds residency and 'Taif,' a string quartet commission, Fellow of the Jurassic Foundation, FONT (Festival of New Trumpet) Award of Recognition, Jazz Journalists Association Jazz Award, Islamic World Arts Initiative of Arts International, Fellow of the Civitela Foundation, Fellow at the Atlantic Center for the Arts, 'Third Culture Copenhagen' in Denmark-presented a paper on Ankhramation, Meet the Composer/Lila Wallace-Reader's Digest Commissioning Program, Asian Cultural Council Grantee to Japan, Meet the Composer/Lila Wallace-Reader's Digest Commissioning Program, New York Foundation on the Arts Fellowship in Music, Numerous Meet the Composer Grants, and National Endowment for the Arts Music Grants.

Smith's music philosophy Notes (8 Pieces) Source a New World Music: Creative Music has been published by Kiom Press, translated and published in Japan by Zen-On Music Company Ltd., and into Italian and published by Nistri-Litschi Editori. He was invited to a conference of artists, scientists and philosophers 'Third Culture Copenhagen', and presented a paper on his Ankhramation music theory and notational system for creative musicians. His interview was broadcasted on Denmark T.V.

Artists Smith has performed with include Muhal Richard Abrams, Anthony Braxton, Leroy Jenkins, Roscoe Mitchell, Lester Bowie, Richard Teitelbaum, Joseph Jarman, George Lewis, Cecil Taylor, Andrew Cyrill, Oliver Lake, Anthony Davis, Carla Bley, David Murray, Don Cherry, Jeanne Lee, Milton Campbell, Henry Brant, Richard Davis, Tadao Sawai, Ed Blackwell, Sabu Toyozumi, Peter Kowald, Kazuko Shiraishi, Han Bennink, Misja Mengelberg, Marion Brown, Kazutoki Umezu, Kosei Yamamoto, Charlie Haden, Kang Tae Hwan, Kim Dae Hwan, Tom Buckner, Malachi Favors Magoustous and Jack Dejohnette among many others. Smith currently has three ensembles: Golden Quartet, Silver Orchestra, and Organic. His compositions have also been performed by other contemporary music ensembles: AACM-Orchestra, Kronos Quartet, Da Capo Chamber Player, New Century Players, San Francisco Contemporary Music Players, Contemporary Chamber Players (University of Chicago), S.E.M. Ensemble, Southwest Chamber Music, Del Sol String Quartet, New York New Music Ensemble, ne(x)tworks, and California E.A.R. Unit. Smith's music for multi-ensembles has been performed since 1969. 'Tabligh' for double-ensemble was performed by Golden Quartet and Classical Persian ensemble at Merkin Concert Hall and by Golden Quartet and Suleyman Erguner's Classical Turkish ensemble at Akbank Music Festival in Istanbul. His largest work 'Odwira' for 12 multi-ensembles (52 instrumentalists) was performed at California Institute of the Arts. His Noh piece 'Heart Reflections' was performed in Merkin Concert Hall, NY.

"Leo Smith is one of the most vital musicians on the planet today... To say that Smith is a highly original player would be an understatement."  
— Bill Shoemaker (Coda)

"Few trumpeters of the modern era have equaled his seamless marriage of lyricism..."  
— Peter Margasak (Downbeat)

"A venerable vanguard rebel for four decades, trumpeter/composer Wadada Leo Smith shows his cutting-edge artistry remains razor sharp... graced with crackling technique, free expression and passion for the beautiful and the spiritual."  
— Owen McNally (The Hartford Courant)

**Mathilde 253** ([www.busterandfriends.com/mathilde](http://www.busterandfriends.com/mathilde)) is the real-time musical meetings between drummer Charles Hayward, guitarist Han-earl Park and trumpeter Ian Smith. The ensemble was born out of an opportunity to explore the spontaneous mashup of avant-rock, African-American creative musics, European free improvisation and noise. Featuring special guest Lol Coxhill, Mathilde 253 debuted at Cafe OTO (London) in April 2010, and 2011 will see performances with Pat Thomas, and a Music Network funded tour of Ireland with the celebrated composer-improviser Ishmael Wadada Leo Smith.

The ensemble weaves a performance of physical virtuosity and humorous sound poetics; a patchwork of restraint, subtlety and recklessness. A playful collision of personal, social and musical histories, Mathilde 253 is a site where tradition and idiom are not straightjackets nor limitations, but playgrounds for real-time (re)inventions and (re)configurations.

**Charles Hayward** ([www.charleshayward.org](http://www.charleshayward.org)) is known as the pioneering drummer with This Heat and Camberwell Now, an ever growing list of solo concerts and CDs (most recent release Abracadabra Information on Locus Solus label), special collaborative performances, and is in Massacre with Bill Laswell and Fred Frith.

Throughout the 90's up to the present he has initiated a bewildering array of events and performances, including the widely acclaimed series Accidents + Emergencies at the Albany Theatre, Out of Body Orchestra (too much sound, not enough space, not enough time), music made from the sound of the new Laban dance centre being built which was choreographed for the official opening, music for a circus (part of the National Theatre's 'Art of Regeneration' initiative), the full-on installation/performance Anti-Clockwise (with Ashleigh Marsh and David Aylward) for multiple strobes, maze structure of diverse textures, 2 drummers, synthesizers and your nervous system. Recent developments include the Continuity evenings as part of Camberwell Arts.

Committed to song 'but the shapes have to change,' his current one-man show is an intoxicating mix of percussive attack, swirling electronics and lyrical fragment collage.

"An unwavering belief in the power of the groove and an uncanny facility for generating one riff after another."  
— The Wire

"Telepathic magic.... Hayward is one of the most life-affirming people who stalks this dark globe."  
— The Sound Projector

Improviser, guitarist and constructor **Han-earl Park** ([www.busterandfriends.com](http://www.busterandfriends.com)) works from/within/around traditions of fuzzily idiomatic, on occasion experimental, mostly open improvised musics, sometimes engineering theater, sometimes inventing ritual. He feels the gravitational pull of collaborative, multi-authored contexts, and has performed in clubs, theaters, art galleries and concert halls in Europe and America.

As a constructor of low- and mid-tech electronic and software devices, and as an occasional score-maker, he is interested in partial, and partially frustrating, context-specific artifacts; artifacts that amplify social relationships and, in some instances, objects that obscure the location of the author.

He is involved in collaborations with Bruce Coates, Franziska Schroeder, Alex Fiennes and Murray Campbell, and is part of Mathilde 253 with Charles Hayward and Ian Smith. Recent performances include Mathilde 253 with Lol Coxhill; duo concerts with Paul Dunmall, and with Richard Barrett; trios with Matana Robers and Mark Sanders, with Kato Hideki and Katie O'Looney, and with Thomas Buckner and Jesse Ronneau; as part of the Evan Parker led 20-piece improvising ensemble; and the performance of Pauline Oliveros' 'Droniphonia' alongside the composer. His recordings have been released by labels including Slam Productions, and DUNS Limited Edition. He has appeared at festivals including Sonic Acts (Amsterdam), the Center for Experiments in Art, Information and Technology Festival (California), dialogues festival (Edinburgh), Sonorities (Belfast) and VAIN Live Art (Oxford).

Park founded and curates Stet Lab, and teaches improvisation at the UCC School of Music.

"Careful, crafty and well-played with that restrained yet fractured guitar that sounds so good. Han-earl's sound seems to be in between Derek Bailey and Philip Gibbs."  
— Bruce Lee Gallanter (Downtown Music Gallery, NY)

"Beautiful music, incredibly focused...!"  
— Nick Didkovsky (Doctor Nerve / Punos Music)

**Ian Smith** ([www.efi.group.shef.ac.uk/musician/msmithi.html](http://www.efi.group.shef.ac.uk/musician/msmithi.html)) has been playing improvised music and has performed with Evan Parker, John Stevens, Maggie Nicols, Lol Coxhill, Steve Beresford and Eddie Prévost among others. His own trio, Trian, has played at the 1993 London Experimental Music Festival and the 1992 Soho Jazz Festival. He also participated in a reformation of Cornelius Cardew's Scratch Orchestra in the ICA in 1994. He has collaborated with composer Roger Doyle, winner of the Bourges International Electro-Acoustic Music Competition 1997, and he has been featured on two instrumental tracks by the hip hop band Marxman. He toured the UK with Butch Morris' London Skyscraper conduction project in November 1997.

He helped to institute the London Improvisers orchestra in 1998 with Steve Beresford and Evan Parker, which continues to play monthly in London and has recently performed at the Bimhuis in Amsterdam. He also founded The Gathering with Maggie Nichols.

In 2000 he recorded his second CD as a leader, Daybreak, with Derek Bailey, Veryan Weston, Gail Brand and Oren Marshall. Into the twenty-first century, as well as regularly playing with London improvisers, he has also performed with Greg Tate's Burnt Sugar Arkestra, guitarists Han-earl Park, Reeves Gabrels, the Poet and Detroit legend John Sinclair, and New York based drummer Harris Eisenstadt.

"Smith's style has the free-form panache of a Wadada Leo Smith or Joe McPhee, but his experience of other musics is never too far from the surface. Some of his gestures seem to derive from earlier forms of jazz, and there are moments of harmonic directness that you could put chord symbols under. But it has all been thoughtfully moulded into a highly convincing and distinctive language." — Philip Clark (JazzReview)

"Smith's trumpet playing is a particular revelation. His brassy blats and smears play off of the hyperactive spatters of Eisenstadt's drums. There is a clear jazz edge to his tone, which sounds almost radical these days when many trumpet players in the improv world seem inclined to turn their back on that vocabulary. But he can also dip down to breathy flutters and muted coloristic playing." — Michael Rosenstein (Signal to Noise)

**Paul G. Smyth** ([www.paulgsmyth.com](http://www.paulgsmyth.com)) is a musician, visual artist and designer, based in Dublin. A member of The Jimmy Cake (described by the Irish Times as "the most powerful musical force in Ireland") and Boys Of Summer ("the sound of John Carpenter being buried alive" according to Le Cool Magazine), Smyth is also Ireland's foremost free-improvising pianist. Since touring with New York free-jazz veteran Charles Gayle, he has gone on to play with such luminaries as Derek Bailey, Evan Parker, Keiji Haino, Barry Guy, John Russell, Chris Corsano, Lol Coxhill, John Butcher, Max Eastley and Damo Suzuki, been a featured composer in the National Concert Hall, written music for theatre, and performed in 17 countries.

"...Considerable gifts as an improviser... a genuinely cathartic listening experience... such fuck-you intensity." — The Wire

"Ireland's darkest jewel." — The Journal of Music

**{ENDS}**