

PERFORMANCE PROSPECTUS

CHARLES SMITH

My Arm Is Up In the Air

MAR 24 - 28 , 2011

running time 65 minutes

Written and Performed by Charles Smith

Directed by Matthew Richter

Stage Manager – Maridee Slater

Set Design – Michael Mowery

Lighting Design – Jay McAleer

Video projections – Shane Wahlund and Michael Anderson

Additional Technical Assistance – Morgan Redfield

Film performers

Kerri Labonte

Charles Smith

Video performers

Mary Hodges

Georgia Keene

John O'Connell

Charles Smith

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Part I was originally presented at the November 2009 12 Minutes Max.
Part III was originally presented at the NW New Works Festival June 2010

Hammered Dulcimer handcrafted by Whamdiddle
Rick Fogel - Seattle, WA
whamdiddle.com

Autoharp handcrafted by d'Aigle Autoharps
Pete d'Aigle - SeaTac, WA
daigleharp.com

Bowed Psaltery handcrafted by Omega Strings
Richard Spencer - Riverside, CA
omegastings.com

Special Thanks

Morgan Redfield - Metrix Create Space – metrixcreatespace.com
Bob Bonniol - Mode Studios - modestudios.com
Publicity photos – Basil Harris

Acknowledgements

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A NOTE FROM OTB

Charles Smith has been performing in Seattle for 20 years. He has a beautiful voice, plays the autoharp and hammer dulcimer, is one of the better actors in town, has good design sense, has a wicked sense of humor and thinks like a writer. He also is exacting and precise, and he likes to think ahead. To that end, he's been circling around the content and format of *My Arm Is Up in the Air* for at least 4 years if not longer. We're pleased Charles agreed to work with us to bring his show to fruition. (It's quietly provocative for many reasons that we won't list here so as not to irritate the artist.)

Congratulations to Charles, director Matthew Richter and all of the talented collaborators involved with this project.

Sarah Wilke and Lane Czaplinski

BEGINNER'S GUIDE TO CHARLES SMITH

- 1.** Charles has developed *My Arm is Up in the Air* through both 12 Minutes Max and the NW New Works Festival. He tested out 2 sections – part 1 and part 3, respectively – in their early stages in front of audiences during OtB's 09/10 season.
- 2.** *My Arm is Up in the Air* features a few instruments that you won't see in your average band: the hammered dulcimer, the bowed psaltery and the autoharp. [Read](#) up on all these instruments in this blog post.
- 3.** The driving inspiration behind *My Arm is Up in the Air* is Charles's focus on how people say things and not what they're saying. This focus on syntax and the actual words gave him the idea to create this satire on language.
- 4.** Charles has been performing for 20 years in Seattle.

INTERVIEW EXCERPT WITH CHARLES SMITH

Charles Smith: ...what the audience will be hearing in the show is essentially how I hear the world. I seem to be in this constant state of always hearing the world like this, and I thought, well if I'm the only - well, maybe not the *only* one - but if other people only function slightly with this, [then] what is it that set me off?... And actually I think there were 2 things. One was my 10th grade English teacher who was amazing but incredibly difficult. I had to learn grammar because if I didn't I would have failed her class - so many people had failed her class.... My best friend who was in the exact same class with me, we said - "alright, we're going to learn grammar" - and we did it so **that it kind of became music**, and we were both musicians (actually I was a musician for about 10 years before I did any theatre stuff) so it became music in our ears and we can automatically hear - you know, even a couple of weeks ago did I make a comment on your Facebook page about a split infinitive?

Scot Auguston: Yes, yes and I have to say I'm a fan of the split infinitive, and English being a Germanic language, split infinitives are not grammatically incorrect.

CS: The thing is that's what we were taught and so my ears hear them. I don't sit there and judge people...or even making fun of people's bad grammar, that's not what the show is about.

SA: Recognizing something like a split infinitive is a talent.

CS: I can hear anybody split an infinitive. I'll wince, like you see my eyes try to close, its funny but it doesn't really bother me. Its one of those musical things - **that's not how the music goes**.

[**LISTEN TO THE FULL INTERVIEW**](#)

BIOS

Charles Smith has performed at various fringe theaters in Seattle since 1991. In the late '90's, he helped in the creation of Dave Schmader's solo shows *Exploring Whoring* and *Straight*; Kevin Kent's two *Sister Windy* solo shows; and the early Dina Martina extravaganzas with Grady West. Thanks to his family: Charlie, Jean, Patty, Diane, Gail, Chris, and Terry

Matthew Richter is a producer, director, critic, author, arts entrepreneur, curator and furniture designer based in Seattle. *My Arm...* is the third production Matthew has directed at On the Boards, following 2010's *WEST* with the band "Awesome" and *Dinner Theater: a history of art* in 2006. You can find more of Matthew's work online at **xomonline.com**, or at his Pioneer Square furniture and design gallery, "xom." Thanks to Mom and Dad, Holly Arsenault, Mike

Michael Mowery has designed for many Seattle theatre companies including Seattle Shakespeare Company, Printer's Devil Theater, Our American Theatre Company, Bainbridge Performing Arts, Theater Schmeater and 14/48 - The World's Quickest Theater Festival. His designs include *The Threepenny Opera* at the Intiman, *Keefee's House of Cards*, *Angles Fall*, *An Adult Evening of Shel Silverstein*, *The Producers* and *Jihad Jones and the Kalashnikov Babes*. Michael is currently the Technical Director and in-house designer for Theater Schmeater.

Jay McAleer is a writer, designer and general maker of things with an extensive background in theatre production. He has worked in various theatres across the country and has toured internationally with productions to Ireland, Russia, South Korea and Mexico. In the spring of 2010 he collaborated with Catherine Cabeen, choreographer, and Julian Martlew, composer, on *Composites*, a short performance piece combining movement, text and soundscape, which will tour to the Joyce SOHO in May 2011. Other current projects include technical direction and dramaturgical support for Catherine Cabeen and Company's *Into the Void* which will premiere at OtB April 28-30. After five seasons as the Technical Director for On the Boards, Jay is pleased to be working with this incredible organization in a new capacity and thanks Charles for this opportunity.

Shane Wahlund and **Michael Anderson** are the duo behind some of Dina Martina's most beloved videos as well as their own found-footage show, Collide-O-Scope. An off-beat, twice-monthly video showcase of the good, bad, weird and wonderful, Collide-O-Scope is curated and hosted by the pair at both Re-bar and Central Cinema. They're very happy to be working with Charles at OTB.

www.facebook.com/pages/Collide-O-Scope/274267271318

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My Arm Is Up In the Air photos by Basil Harris

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