

Quotes about the Alma College Percussion Ensemble

“The Alma College ensemble left a packed house at the Notre Dame Jazz Festival, the Clayton Brothers’ members, and me with our jaws on the floor when we heard them. It wasn’t just precision, it was passion. It wasn’t just synched, it was soulful. It was exciting, it was beautiful, and it was an experience that no one in the audience would forget.

It is a huge ensemble - larger than a big band - and is comprised of percussion instruments. You’ll hear vibes, marimba, African drums, South American drums, steel drums from the Caribbean, and instruments you’ve never seen or heard before.”

**-John Clayton
Artistic Director
Centrum Jazz Program**

“Alma College’s Percussion Ensemble displayed the high level of professional musicianship that we present at the Centrum Jazz Festival. As I knew they would, they made thousands of people feel good and left an indelible impression on all who were in attendance. Not only are they technically proficient, this ensemble plays with SOUL! It was a pleasure to witness their success and acceptance by the Pacific Northwest audiences.”

**-John Clayton
Artistic Director
Centrum Jazz Program**

“Wow! Holy Smokes! Oh, Man! And did I mention “Wow?” You guys were amazing and wonderful...the music was beautiful and exciting--top notch.”

**-Gregg Miller
Associate Director
Centrum**

“[The group’s director] must have extraordinary talent to have produced a group of such outstanding quality -- teamwork, musicality, technique, professionalism...You have given those students and we the listeners/viewers a gift.”

-Herb Payson

Audience Member

“Lots of rhythmic variety which seems obvious with this kind of group, but you make use of all the colors, possibilities, talents, and made what could have been a novelty act something not only quality but professional sounding. Excellent!”

-Joan Hickey

Adjudicator

2007 Notre Dame Jazz Festival

“For those of you who have not seen a Percussion Ensemble concert...for shame. It really is one of the greatest events that takes place on this campus, and it never ceases to amaze. ...[It allows] the audience to see just exactly how much fun playing the percussion instruments can be - it is just awesome.”

-Kevin Bilbrey

Staff Writer for *The Almanian*

“I’m speechless. This is beyond gorgeous...a fantastic performance. Is there a better place to go to study mallet percussion? I think not.”

-John Clayton

Adjudicator

2006 Notre Dame Jazz Festival

“Thank you for the opportunity to host the Percussion Ensemble! They were fabulous and have left quite an impression on all who attended. Those in the audience from our congregation are still ‘buzzing’ about the evening. One older member (in her 80’s) described it as one of the few dramatic experiences of a lifetime that she’s glad she didn’t miss!”

**-Rev. Sarah Sarchet Butter
First Presbyterian Church
Willmette, Illinois**

“Dear Alma College, thank you so much for your encouragement and help this past week. You were and still are an inspiration. You...showed us the value of teamwork and how if you try hard enough you can make something wonderful.”

**-A sixth-grader at the Choir
Academy of Chicago**

"When the students get here, there is a respect for each other and a tightness within the group. They support each other, hang out together and practice their behinds off. In some ways, it's a different breed of music student."

**-Dr. Raymond Riley
Chair, Alma College Music Dept.**