Critical Acclaim for the Oberlin Conservatory of Music

*U.S. News and World Report Guide to American Colleges 2008*

Perhaps no other school exemplifies the liberal arts like Oberlin College. It’s a bastion of liberal thought, of course, and home to one of the country’s best music conservatories. … Its reputation as one of the best undergraduate music schools in the country benefits even nonmusical students: The campus hosts some 300 concerts each year, including numerous student recitals.


A recent conversation with members [of the International Contemporary Ensemble] gave an impression of the group as, in equal parts, hungry indie band, efficient corporation and missionary initiative. That mix of characteristics actually predated the group, which was founded in 2001 by former students from the Oberlin Conservatory in Ohio, a hotbed of contemporary-classical players.


In recent years Oberlin has produced some of the top names in contemporary music, including the innovative ensembles International Contemporary Ensemble and Eighth Blackbird and soloists like the violinist Jennifer Koh, who champions new repertory. Oberlin students are encouraged to experiment by Timothy Weiss, director of the conservatory’s respected Contemporary Music Ensemble. … Given the number of young musicians applying annually to conservatories around the country, warnings about the purported demise of classical music seem to be exaggerated. Oberlin’s rural experimental haven has resulted in successful music careers in a cutthroat marketplace.

*MUSICALAMERICA.COM* January 29, 2007

Oberlin has trained some of America’s best orchestral musicians for decades …

*The New Yorker* January 29, 2007

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*The Plain Dealer* (Donald Rosenberg) January 26, 2007

Spano and the orchestra treated the work’s gorgeous sonic rivulets and oceans to a mesmerizing performance. … The Oberlin ensemble was first-rate in every instrumental section, whether negotiating tricky metrical changes or savoring the music’s extremes of tragedy and wit.

*Marilyn Horne, October 2005*

There’s some really good teaching going on here.

*Sir Simon Rattle, December 2004*

I was immensely impressed with my time at Oberlin. Not only were the students excellently prepared, but they emanated a joy in discovery and a corporate intelligence that was very moving. In this small intense community, there is obviously something special going on."