

John Damberg-Biography

Vibist, Marimbist, Steel Drummer, Percussionist, Composer, & Educator

John Damberg is a master vibist, marimbist, steel drummer, percussionist, composer, & educator who has enjoyed a successful career in music spanning 43 years. John resides in Anchorage, Alaska where he is the leader of the **John Damberg Latin Jazz Quintet**, the **Instructor of Percussion at the University of Alaska Anchorage**, the founder and **President of the Alaska Jazz Workshop**, a 501 (c) 3 non-profit community service organization promoting jazz education and performance opportunities in Alaska. He is the past President & Vice President of the Percussive Arts Society Alaska Chapter. John is an active performer and educator in Alaska and Pacific Northwest. He is an ardent promoter of jazz & percussion education.

Background: John was born in 1952 in Kittery, Maine & received his early music training in Detroit, Michigan. He moved to Seattle in 1979 & was very active on the Seattle Music scene until 1991, when he moved to Anchorage, AK to teach at UAA and explore Alaska's great outdoors. John holds a BM degree in Percussion Performance & a MM degree in Jazz Studies & Ethnomusicology from the U of WA, & a BM degree in Music Education from UAA.

Feelings & Passions

John's major passions in life are sharing his joy for composing and playing great music with others & exploring the great outdoors!

When you first experience the positive energy of John Damberg's live shows & his approach to teaching, you know you are in for an exhilarating & enlightening experience. You get the sense that you are in the presence of a highly motivated visionary & charismatic spirit who loves to share his deep love for music, the outdoors, & living life to its fullest to inspire his audiences & students.

John's deep passion for composing, performing, & teaching life skills through music has been a constant, unbridled force throughout his life's long & fulfilling journey. His interest in music, nature, & different world cultures over the last 47 years has taken him on many varied and interesting musical journeys throughout North, Central, South America, the Caribbean islands, Sweden & Norway. On these journeys John experienced the music of the land & the diverse music cultures of its native inhabitants. Because of these experiences, John developed his focus on using improvisatory music as a vehicle for self-expression & communication to develop a sense of balance between one's inner spirit & the surrounding world. John is a firm believer that an artist's sense of place in the world comes into focus and has deep meaning when the artist is actively

practicing his or her art form. In this space, time ceases to exist and the artist becomes whole & one with their world.

Professional Experience:

As a percussionist, John has performed in a wide variety of musical settings nationally and internationally including: the John Damberg Latin and jazz ensembles, recording studio dates, with the Detroit, Seattle and Anchorage Symphony Orchestras and Broadway touring shows. John has performed with internationally acclaimed jazz artists including: Wynton Marsalis, Rebeca Mauleon, Eddie Palmieri, Kristin Korb, Jovino Santos Neto, Milt Jackson, Cedar Walton, Denis Deblasio, Brian Lynch, Oscar Stagnaro, Allison Miller, Michael Davis, & Mimi Fox and with nationally renowned entertainers including: Harry Connick Jr., Ray Charles, Quincy Jones, the Temptations, Gladys Knight & the Pips, Sammy Davis Jr., Steve Allen, Joel Gray, Bob Hope, & Liberace.

As a composer, John writes music for his Latin Jazz Ensemble & for other creative projects including: movie sound tracks, travel videos and children's educational videos. John's compositions have been featured on the 2005 CD release **Azure** by the JoMaLa Jazz Quintet, the 1998 CD release of **Angie's Samba** by the John Damberg Latin Jazz Quintet, the 1993 release of **Human Hands: a Composers and Improvisers Ensemble**, on his 1985 release of **Soaring** & on videos including "Cruising Alaska's Inside Passage" & the award winning children's video "Monty the Moose". John is currently working on a new CD of original jazz, Latin, and funk music to be released in September 2018 featuring the John Damberg Latin Jazz Quintet.

As an educator, John is a passionate educator who uses his love for people, music & self expression to help his students develop effective strategies to realize their passions, goals & dreams while building well balanced rewarding lives. He is a visionary actively promoting creative collaborations with other individuals in strong leadership teams to enhance the growth & well being of the Alaska Music and Arts community. He is the founder & President of the **Alaska Jazz Workshop**, a 501 (c) 3 community arts and service organization founded in 2000 to promote jazz education and performance opportunities in Alaska. John & the AJW instructors have mentored with over 3,000 grade 6 through adult students through since 2000.

John is the **Instructor of Percussion at UAA**, a post he has held since 1991 & the past President & Vice President of the AK Chapter of the Percussive Arts Society from 1992-2008, promoting percussion

education. John also maintains an active private music studio of 30-40 percussion & piano students.

Continuing Education:

To be an effective educator John believes that one has to be a life long student as well. To this effect he has attended many seminars, workshops, and summer camps including: the 2011 Pan Ramajay Steel Drum Camp, the 2010 & 2012 California Brazil Camps, the 2010 Rebeca Mauleon Arfo-Cuban Music Workshop, the 2008 Fairbanks Summer Arts Festival, the 2007 Valerie Naranjo African Percussion and Gyl Workshop at UAA, the AJW Summer 2000-2010 Jazz improvisation workshops at UAA, the 1999-2005 IAJE Conventions, the 2001 Chamber Music America Convention, 1994 & 1997 Nigerian Talking Drum workshops with Francis Awe, and the 1993 Afro Cubanismo Festival in Banff, Canada, and the 1990 Ellie Mannette Steel Drum performance and building camp in Cannon Beach, Oregon.

Awards

Recipient of :

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| 2017
2012 | ASCA Career Opportunity grants to attend music workshops in New York City |
| 2010 | Rasmuson Foundation \$12,00 Artist Fellowship grant in Music Composition |
| 2001 | CMA Travel Grant to attend the CMA Convention (Chamber Music America) in New York City. |
| 2000 | Honorable Mention-Anchorage APRN Song of the Year Competition for <i>Angie's Samba</i> |
| 1998- | Percussive Arts Society State Chapter Grants for 2007 the Alaska Day of Percussion Festivals at UAA and UAF |
| 1994 | ASCA Artist Development grant to attend Afro Cubanismo Festival at the Banff Centre for the Arts: Alaska State Council on the Arts |