

„This is probably the coolest string quartet in the world “

Sydney Morning Herald
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BROOKLYN RIDER

JOHNNY GANDELSMAN (VIOLINE), COLIN JACOBSEN (VIOLINE),
NICHOLAS CORDS (VIOLA), MICHAEL NICOLAS (VIOLONCELLO)

The name Brooklyn Rider was inspired by the artist group Der Blaue Reiter (The Blue Rider), who published an eclectic almanac of artworks, essays, and music that served both as an artistic testimony of their time and a vision for the future - all while openly embracing different artistic traditions, media and aesthetics.

Hailed by Strings Magazine as “future of chamber music”, the Brooklyn Rider String Quartet's eclectic repertoire and electrifying performances have garnered enthusiastic reviews from classical, world and rock music critics alike. The National Public Radio (NPR) credits Brooklyn Rider with “recreating the 300-year-old genre of string quartet as a vital and creative 21st-century ensemble,” reflected indeed in the quartet's programme.

With The 4 Elements, Brooklyn Rider brings a theme to the concert Hall that could not be more pressing: global warming and the destruction of our planet. The programme, which was released as an album in spring 2025, is intended to serve as a wake-up call. The New York Times described it as “intellectually lucid, aesthetically far-reaching and emotionally draining – a rare musical protest at the destruction of our planet that actually succeeds as art”.

Brooklyn Rider demonstrated a near-prophetic sense of the zeitgeist in 2020 with their project Healing Modes; juxtaposing five commissioned works by Reena Esmail, Gabriela Lena Frank, Matana Roberts and the two Pulitzer Prize winners Caroline Shaw and Du Yun against Beethoven's op. 132. The program explores the theme of healing from a wide range of historical and cultural perspectives. The New Yorker praised the corresponding recording as compelling and described the ensemble's performance as overwhelming.

In 2019, two albums were released featuring two trailblazing musical partners: jazz saxophonist Joshua Redman (Sun on Sand) and the master of the Irish fiddle, Martin Hayes (The Butterfly).

In fall 2018, Brooklyn Rider released Dreamers on Sony Music Masterworks with acclaimed jazz vocalist Magos Herrera. The recording includes works from the Ibero-American songbook as well as works written to texts by Octavio Paz, Rubén Darío and Federico García Lorca, reinterpreted by renowned arrangers.

In the 2017/2018 season, the album Spontaneous Symbols was released with new works for the quartet by the American composers Tyondai Braxton, Evan Ziporyn, Paula Matthusen, Kyle Sanna and the 2nd violinist of Brooklyn Rider, Colin Jacobsen. Works by Braxton, Ziporyn and Jacobsen featured on the album were also heard live in Some of a

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Thousand Words, the ensemble's co-production with choreographer Brian Brooks and former New York City Ballet prima ballerina Wendy Whelan.

In 2016, Brooklyn Rider released the album so many things with the Swedish mezzo-soprano Anne Sofie von Otter on the French label Naïve Records, featuring music by John Adams, Nico Muhly, Björk, Sting, Kate Bush and Elvis Costello, amongst others.

In 2015, the ensemble celebrated its tenth anniversary with their groundbreaking multidisciplinary project Brooklyn Rider Almanac, for which it recorded and toured 15 specially commissioned works, each inspired by a different artistic muse. The second edition of the project, featuring four new works by Clarice Assad, Gabriel Kahane, Giovanni Sollima and Tyshawn Sorey, was performed at venues including the Cologne Philharmonie in the 23/24 season.

The highly acclaimed album Brooklyn Rider Plays Philip Glass in 2011 marked the beginning of a long-standing relationship between the composer and the quartet, which continued with further releases on the composer's own label, Orange Mountain Music.

The 2025/2026 season marks Brooklyn Rider's 20th anniversary. To mark the occasion, Gabriela Lena Frank has once again dedicated a new work to the quartet, titled Frieda's Dreams. Following their Australian debut in 2024, the ensemble will return this year for performances at Ukaria in Adelaide and the Melbourne Recital Hall. In Europe, they will celebrate their anniversary season at venues including the Berlin Philharmonie, Amici della Musica in Florence, Wigmore Hall London, DeSingel in Antwerp and the Beethovenfest in Bonn.

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Impresariat
Simmenauer GmbH

Kurfürstendamm 211
DE-10719 Berlin

+49 (0)30 41 47 81 710
www.impresariat-simmenauer.de