

“The quartet presented a programme illustrative of the diversity of expressive gestures arising from the artistry of the physical ensemble, and from the vitality of the structural forms created by composers.”

bachtrack (July 2023)

BROOKLYN RIDER

JOHNNY GANDELSMAN (VIOLIN), COLIN JACOBSEN (VIOLIN),
NICHOLAS CORDS (VIOLA), MICHAEL NICOLAS (CELLO)

The name Brooklyn Rider is inspired by the artist group The Blue Rider, which published an eclectic almanac of artwork, essays and music that served as an artistic testament to their time while offering a vision for the future and an open embrace of diverse artistic traditions, media, and aesthetics.

Hailed as “the future of chamber music” (*Strings*), the String Quartet Brooklyn Rider presents eclectic repertoire and gripping performances that continue to draw rave reviews from Classical, World, and Rock critics alike. *NPR* credits Brooklyn Rider with “recreating the 300-year-old form of string quartet as a vital and creative 21st-century ensemble,” which is reflected in the quartet’s programs:

With *The 4 Elements*, Brooklyn Rider brings a theme to concert stages since the past season that could not be more timely: global warming and the destruction of our planet, which also serves as a wake-up call.

With an almost prophetic sense for the zeitgeist, Brooklyn Rider presented the project *Healing Modes* in 2020, which takes a holistic view on Beethoven’s Op. 132 combined with five commissioned works by Reena Esmail, Gabriela Lena Frank, Matana Roberts and the two Pulitzer Prize winners Caroline Shaw and Du Yun. They explore the theme of healing from a variety of historical and cultural perspectives. In March 2020, the *New Yorker* praised the concept of the recording as convincing and the playing of the four as persuasive.

In 2019, two albums were released featuring instrumentalists who are at the forefront of their respective genre: jazz saxophonist Joshua Redman (*Sun On Sand*) and Irish fiddle master Martin Hayes (*The Butterfly*).

In the fall of 2018, Brooklyn Rider released *Dreamers* on Sony Music Masterworks with celebrated Mexican jazz vocalist Magos Herrera. The recording includes gems of the Ibero-American songbook as well as pieces written to texts by Octavio Paz, Rubén Darío, and Federico García Lorca – all reimagined by arrangers including Jaques Morelenbaum, Gonzalo Grau, Diego Schissi, Guillermo Klein, and Brooklyn Rider’s own Colin Jacobsen.

In 2017/ 2018, Brooklyn Rider released *Spontaneous Symbols*. The album features new quartet music by Tyondai Braxton, Evan Ziporyn, Paula Matthusen, Kyle Sanna, and Brooklyn Rider

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violinist Colin Jacobsen. Works from that recording were also featured in the live performance of *Some of a Thousand Words*, the ensemble's recent collaboration with choreographer Brian Brooks and former New York City Ballet prima ballerina Wendy Whelan. An intimate series of duets and solos in which the quartet's live onstage music is a dynamic and central creative component, *Some of a Thousand Words* was featured at the 2016 Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival, before two U.S. tours, including a week-long run at New York City's Joyce Theater.

In 2016, Brooklyn Rider released an album entitled *so many things* on *Naïve Records* with Swedish mezzo-soprano Anne Sofie von Otter, comprising music by Colin Jacobsen, Caroline Shaw, John Adams, Nico Muhly, Björk, Sting, Kate Bush and Elvis Costello, among others. The group toured material from the album and more with von Otter in the U.S. and Europe, including stops at Carnegie Hall and the Opernhaus Zürich.

Additionally, Brooklyn Rider performed Philip Glass's String Quartet #7, furthering a relationship with the iconic American composer, which began with 2011's much-praised *Brooklyn Rider Plays Philip Glass* and will continue with the upcoming album release of Glass's recent quartets on the composer's Orange Mountain Music label.

In 2015, the group celebrated its tenth anniversary with the groundbreaking multi-disciplinary 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 with four new works by Clarice Assad, Gabriel Kahane, Giovanni Sollima and Tyshawn Sorey was performed in the 23/24 season at the Kölner Philharmonie and several other venues.

Brooklyn Rider toured Australia in February 2024 with concerts at the Melbourne Recital Center, the Perth Festival, Ukaria in Adelaide and the Sydney Opera House. The Sydney Morning Herald subsequently ran the headline "This may be the coolest String Quartet in the world".

In the 2024/25 season, the quartet will perform in Europe at venues including the National Concert Hall in Dublin, the Tonhalle Zurich, the Pierre Boulez Saal Berlin, the Konserthuset Stockholm and the Teatro Auditorium Manzoni in Bologna.

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