

About Brooklyn Rider

Johnny Gandelsman, violin
Colin Jacobsen, violin
Nicholas Cords, viola
Eric Jacobsen, cello

The multi-faceted string quartet Brooklyn Rider is becoming increasingly known for its creative programming and exciting collaborations which serve to illuminate music in new ways and invite audiences into a shared experience. Uniquely able to address a wide and inclusive range of music, they are as willing to explore the world of Haydn as they are in the music of our time and have performed in venues as varied as Joe's Pub in NYC, Todai-ji Temple in Nara Japan and the Petronas Towers in Malaysia. Born out of a desire to use the rich medium of the string quartet as a vehicle for borderless communication, all of the musicians have enjoyed diverse careers in music that have intersected with each other over many years.

Brooklyn Rider is devoted both to the interpretation of existing quartet literature and to the creation of new works. They have worked with composers such as Chen Yi, Osvaldo Golijov, Dmitry Yanov-Yanovsky, Shirish Korde, Lvova, and Jenny Scheinman as well as the original compositions and arrangements of Brooklyn Rider's own Colin Jacobsen. Exploring new possibilities through collaborative programs is a frequent part of Brooklyn Rider's work. Some examples include programs with Chinese pipa virtuoso Wu Man, Syrian/Armenian visual artist Kevork Mourad, traditional and technology-based Japanese shakuhachi player Kojiro Umezaki, and singer/songwriter Christina Courtin. A long-standing relationship with Persian kemanche player and composer Kayhan Kalhor will result in a CD release entitled *Silent City* later this year on World Village Records, the world music label of Harmonia Mundi.

Audience engagement and outreach is an essential part of the quartet's creative mission. To further their reach, Brooklyn Rider often appears under the umbrella of outside initiatives begun by all four members of the group. Two summers ago, they collectively inaugurated the Stillwater Music Festival in Minnesota, providing concerts and outreach activities designed to connect communities in the St. Croix Valley area. In 2003 violinist Johnny Gandelsman created *In A Circle*, a series of performance events in Lower Manhattan and Brooklyn that explore connections between music and the visual arts. Brothers Colin and Eric Jacobsen are the founders of The Knights, a chamber orchestra based in New York that has recently appeared at Long Island's Beethoven Festival, Dublin's National Gallery, and will be featured next summer at the Dresden Musikfestspiele. As educators, the quartet has been in residency at Williams College, the University of Delaware, the School for Strings Summer Institute in NYC, Macphail Center for the Arts in

Minneapolis and next year will include a week long series of events at Dartmouth College. Brooklyn Rider has been featured on John Shaffer's Soundcheck, Minnesota Public Radio and was invited in 2005 to help curate a weeklong residency at National Public Radio's Performance Today.

Much of Brooklyn Rider's desire to extend the borders of conventional string quartet programming has been through their longstanding participation in Yo-Yo Ma's Silk Road Ensemble, a group dedicated to exploring the cultural intersections of the peoples along the ancient trade route. As members of the ensemble, they have performed throughout the world, recorded three albums for Sony Classical, and have reached audiences through a series of educational initiatives, family concerts and media broadcasts. Brooklyn Rider has also taken part in a series of museum residencies initiated by the Silk Road Project that have taken them to the Rubin Museum of Himalayan Art in New York City, the Art Institute of Chicago, the Museum Reitberg in Zurich and the Nara National Museum in Japan. They have also participated extensively in ongoing Silk Road Ensemble residencies at Harvard University and the Rhode Island School of Design.

The quartet's name is inspired in part by the creations, interests and cross disciplinary visions of the Blue Rider group; an artistic association comprised of Vassily Kandinsky, Franz Marc, Arnold Schoenberg and Alexander Scriabin, to name a few. In the spirit of those sympathetic friendships, Brooklyn Rider has created an online art gallery showcasing the work of our peers in which the proceeds are used to support new commission projects. The quartet also draws additional inspiration from the exploding array of cultures and artistic energy found in the borough of Brooklyn in New York City, a place they also call home.