



Quartetto di Cremona
2025-2026 Biography
Cristiano Gualco, violin; Paolo Andreoli, violin
Simone Gramaglia, viola; Giovanni Scaglione, cello

Quartetto di Cremona, founded in 2000 and winner of the 2019 Franco Buitoni Award, are among the world's preeminent string quartets, noted for their lustrous sound, refined musicianship and stylistic versatility. According to *The Strad*, the Quartetto's Lincoln Center debut in 2022 "was distinguished by splendid balance, abundant colour and a relaxed mastery of all the musical elements."

The 2025-2026 season for Quartetto di Cremona brings a North American tour with clarinetist David Shifrin, including performances in San Diego, Phoenix, and Northampton, and they also appear in concert at the University of Florida. In Europe, they visit Milan and Rome, Italy, Vaduz, Lichtenstein, and Salonica, Greece, as well as Beirut, Lebanon. As the Quartetto make their way around the world, they perform in exquisite tuxedos designed by the renowned Italian designer Brunello Cucinelli. The Quartetto di Cremona wish to express their deepest gratitude to the Cucinelli family for their generous support and for creating this marvelous stage attire.

Quartetto di Cremona were established in 2000 at the Accademia Walter Stauffer in Cremona, Italy, and have toured extensively in Europe, the United States, South America and Asia; appeared at leading festivals; and performed regularly on radio and television broadcasts, including RAI, BBC, ORF, Westdeutscher Rundfunk and the Australian Broadcasting Corporation. Quartetto di Cremona's extensive repertoire encompasses key masterworks from Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven, Schubert and Brahms; essential late nineteenth- and twentieth-century literature; and contemporary works by Golijov, Lachenmann, Fabio Vacchi, Silvia Colasanti, Nimrod Borenstein, Kalevi Aho and Maxwell Davies. They are also known for their performances of work by Italian composers, including Verdi, Respighi and Boccherini.

In the 2024-2025 season, Quartetto di Cremona marked their 25th season with an ambitious new recording of Bach's *Art of the Fugue* (Orchid Classic, November 1, 2024), and a world tour that took them to Music Toronto, the Society of the Four Arts in Palm Beach, FL, Friends of Chamber Music Denver, Aspect Chamber Music Series in New York and Longwood Gardens in Pennsylvania. In Europe, they appeared in Prague, Pully (Switzerland), Madrid and

Rome. In January 2025, they toured Taiwan and China and in December 2025, return to Asia with stops in Tokyo and Yokohama, Japan, to perform and to teach.

To celebrate their 25th season, the Quartet took on the challenge of recording Bach's seminal *Art of the Fugue*, adding instruments to bring Bach's original score to life. Bach's manuscript was not written for string quartet, and it includes several passages that go beyond the ranges of violin and viola, so the Quartetto came up with an audacious solution: second violinist Paolo Andreoli learned the viola in order to play these passages and violist Simone Gramaglia had a tenor viola made to accommodate the score.

Their 2020 recording *Italian Postcards* (Avie Records), features music inspired by Italy and written by non-Italian composers, including the world premiere recording of *Cieli d'Italia* by Nimrod Borenstein. Previous recordings include an all-Schubert disc with cellist Eckart Runge (Audite, 2019) and a box set of the complete Beethoven quartet cycle (Audite, 2018), including a quintet with Lawrence Dutton, violist of the Emerson String Quartet; several of the seven individual discs in this set received widespread and immediate recognition upon their release, including a five-star rating in *BBC Music Magazine*, International Classical Music Awards, the Supersonic Award from the German magazine *Pizzicato* and the Echo Klassik 2017 prize.

Quartetto di Cremona lead a renowned string program, currently in its thirteenth year, for professional and advanced string quartets at the Accademia Walter Stauffer, now part of the Stauffer String Center, opened in Cremona in 2021. They also regularly participate in masterclasses while on tour throughout Europe and the United States. Awarded the Borletti-Buitoni Trust Fellowship in 2005, Quartetto di Cremona subsequently received the prestigious Franco Buitoni Award in 2019 in recognition of their contribution to promoting and encouraging chamber music in Italy and throughout the world. The quartet are supported by the Kulturfond Peter Eckes which provides the musicians with three superb instruments: violin Paolo Antonio Testore, viola Gioachino Torazzi and cello Dom Nicola Amati. Cristiano Gualco plays his own violin by Nicola Amati (Cremona, 1640). In 2015, the musicians were awarded honorary citizenship by the city of Cremona, and in 2016, were awarded a loan of the famous Paganini Quartet of Stradivarius instruments from the Nippon Music Foundation.

“The Cremona's performance was distinguished by splendid balance, abundant colour and a relaxed mastery of all the musical elements.”

– *The Strad*

“It’s a rare blend: breadth of sound and capriciousness combined with perfect tuning and ensemble has the players sounding absolutely of one voice... Nothing less than life-affirming.”

– *Gramophone*

“The Cremona Quartet completes its Beethoven series with a fine coupling, combining exemplary technique and intonational purity with an interpretive acuity that strips away 19th-century rhetoric while avoiding the pitfalls of sounding merely ‘historically informed’.”

– *The Strad*

“Quartetto di Cremona’s magnificent survey of Beethoven’s Complete String Quartets moves securely and unquestionably into mastery... such warm playing; such perfection on a silver disc; what a glory this is.”

– *The Herald*

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