

REPUBLIC OF STRINGS BIO: The band

Somewhere beyond or behind all musical borders lies a creative terrain where bluegrass, jazz, classical, pop, and various world musics mingle, played by musicians who care more for inspiration than they do for genre. If that place has a name, it's surely the Republic of Strings, for no one knows its contours better than veterans Darol Anger, Scott Law, and a constantly developing population of young excellent string players. They have created the visionary musical landscape of the Republic, exemplified by their 2 recordings, *Republic Of Strings* and *Generation Nation*, for Compass Records.



Drawing from an array of sources that includes Bluegrass, Celtic and Appalachian music, Ornette Coleman, Scandinavian string bands, Aretha Franklin and the quartet's own members, *Generation Nation* documents a unique intergenerational exchange. Compelling musical textures, elegant solos and vocals all emanate from a startlingly diverse group of guests. "There's a lot of respect and love going on among the players," says Anger, "and I think it comes out in the music". One listen proves that he's exactly right.

The Republic Of Strings has appeared at major music festivals all over the US including Rockygrass, Grey Fox, and Wintergrass. They have toured extensively in all parts of the country and have developed a deep empathy that has developed among its members over nearly eight years of concert appearances, teaching residencies and informal exchanges.

Veteran legendary fiddler **Darol Anger** has poured everything he learned over 30 years about music into the Republic Of Strings. Violinist, fiddler, composer, producer and educator, Anger is at home in a number of musical genres, some of which he helped to invent. He developed his signature sound through working closely with many of the world's great improvising string musicians, among them Stephane Grappelli, Edgar Meyer, Mark O'Connor, Bela Fleck, Tony Rice, David Grisman, and Vassar Clements. Today Darol can be heard on NPR's "Car Talk" theme every week, along with Earl Scruggs, David Grisman and Tony Rice. Anger has produced dozens of critically lauded recordings since 1977 which have featured his compositions and performances. His current group, The Republic Of Strings, breaks new territory for bowed string instruments and presents young talent. With the jazz-oriented Turtle Island String Quartet, Anger developed and popularized new techniques for playing contemporary music on string instruments. His groups The Republic of Strings, The Fiddlers 4, Psychograss, and the Anger-Marshall Duo feature his compositions and arrangements. His group Montreux was the original musical model for the New Adult Contemporary radio format. The David Grisman Quintet forged a new genre of acoustic string band music with Darol's "fertile inventiveness, surprising touches and technical mastery" often in the forefront. He is an Associate Professor at the prestigious Berklee School of music and is a McDowell and UCross Fellow. "Darol Anger is the sort of musician who refuses to concede that musical boundaries even exist. Surrounding himself with up-and-coming musicians of the absolute top rank, Anger has upped the ante of string-band music almost off the charts."—Amazon.com

Mike Block, cello, plays in many genres and groups, including his own band for which he sings and writes. Mike is the cellist in Mark O'Connor's Appalachia Waltz Trio, and frequently performs with Yo-Yo

Ma in The Silk Road Ensemble. Mike is a member of the Absolute Ensemble, the Sirius String Quartet, the Hanneke Cassel Band, The Knights, and Bassam Saba's New York Arabic Orchestra. He has performed with Edgar Meyer, Mike Marshall, Christian Howes, Marcel Khaliffe, Goran Bregovic, and Kayhan Kalhor. Mike performs frequently in Germany, where he recorded the World Premiere of Gregor Hubner's Cello Concerto No. 1, showcasing Mike's non-traditional pizzicato and improvisation skill. As a composer, Mike has had his works performed by the Silk Road Ensemble, Sirius String Quartet, the Absolute Ensemble, and many others. A graduate of the Juilliard School and the Cleveland Institute of Music, Mike's former cello teachers include Richard Aaron, Joel Krosnick, Darrett Adkins, and Carter Enyeart. Mike also trained two years with Pamela Devenport to become a Suzuki teacher. In the summers, Mike teaches improvisation and non-classical styles at Mark O'Connor's string camps, the Kansas City Cello Clinic, and the Swannanoa Gathering in North Carolina.
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Beginning as a brilliant and versatile electric guitarist, **Scott Law** has perfected an acoustic style which bears his unique stamp yet freely ranges over the entire history of rock, jazz, and bluegrass guitar. His early years as a drummer inform his style with a rare rhythmic concision. He is also a prolific songwriter with a strong tenor voice. Scott Law embodies the ideal of the American Guitar Master. He has connected onstage with many contemporary masters of Americana music, among them Phil Lesh and friends, Melvin Seals, String Cheese Incident, David Carradine, Leftover Salmon, David Grisman, Darol Anger, Steve Kimock, The Motet, Peter Rowan, Yonder Mountain, and more. Trained early as a drummer, Scott took on the guitar at the age of 15 and in a few years was averaging 100 dates a year all over the U.S. He was a member of the Melvin Seals Band from 2000 to 2002. His popular acoustic world-rhythm group Hanuman released 3 recordings between 1998 and 2003. In 2005 he released his first solo project, Deliver, and toured nationally with his Scott Law Band. Living in Los Angeles, New York, and Seattle along the way has earned him a wealth of musical and professional connections and knowledge which he can draw on from his current home base of Portland, Oregon. Scott has scored and performed music for film and television, including an original song for the CBS primetime feature "Viva Laughlin" in 2007, and recent scores for 2 full-length documentaries by The Columbia Land Trust and Tom's Of Maine. He is a dedicated music educator, and has taught privately and at the Puget Sound Guitar Workshop since 1984.

A rising star in the national fiddle scene, **Lauren Rioux** performs with Darol Anger's Republic of Strings, Scott Nygaard and Crow Molly, and the StringNation Orkestra. A classically trained violinist and violist, Lauren discovered traditional fiddle music in 2001 at the first National American String Teachers' Association Convention. She is an excellent role model and source of useful information for classical players wishing to "cross over" into vernacular styles. Her powerful sound, vibrant rhythmic sense, fluency in old-time, Celtic and Scandinavian fiddle styles, and her tremendous personal charm add depth and interest to any ensemble. Lauren plays an active role in her native state of Maine's music education network and served two terms as the state president for Maine ASTA. She is a highly sought-after teacher and workshop clinician, leading classes at Mark O'Connor's Fiddle Camps as well as National and State Conferences held by the American String Teacher's Association. Lauren lives in Maine and maintains a very active private studio of rowdy violinists, violists, and fiddlers ranging in ages from five to sixty-five years old.