

Bernard Foccroulle, Komponist

Biography

The elegance of the vocal line, at times feverish, at times reflective, the evocative power of the orchestration, the expression, which is as intense in its brilliant power as it is in its contemplation – all this suggests that we are dealing with a masterpiece. LE MONDE, September 2020 – about *E vidi quattro stelle*

Bernard Foccroulle, born in Liège (Belgium) in 1953, combines a wide variety of aspects in his musical biography: his work as a composer, organist and artistic director of important institutions makes him one of the outstanding musical personalities of our time.

He celebrated great success in 2023 with the world premiere of his first opera *Cassandra* at La Monnaie Opera House in Brussels and with the German premiere of the work in June 2025 at the Staatsoper Unter den Linden Berlin. In February 2026, his new composition *Winterreisende (Winter Travellers)* will be premiered in two concerts on the same day: soprano Pia Davila, tenor Julian Prégardien and the Ensemble Modern under Lucie Leguay will perform the work first at a promenade concert in Frankfurt and then in the evening at the Casals Forum Kronberg.

Bernard Foccroulle's compositional practice is primarily based on chamber music and organ music. He has created works such as *E vidi quattro stelle* for soprano, baritone, wind quartet, harp and organ, based on Dante's *Purgatorio*, *Am Rande der Nacht* after Rilke for soprano and orchestra, *Due* after De Luca for baritone and ensemble, and *Quatre mélodies d'après Verlain* for soprano and piano. *Zauberland*, a song cycle based on poems by Martin Crimp, premiered in 2019 at the Théâtre des Bouffes du Nord in Paris in a production by Katie Mitchell. *Le Journal d'Hélène Berr* for mezzo-soprano and piano quintet was premiered in concert in 2023, followed by an acclaimed staged production at the Opéra du Rhin. The work is presented at the 21C Music Festival in Toronto in the current season.

He can also be heard as an organist during the current season; among other engagements, he will give an organ recital at the Elbphilharmonie in March 2026. Bernard Foccroulle began his international career on the organ in the mid-1970s with a repertoire ranging from Renaissance to contemporary music. In the 1980s, he was a member of the Ricercar Consort, which was mainly dedicated to German Baroque music. Since then, he has performed as an organist all over the world and premiered numerous works, including compositions by Philippe Boesmans, Brian Ferneyhough, Betsy Jolas, Xavier Darasse, Jonathan Harvey and Pascal Dusapin. Bernard Foccroulle's discography comprises a total of 50 CD recordings, including the complete works for organ by J.S. Bach, D. Buxtehude and M. Weckmann. He has also served as artistic director of the La Monnaie de Munt opera house (1992-2007) and the Aix-en-Provence Festival (2007-2018), among others.

Bernard Foccroulle's compositions are published by Ricordi and Henry Lemoine.

2025/26 season

This biography is to be reproduced without any changes, omissions or additions, unless expressly authorised by the artist management.

Link to the artist page: <https://en.karstenwitt.com/artist/bernard-foccroulle>