

Freiburger Barockorchester

For nearly four decades, the Freiburg Baroque Orchestra (FBO) has been one of the most internationally influential ensembles in historically informed performance practice. Led by its concertmasters Cecilia Bernardini and Gottfried von der Goltz, the orchestra combines the precision of chamber music, scientific curiosity, and collective responsibility in its lively and virtuosic performances. Founded in 1987 by graduates of the Freiburg University of Music, the ensemble is distinguished by its broad stylistic range, spanning early Baroque to contemporary music, as well as by its tireless curiosity for both familiar and lesser-known repertoire.

With around 100 concerts per year, the Freiburg Baroque Orchestra appears on the world's most important stages. For more than 30 years, the musicians have also been active as presenters, curating their own subscription series in Freiburg, Stuttgart, and Berlin since the 1996/97 and 1999/2000 seasons, respectively. Since 2012, the FBO has been based in Freiburg's Ensemble House alongside Ensemble Recherche and has helped shape the city's cultural life far beyond the concert scene. In addition to its regularly sold-out performances, the orchestra has long been engaged in education and inclusion projects with local partners. This season, for example, the project *Listening Together* continues in collaboration with the Freiburg Institute for Musicians' Medicine.

A particular highlight at the beginning of the year is the collaboration with cellist Nicolas Altstaedt. With its *Bohemian Symphony* programme, the FBO performs in Freiburg and Berlin, as well as at the Esterházy Palace in Eisenstadt in January, followed by appearances at the Lake Constance Festival in May.

Opera is another major focus of the season. A new production of Georg Friedrich Handel's *Tamerlano* will premiere on 20 February 2026 at the International Handel Festival in Karlsruhe, under the musical direction of René Jacobs. Also conducted by Jacobs, the orchestra will tour Europe in April 2026 with Antonio Vivaldi's *Il Giustino*, with performances at venues including the Palau de la Música in Valencia, deSingel in Antwerp, and the Teatro Real in Madrid. In early July 2026, the FBO will perform Niccolò Jommelli's "La Didone abbandonata" under the direction of Francesco Corti at the Schlosstheater in Ludwigsburg.

The FBO's history has been shaped by numerous outstanding artistic partnerships and conductors. The ensemble regularly appears at major international festivals such as the Salzburg Festival, the Festival d'Aix-en-Provence, the Rheingau Music Festival, and the Gstaad Menuhin Festival, and collaborates with leading artists, including Kristian Bezuidenhout, who serves as Principal Guest Director, Pablo Heras-Casado, Sir Simon Rattle, and Isabelle Faust.

Members of the orchestra also form the Freiburger BarockConsort, a chamber ensemble specialising in Renaissance and early Baroque repertoire, which collaborates with partners such as the Belgian vocal ensemble Vox Luminis and its director Lionel Meunier. The orchestra's discography comprises more than 130 recordings released on leading international labels, including Harmonia Mundi and Deutsche Grammophon, and has received numerous awards, among them the Gramophone Award, the German Record Critics' Annual Prize, and several *Diapason d'Or* distinctions. This extensive body of work documents the ensemble's artistic development and stylistic diversity. Most recently, in November 2025, the FBO released the album *Grand Tour* on the Aparté label—a musical journey from Freiburg to Berlin that traces Baroque music along historic travel routes.