

R.I.P. Florian Schneider



Credit: Marc Piasecki/Getty Images

Florian Schneider, a founder of pioneering German electronic group Kraftwerk, has died at age 73 after being ill with cancer. Schneider and Ralf Hütter formed Kraftwerk in 1970 and they would release influential albums like *Autobahn*, *Radio-Activity*, *Trans-Europe Express*, *Computer World* and *Electric Cafe*. Their music would become a major influence on pop, house, Detroit Techno and hip-hop. Kraftwerk inspired most of the synthpop bands of the '80s like Depeche Mode, New York's electro movement that included Afrika Bambaataa's Soul Sonic Force, the Belleville three responsible for techno and more. The group was also sampled a lot and covered by artists from varied genres. They took their love of technology and used it to create an image that styled them as robots on their album covers and in publicity photos. Schneider was always focused on new devices to make music with and the group had a customized vocoder in the '70s and would create their own drum machines. The band was respected by artists of all genres and David Bowie's "V-2 Schneider" from his *Heroes* album was dedicated to Schneider. The BBC Radio 4 broadcast the documentary *Kraftwerk: Computer Love* in 2018 and it was about the way the album changed people's lives. Schneider left the band in 2008 and had his last live performance with them in 2006. In 2019, Kraftwerk was nominated for the 2020 Rock and Roll Hall of Fame class.

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