

Collectif9

"Collectif9 takes the future of classical music by the hand, giving it a serious rejuvenation." ICI Musique Known for their innovative programming and unique approach to chamber music, Juno-nominated Montreal string nonet collectif9 performs "with an infectious energy and vigour that grabs an audience's attention" (The WholeNote). Since their 2011 debut, collectif9 has performed numerous concerts across North America, Europe, and Asia. As performers of classical and contemporary music, the ensemble combines the power of an orchestra with the agility of a chamber ensemble. collectif9 operates on the premise that a change of context can influence communication and experience.

collectif9 presents new programmes every season in Montréal, Canada, and their national and international touring schedule includes performances in chamber music series, festivals, universities, and more. Highlights include concerts in the Festival de Música de Morelia (Mexico), La Folle journée de Nantes (France), Festival de Lanaudière (Québec), Shenzhen Concert Hall (China), and Sound Unbound (Barbican Centre, London). The ensemble continually explores new repertoire and new artistic partnerships with composers, video artists, poets, lighting designers, and other inspired collaborators, to create multidisciplinary projects that come to life in acoustic or amplified settings.

They have released several albums, including 2 with European label Alpha Classics - the re-release of the group's 2nd album, *No Time for Chamber Music* (2021), was nominated for classical album of the year (small ensemble) at the 2022 JUNO Awards, and the release of *Vagues et ombres* (2022) has been described as "spellbinding" (PAN M 360), a "superb reinterpretation of Debussy" (Classique News). collectif9 will release their fourth album, *Rituæls*, in 2023. In addition to their albums, the group has released a series of three film-concerts, live performances filmed with a cinematographic approach.

Inspired by the processes of other artistic movements, collectif9 continually searches for new ways of expression within the classical medium, fostering communication and collaboration between artists of all kinds and members of society. The group is also committed to the preparation of specially-designed school shows and presentations, masterclasses, and workshops. Created specifically for their intended group, collectif9's educational activities focus on energy, shared experiences, and exploration.

collectif9 has received a great deal of support and encouragement, and is very grateful to the Conseil des arts et des lettres du Québec, the Canada Council for the Arts, the Conseil des arts de Montréal, and FACTOR.

HISTORY: Erupting onto the scene in a 2015-16 break-out tour, collectif9 released their debut album, *Volksmobiles*, while performing over 40 concerts across Ontario, New Brunswick, and Quebec as Entrées en scène Loto-Québec Artists. Described as "dazzling" (The WholeNote), *Volksmobiles* exudes "great brio and vitality" (GappleGate Classical-Modern Music Review), capturing the brilliant colour and driving energy of a live performance. Featuring folk-inspired music by Brahms, Bartók, Schnittke, and André Gagnon, collectif9's debut album also presents the world premiere recording of Canadian composer Geof Holbrook's *Volksmobiles*, written for the ensemble. A season of firsts, the musicians of collectif9 spent Christmas 2015 in China on their first international tour.

Seasons 2016-17 and 2017-18 saw collectif9 perform nationally in Quebec, Ontario, British Columbia, the Northwest Territories, at the Banff Centre (Banff, AB), and at the Festival de Lanaudière (Joliette, QC). Internationally, collectif9 presented concerts at Classical:NEXT in Rotterdam (NL), throughout the US West Coast, in Norway, in China, and in South Korea. Active on the local scene, they toured across the Island of Montreal as part of Conseil des arts de Montréal en tournée. The 2017-18 season ended in the studio as the group recorded their second album, *No Time for Chamber Music*, featuring the music of Gustav Mahler. These original chamber arrangements integrate textural exploration, improvisation, and above all, interaction and spontaneity, transporting the listener into a world of imagery.

In 2018, with the exceptional support of the Canada Council's New Chapter program and in collaboration with Architek Percussion, collectif9 created a multi-disciplinary show, with original music commissioned from composers Derek Charke, Nicole Lizée, Eliot Britton, Luna Pearl Woolf, and Bret Higgins, and words by Kaie Kellough. *My Backyard, Somewhere*

premiered in Montréal in June 2018 and toured throughout Canada during the following season, notably at the Winnipeg New Music Festival in January 2019.

During the 2018-19 season, following the release of their 2nd album, the ensemble packed up and headed to Mexico for the first time. There they had the pleasure of collaborating with composer and DJ Gabriel Prokofiev before travelling to the United States to perform on the West Coast. collectif9 returned to Europe in January (La Folle journée de Nantes) and again in May (Barbican Sound Unbound Festival, London). The season was punctuated by a special collaboration with the indie group Yes We Mystic, culminating in a concert at the Big Fun Festival in Winnipeg. At home, collectif9 created and premiered *The Night of the Flying Horses*, a program centered around the music of Osvaldo Golijov, an Argentine contemporary composer with international roots.

2020 was marked by an interruption of a global scale, resulting in the postponement of concerts planned in Québec and Ontario. Before this, collectif9's 2019-20 touring was quite fruitful, including a tour of the US Midwest (CO, IN, OH) and Central Canada (AB, MB), as well as performances in local festivals such as Orford Musique and the OSM Classical Spree. One of the highlights was the development and premiere of *Heroes*, a stunning audiovisual work created with composers and video artists Myriam Boucher and Pierre-Luc Lecours, that premiered at La Folle journée de Nantes (France) after a creative residency at Bishop's University in Lennoxville (QC).

During the atypical 2020-21 season, the group produced a series of film-concerts. *Rituæls* is an artistic and spiritual experience that unites works from the Middle Ages to the 21st century (von Bingen, Pärt, Lizée, Dessner, Tippett, and Morlock), elevated by a gripping performance by Stacey Désilier (dance and choreography). Centered around the music of Osvaldo Golijov, an Argentinian contemporary composer with international roots and multiple influences, *The Night of the Flying Horses* also features music by Sapó Perapaskero from Taraf de Haidouks - a group emblematic of the Roma folklore's vitality in Romania - and the Baroque refinement of French composer François Couperin. *Vagues et ombres* an ode to our aquatic world with works by Claude Debussy and Luna Pearl Woolf as well as shadow artistry by Mere Phantoms. These productions are shown in festivals and cultural programming, and are currently available to the Canadian public on ARTS.FILM, the new initiative from the International Festival of Films on Art (Le FIFA).

In 2021, collectif9 signed with leading European label Alpha Classics - a partnership that began with the re-release of the group's 2nd album, *No Time for Chamber Music* featuring music written by and inspired by Gustav Mahler, nominee for classical album of the year (small ensemble) at the 2022 JUNO Awards. In 2022, they released *Vagues et ombres*. "A captivating disc, both modern and timeless" (Le Soir), the album includes reinterpretations of several of Debussy's works for piano as well as a complete performance of the composer's iconic *La Mer*. "A sonic view into the underwater world of beluga whales in the St. Lawrence Estuary", Woolf's *Contact* highlights the urgent situation currently affecting the marine ecosystem in Québec.