

PRESS RELEASE

6 February 2018

Romanian pianist Alexandra Dariescu joins the European Young Leaders' programme class of 2018, organised under the patronage of Jean-Claude Juncker, President of the European Commission

Romanian pianist **Alexandra Dariescu** joins the **European Young Leaders (EYL40) programme** class of 2018, organised under the patronage of **Jean-Claude Juncker, President of the European Commission**. Led by Friends of Europe, EYL40 is a unique, inventive and multi-stakeholder programme that aims to promote a European identity by engaging the continent's most promising talents that will shape Europe's future.

Based on the premise that a group of talented leaders from different backgrounds, sectors and European countries can offer new responses to international challenges, it brings together established professionals under the age of 40 who have made their mark in a wide range of fields such as politics, science, business, media NGOs, the arts and civil society. Those selected to participate are creative, committed to changing the world, and have demonstrated potential to reach the highest levels of their chosen profession.

As part of the programme, Dariescu joins other members of the Class of 2018 and alumni for two European seminars, encouraging 'out-of-the-box' thinking in open, constructive discussions: from **8-10 March** in Warsaw and **13-15 September 2018** (location to be announced).

Alexandra Dariescu said: *'I am thrilled and humbled to be part of the European Young Leaders (EYL40) and feel very privileged to join such an incredible group of leaders from all over Europe. I hope through the discussions and fantastic activities programme in Warsaw we will be able to identify solutions in creating a more unified, perceptive and prosperous Europe.'*

Dariescu also participates in the Guildhall School of Music & Drama's fifth international **Reflective Conservatoire Conference Tuesday 20-Friday 23 February 2018**: this year's theme is 'Artists as Citizens.' She sits on Vice-Principal & Director of Guildhall Innovation **Professor Helena Gaunt's** welcome panel on the opening day, and, as an alumna of their Creative Entrepreneurs scheme, joins others from the course in discussing their work and professional trajectory before performing at the end of the session.

Dariescu has also been selected to present her project *The Nutcracker and I*, by *Alexandra Dariescu* at the Classical:NEXT conference, held in Rotterdam on **16-19 May 2019**, as part of their annual Project Pitches initiative. Each of the 14 participants have nine minutes to present and answer questions in front of leading and influential members of the music industry, allowing an insight into the most intriguing and innovative developments in the sector.

She wants to challenge the traditional concert format and reach out to new audiences who might not have considered coming to a classical concert before. She has devised a ground-breaking 50-minute live multi-media performance piece for piano soloist, ballerina and digital animation.

Dariescu has created her own personal take on this much-loved story which sees herself re-imagined as Clara: from little girl dreaming to concert pianist. On stage is a grand piano, played by Dariescu herself, and a ballerina behind a see-through gauze screen. Projected onto the gauze and bringing the story to life are exquisite digital animations, all hand drawn and created in advance by **Yeast Culture**. They follow the music and engage live with the pianist and ballerina as they 'dance' across the screen. The audience feel like they are actually in and a part of the Nutcracker story.

Tchaikovsky's beloved ballet music features throughout and includes favourites such as *Dance of the Sugar Plum Fairy*, *Arabian Dance*, *Chinese Dance*, *Pas de Deux*, and the *Flower Waltz* in 15 virtuosic arrangements by **Mikhail Pletnev**, **Stepan Esipoff**, **Percy Grainger** and three brand new variations by **Gavin Sutherland**.

Having received its world premiere on 19 December 2017 on the Guildhall School's Alumni Recital Series at Milton Court, it is also being released as a special book and CD on **Signum Records** and will include all 15 piano transcriptions with narration by **Lindsey Russell**, story by **Jessica Duchon**, artwork created by **YeastCulture** and illustrated by **Adam Smith**.

For complete listings for Alexandra's schedule, please visit <http://alexandradariescu.com/> or Alexandra's general management Konzertdirektion Schmid <http://kdschmid.de/artistdetail/items/alexandra-dariescu.html>.

For further press information please contact:

Rebecca Driver Media Relations

Email: rebecca@rdmr.co.uk | ruth@rdmr.co.uk

Tel: 020 7247 1894 | web: www.rdmr.co.uk

Notes to Editors

Pianist Alexandra Dariescu dazzles audiences worldwide with her effortless musicality and captivating stage presence. In addition to numerous international ensembles she has forged relationships with key UK orchestras including the London Philharmonic Orchestra, Royal Scottish National Orchestra, Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, Hallé Orchestra, BBC National Orchestra of Wales, Royal Liverpool Philharmonic and the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra, performing in venues such as London's Royal Albert Hall, Southbank Centre, as well as in recital at the Wigmore Hall, Amsterdam's Concertgebouw and New York's Carnegie Hall.

She released two contrasting recordings in autumn 2016: her first concerto recording with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra features Tchaikovsky's *Piano Concerto No. 1* and Mikhail Pletnev's concert suite of arrangements from *The Nutcracker* (Signum Records). The second recording of *Mesmerism* for piano and orchestra by British Composer Award winner Emily Howard, with the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra is on the NMC Records label. In 2015, Alexandra released her second volume of complete preludes by Shostakovich and Szymanowski as part of her trilogy of preludes project for Champs Hill Records.

Alexandra receives advice from Sir Andrés Schiff and she was mentored by Imogen Cooper through the Royal Philharmonic Society/YCAT Philip Langridge Mentoring Scheme, whilst a former artist of the Young Classical Artists Trust. In 2013, Alexandra received the UK's Women of the Future Award in the Arts and Culture category and, in 2015, became the youngest musician to receive the

Custodian of the Romanian Crown Medal. She has also been appointed patron of Music in Lyddington and Honorary Associate Artist of the Royal Northern College of Music in 2016.