

PRESS RELEASE

11 March 2019

Romanian born British pianist Alexandra Dariescu uses her voice to help to change the future of classical music and see more female composers programmed

Romanian born British pianist Alexandra Dariescu is a multi-faceted artist: a performer, programmer, educator, political voice, a creative entrepreneur, and she is deeply committed to the future of classical music. Named as one of International Piano's 'Top 30 Pianists under 30' in 2016, she regularly dazzles audiences and critics worldwide with her effortless musicality and captivating stage presence.

Dariescu has recently returned from her first world tour of *The Nutcracker & I*, by Alexandra Dariescu: a multi-media performance for piano solo, live ballerina and digital animation which sought to challenge the traditional concert format and reach out to new audiences who might not have considered coming to a classical concert before. Alexandra presented *The Nutcracker and I* in 48 performances in prestigious venues such as Vienna Konzerthaus, Royal Liverpool Philharmonic, Philharmonie Luxembourg, Laeiszhalle Hamburg, Dubai Opera House, London's Barbican and King's Place, Melbourne Recital Centre, Sydney Festival, Gothenburg Concert Hall, BOZAR Brussels, Riga Palace of Culture and toured 7 cities in China, selling out in most venues with an average age of 35.

Dariescu's 2018/19 season includes many important milestones which she is harnessing to highlight her driving conviction that works by female composers, both past and present, must be equally represented in programmes. This is something she is striving for in all her concerts across the world. Much is being done by the classical music industry already, notably PRS Foundation launched its International Keychange programme at the end of 2017, which has encouraged over 150 festivals worldwide to pledge a 50/50 gender balance by 2022 across line-ups, conferences and commissions. Dariescu herself is often invited to take part in roundtable discussions and has chaired a panel on gender equality at Friends of Europe's EYL Conference in Malta, has been on the panel at the University of Liverpool on how to empower young girls, has participated in Southbank Centre's Women in Classical Music breakfast with conductor Marin Alsop; Jude Kelly, Artistic Director at Southbank Centre; Gillian Moore, Head of Classical Music at Southbank Center and journalist Jessica Duchon. Alexandra acts as a role model for the younger generation, being involved in many educational initiatives like Rhapsody in Schools in Germany, Princess Margareta Foundation in Romania and Wigmore Hall Learning in the UK. She is a real ambassador for the younger generation, making a difference through the versatile career she is strongly building.

On **Sunday 6 April** she makes her debut with the BBC Symphony Orchestra at its Total Immersion weekend celebrating Lili and Nadia Boulanger, where she performs Nadia Boulanger's *Fantaisie variée*, conducted by James Gaffigan at London's Barbican. Lili Boulanger is central to her new disc of Preludes, out on Champs Hill Records on **Sunday 14 April**: this album is the third and final volume of her Complete Preludes trilogy with the label, following the first two recordings of Chopin & Dutilleux and Shostakovich & Szymanowski. Such an achievement is a calling card not many young artists can claim to have. The album is released on the same day as Dariescu performs a recital at **Wigmore Hall** and the programme features works by Lili Boulanger and Germaine Tailleferre, the only female member of *Les Six*.

Dariescu is encouraged by the progress that has been made in recent years, but she still feels there is more to do to achieve equality. There is a notably increased appetite to commission new work from female composers. In 2012, Dariescu commissioned a new piano concerto by Emily Howard, *Mesmerism*, which she recorded with the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra on NMC Records and subsequently won a British Composer Award in 2013. Furthermore, Dariescu has just performed Germaine Tailleferre's Ballade for piano and Orchestra with the RLPO and Jessica Cottis and a solo recital focused on female composers. She is calling on the industry to build on the work already done to come together and collectively bring awareness and promote not only new commissions, but historical female composers otherwise neglected.

Dariescu's advocacy extends to the political sphere too. She is Romanian and considers herself European and acquired British citizenship in 2018. She believes in the power of the EU and wants to do all she can to ensure that the arts are protected in this turbulent period. In 2018, she was invited to join the European Young Leaders' programme, organised under the patronage of Jean-Claude Juncker, President of the European Commission. Led by Friends of Europe, EYL40 brings together professionals under the age of 40 who have made their mark in a wide range of fields such as politics, science, business, media, NGOs and the arts to discuss new responses to international challenges. Her cohort discussed everything from Brexit to climate change and social justice to arts education. Now an alumnus, she is still actively involved and is attending the next event in London from 14 – 17 March. She was invited to perform at the President's Gala in Brussels at the Palais d'Egmont, where the most influential leaders of our time were present.

Alexandra Dariescu says: *"At the end of my recital I played Ode to Joy (arr by Liszt)- one by one, every single person there stood up, making it one of the most spiritual experiences of my life. For a few minutes, Churchill's wish for the United States of Europe based on "peace, in safety and in freedom" seemed tangible."*

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: 0203 691 7034 | web: www.rdmr.co.uk