

PRESS RELEASE
19 December 2017



Children's TV presenter Lindsey Russell narrates CD and accompanying book of *The Nutcracker and I*, by Alexandra Dariescu

Children's TV presenter **Lindsey Russell** narrates the disc and accompanying book of *The Nutcracker and I*, by **Alexandra Dariescu**: the story has been written by the notable classical music journalist and author **Jessica Duchen** with artwork created by **Yeast Culture**, illustrated by **Adam Smith**. Early copies are available at the work's world premiere on **Tuesday 19 December 2017** with commercial release on **Friday 27 April 2018** on Signum Records.

The premiere concert performance at the Guildhall School's Milton Court showcases the groundbreaking multi-media piece for piano soloist, ballerina and digital animation: challenging the traditional concert format. This additional narration accompanying the CD and book further extends Dariescu's desire to reach out to new audiences who might not have considered coming to a classical concert before.

Jessica Duchen puts into words this very personal story which sees Dariescu re-imagine herself as Clara: from little girl dreaming to concert pianist: whilst the magic of the exquisite live digital animations is translated into the book's artwork by their creators Yeast Culture, illustrated by Adam Smith.

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**.

Arrangements for *The Nutcracker and I*, by Alexandra Dariescu

1. *Miniature Overture* - Stepan Esipoff
2. *Scene* - Piotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky
3. *Opening Act One* - Gavin Sutherland
4. *March* – Mikhail Pletnev
5. *The Battle* – Gavin Sutherland
6. *Pas de Deux in the Snow* – Mikhail Pletnev
7. *Dance of the Sugar Plum Fairy* – Mikhail Pletnev
8. *Tarantella* – Mikhail Pletnev
9. *Arabian Dance* – Stephen Esipoff
10. *Trepak* – Mikhail Pletnev
11. *Chinese Dance* – Mikhail Pletnev
12. *Dance of the Reed Flutes* - Stepan Esipoff
13. *Pas de Deux* – Mikhail Pletnev
14. *Flower Waltz* – Percy Grainger
15. *Finale* – Gavin Sutherland

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>.

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Notes to Editors

Alexandra Dariescu

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.

Lindsey Russell

One of the most popular and recognisable personalities on Children's television, Lindsey Russell is best known for her participation in extreme challenges and physical trials. Her positive can-do attitude inspires and motivates children of all ages.

Lindsey is an Ambassador for children's & animal charities. She regularly hosts live events, literary festivals and educational workshops. More exciting projects in the pipeline for 2018.