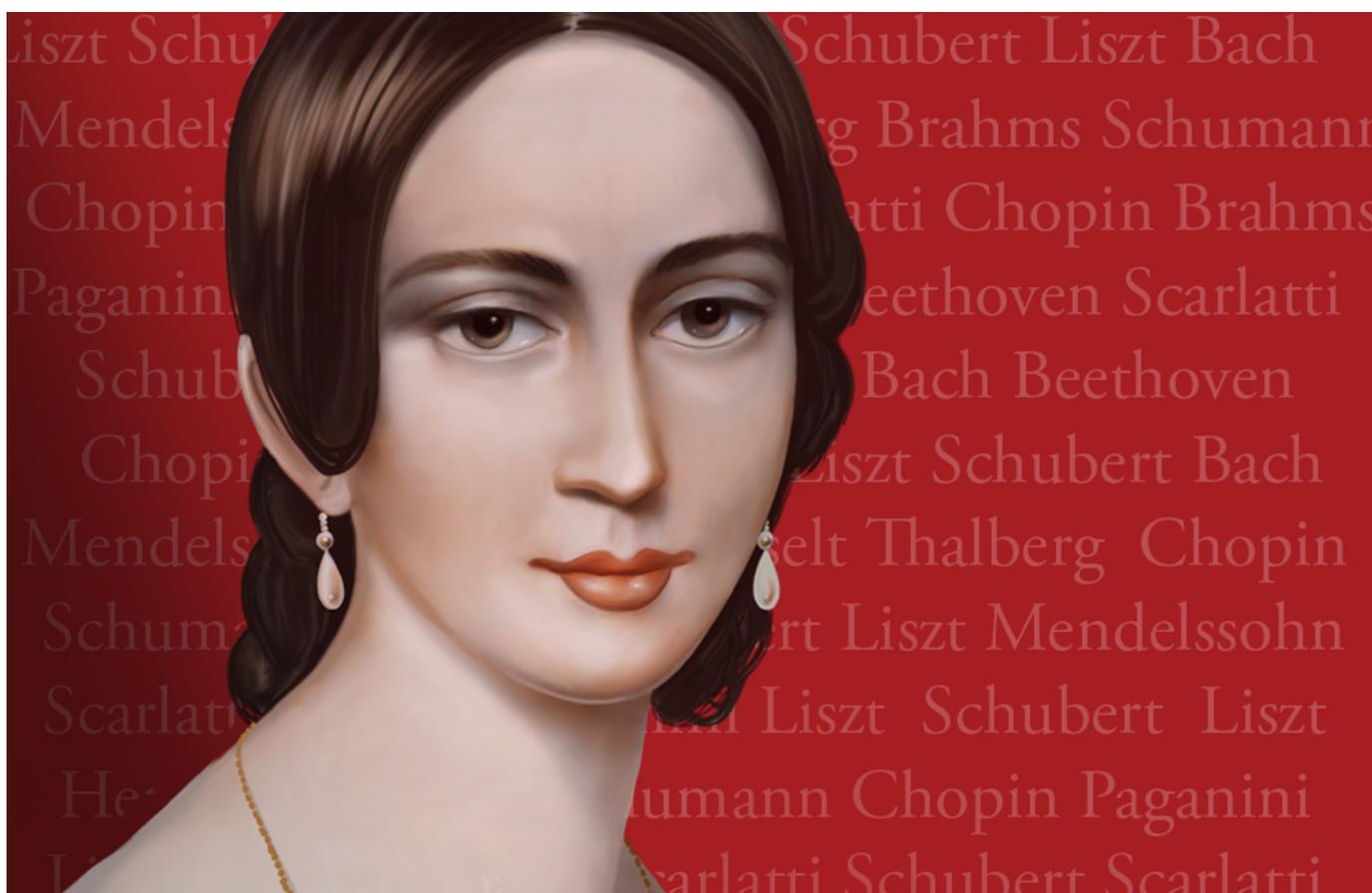


## PRESS RELEASE

19 February 2019

### A celebration of Clara Schumann for International Women's Day 2019

Friday 8 March – Sunday 10 March 2019



The Royal College of Music (RCM) is delighted to present an inspiring programme of events to mark International Women's Day 2019, including a major celebration of contemporary female composers who are graduates of the RCM and a Keyboard Festival honouring Clara Schumann.

Remarkable female composers and musicians such as Imogen Holst, Ruth Gipps and Dame Joan Sutherland have played an integral part in the College's rich history, and one of the RCM's wonderful performance spaces is named after cellist Amaryllis Fleming.

For this year's International Women's Day, RCM honours contemporary composition from notable alumnae at the RCM New Perspectives concert on Friday 8 March. Helen Grime's *A Cold Spring* and Charlotte Bray's *Reflections In Time*, both large-scale orchestral works, are performed alongside a world premiere from current RCM composer Zoë Darbyshire. The concert will also feature Anna Meredith's genre-defying ensemble work *Flak*.

The RCM celebration of female composers and musicians culminates with Clara's Circle on Sunday March 10. This year's Keyboard Festival celebrates the bicentenary of Clara Schumann through performances of her solo piano music and songs, with notable works from her repertoire as a concert pianist too. RCM pianists, organists, harpsichordists and collaborative pianists and their partners will come together to explore Clara's rich, brilliant and virtuosic music, as well as that of her Romantic contemporaries.

Born 200 years ago, Clara was a distinguished performer and composer whose career spanned over 60 years at a time where such a role in society was rare for a woman. Known as Europe's 'queen of the piano' she was an important figure among the concert pianists of her time. The festival will also tell the stories of her friendships with Chopin, Brahms, Mendelssohn and Liszt, and her relationship with Robert Schumann.

RCM Sparks' inspiring outreach programme for families, schools and young people, is part of the Keyboard Festival for the first time. Visitors can test their skills on the oversized floor piano and take part in various craft activities and family-friendly workshops throughout the day.

A Song Plus concert honouring the likes of Cécile Chaminade, Amy Beach and Clara Schumann will also take place on Friday 8 March and students from RCM's master's course Women In Music will perform at the Royal Academy of Arts event, [In Tune with Feminist Time](#), on Saturday 9 March.

For more information and to buy tickets, call the RCM Box Office on 020 7591 4314, visit the RCM in person on Prince Consort Road SW7 or visit the RCM website at [www.rcm.ac.uk/events/iwd](http://www.rcm.ac.uk/events/iwd) and [www.rcm.ac.uk/events/keyboardfestival](http://www.rcm.ac.uk/events/keyboardfestival)

Keyboard Festival: Clara's Circle will be streamed live at [www.rcm.ac.uk/live](http://www.rcm.ac.uk/live)

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Notes to Editors

For press tickets and image requests please contact Tessa Deterding  
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## **Royal College of Music**

Founded in 1882, the Royal College of Music (RCM) is a world leading music conservatoire with a prestigious history and contemporary outlook. Our 800 undergraduate and postgraduate students come from over 60 countries and are taught in a dynamic environment, leaving the RCM to become the outstanding performers, conductors and composers of the future.

For the third consecutive year in 2018, the RCM was ranked as the top conservatoire in the UK for the Performing Arts in the QS World University Rankings. It was also ranked top in Europe and second in the world. In 2017, the RCM achieved an overall rating of gold for its outstanding teaching and learning provision for undergraduates in the first ever Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF). The RCM was the top UK conservatoire in the Complete University Guide's Arts/Music Institution League Table 2017.

RCM professors are leaders in their fields and, under such expert guidance, RCM students regularly achieve remarkable success around the globe.

Among our alumni are composers and performers such as Sir Hubert Parry, Benjamin Britten, Gustav Holst, Samuel Coleridge-Taylor, Lord Lloyd Webber, Rebecca Clarke, Dame Joan Sutherland, Dame Sarah Connolly, Elizabeth Watts, Ralph Vaughan Williams, Mark-Anthony Turnage and Sir Thomas Allen.

Regular visitors to the RCM include Maxim Vengerov (Polonsky Visiting Professor of Violin), Bernard Haitink, Sir Thomas Allen, Vladimir Ashkenazy, Alina Ibragimova and Lang Lang. Our most recent honorary doctorates include Vladimir Jurowski, Dame Kiri Te Kanawa, Sir Roger Norrington, Sir Bryn Terfel and Steve Reich.