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FESTIVAL 2022

SCOTT MANSON

North East of Scotland
Music School

PIANO RECITAL

Monday October 10th

PROGRAMME

FRANZ LISZT and PETER MAXWELL DAVIES

Vallée d'Obermann (From Années de Pèlerinage) Franz Liszt (1811-1886)

"What do I desire? Who am I? What do I ask of nature?"

These were the questions that Étienne Pivert de Senancour's solitary character Obermann asked himself during his quest to find inner peace.

These were also the questions that Franz Liszt asked himself, about his own life and career, during the writing of his masterwork *Vallée d'Obermann*. The work is inspired by his travels and tours around Switzerland, and forms part of the monumental set *Années de Pèlerinage* (Years of Pilgrimage).

In a remarkable example of Liszt's motivic transformation skills, the entire work is built from the short descending scale which opens the piece. This motif represents the character of Obermann, and its extended development parallels the hero's search for happiness. In the first of the movement's three large sections, the mood is dominated by unease and restless passion. Swiftly following is the *recitativo*, a raging storm that builds to a flurry of virtuosic broken octaves, which leads seamlessly into the tranquil, delicate sound-world of the final section. The music once again grows to reach a final, joyful climax. But in a reflection of Obermann's realisation, this true happiness only exists momentarily: the uncompromising final two bars bring the audience sharply back to the disjointed world of the opening.

Peter Maxwell Davies (1934-2016) **Farewell to Stromness**
(from The Yellow Cake Revue)

Farewell to Stromness is the more well-known of the two piano interludes from *The Yellow Cake Revue*. The name of the *Revue* is based on the nickname of uranium ore, and the work concerns the impact of suggested uranium mining on the Orkney islands. Stromness is one of the largest towns in Orkney and would experience the greatest environmental consequences from the mining.

Farewell to Stromness is styled as a Scottish slow air, with a lilting, wistful melody drifting above a simple repeating bass line. The chordal central section begins introspectively, swelling into great beauty and power, before the more impassioned return of the main melody.

SCOTT MANSON is a pianist, flautist, and composer from Aberdeen. He began piano lessons at age 7 and has recently achieved a distinction in Grade 8 piano and flute. He has been a member of local and national ensembles including the NYOS Junior and Senior Orchestras, Aberdeen Concert Band, and Aberdeen City Youth Orchestra.

He is an enthusiastic composer, and his works have been performed by the Scottish Freelancers Ensemble, Consone Quartet, and soprano Sarah Leonard. He was a member of the RSNO 2021-22 Notes from Scotland scheme, and a new composition was performed in the RSNO Centre in February. He is also taught composition by Jay Capperauld.

Scott currently receives piano lessons with Nigel Clayton and Joseph Long at the North East of Scotland Music School. Recent performances include solo recitals at St Andrew's Cathedral (Aberdeen), St Mary's Cathedral (Edinburgh) and the NESMS Scholarship Concert.

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