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THE **bridgewater** HALL

THURSDAY 16TH JULY

Orage Vallée d'Obermann

from *Années de Pèlerinage (Suisse)*

Franz Liszt (1811-1886)

The first set in Liszt's trilogy, '*Années de Pèlerinage*' ('Years of Pilgrimage' or 'Years of Travel') consists of nine pieces, each inspired by scenes or moods associated with his travels in Switzerland. They are highly descriptive and invite us to join the young composer in his journey. '*Orage*' ('Storm') is an unsettling but brilliant representation of a thunderous storm, full of virtuosic bravura and cascading octaves, while '*Vallée d'Obermann*' ('Obermann Valley') may be the most profound work in the collection. A melancholy theme establishes the mood here to depict not just a place but also the eponymous hero of an influential 1804 novel, '*Obermann*' by Étienne Pivert de Senancour, a solitary and melancholy type who withdraws to the country to seek solace. Cast in three sections, the piece progresses from sadness and gloomy pensiveness at the outset to a brighter, if not quite radiant mood in the last section.

Born in Prague, **Libor Novacek** studied with Joan Havill at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama, graduating in 2004 with the highest awards and going on to win several international prizes. His concerts and tours have taken him to major festivals and venues worldwide including regular appearances at the Wigmore Hall as well as the Barbican in London. Libor works regularly with the Czechoslovak Chamber Orchestra and has recently performed with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, the Prague Philharmonia, the Prague Chamber Orchestra, Prague Chamber Philharmony, Hamburg Symphony Orchestra, Brighton Philharmonic Orchestra, English Sinfonia and the European Union Chamber Orchestra. He has also recorded for Czech Radio and BBC Radio 3.

Libor is internationally recognised for his interpretation of Liszt and Brahms. He won the Landor Records Competition in 2005 and his recording of Liszt's '*Années de Pèlerinage - Italie*' and '*Mephisto Waltz No.1*' was Editor's Choice in Gramophone Magazine; in October 2007 this CD was awarded the '*Diplom d'Honneur*' by the Ferenc Liszt Society in Budapest. His latest CD, featuring works by Brahms, was Instrumental Choice in BBC Music Magazine. He is scheduled to record a new CD of works by Liszt to be released later this year.

Refreshments will be available before the recital and during the interval.

The recital ends at 9.30pm.

Sponsors: Richard and Jean Winfrey

THURSDAY 16TH JULY



Twilight Recital

KATY SMITH, violin

ALISON RHIND, piano

9.45pm Arthur Marshall Room, Great Hall, Oundle School

From *Violin Partita No 2 in D minor, BWV 1004*

Allemande - Courante - Sarabande - Gigue

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)

Bach completed his six Sonatas and Partitas for Solo Violin in about 1720 while in the employ of Prince Leopold of Anhalt-Cöthen: three sonatas in four movements and three partitas consisting of dance-based movements. It is not clear for whom they were composed - their extreme difficulty both technically and musically suggests Bach could have intended them only for a very gifted player; Bach himself played the violin and viola, although he was primarily a keyboard player, and it may be that he himself gave the first performance. It might be that they were intended for Prince Leopold himself - he played a variety of instruments including the violin and was respected and praised by Bach as one who 'loved and knew music'.

The partita, or 'suite' was an instrumental genre generally comprising four main dances: an allemande in moderate 4/4 time, a courante in moderate triple time, a sarabande in slow and stately triple time, and a gigue in a fast compound time. Bach departed from this model in his first and third partitas, but the second includes all four of the traditional

suite dances, followed by the famous ciaccona that is often performed separately. "The essential difficulty of Bach's music", writes Malcolm Boyd, "lies in the intrinsic complexity of the musical thought. It is not that the music is awkwardly laid out or that it tests the dexterity of the performer, but rather that its figuration ... has a logic which is directed not by the fingers but by the brain." Bach's solos for unaccompanied string instruments, of all the music in the repertoire, are those that most demand the player's complete understanding of the structure of the music for it to make sense in performance. They are the ultimate test of musicianship and performing skill. Without musical understanding, Bach's Sonatas and Partitas simply dissolve into a string of meaningless quavers and semiquavers.

Sonata for Piano and Violin in D major, Op.12, No.1

Allegro con brio - Tema con variazioni (Andante con moto) - Rondo: Allegro

Ludwig van Beethoven (1770-1827)

Beethoven wrote ten sonatas for violin and piano, his first being the three Op.12 sonatas, written in 1797-1798, at approximately the same time as the Op.18 string quartets: the string writing is difficult and exposed in both works. The influence of Mozart and Haydn is strongly felt in these early compositions, but they bear his distinct style. An early critic described the Op.12 sonatas as 'heavily laden with unusual difficulties', making him feel 'like a man who had wandered through an alluring forest and at last emerged tired and worn out.' To modern