

# REALISING AMBITIONS

## George Smith, Violin



George Smith, a talented violinist originally from Forfar began playing the violin at age 10 and, now 21, lives and studies in Glasgow, where he graduated from the prestigious Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama in 2009 with a Bachelor of Music Degree in Violin Performance. George now plans to undertake a postgraduate degree in Violin Performance at the same institution and, eventually, he would like to forge a successful career playing in a chamber orchestra.

### FOCUS ON GEORGE

Having played the violin since he was aged 10, George has participated in a total of 15 NYOS courses including the flagship orchestra of NYOS; The National Youth Orchestra of Scotland as well as the contemporary chamber ensemble NYOS Futures and has also been invited to perform with NYOS' showcase, pre-professional ensemble, Camerata Scotland, where in 2009 he travelled to France and Spain for a total of four performances.

Now 21 years old and with such extensive experience gained in such a short time, George has had to work incredibly hard to get to such a high standard of playing. He admits he found it difficult at first, having to practice every day but he has always enjoyed it, particularly because of the violin teachers he had in his youth both at NYOS courses and in school or college. Additionally, his musical family, who very much appreciate and enjoy classical music, nurtured his talent further which he believes was hugely beneficial and motivating.

George believes that participating in NYOS courses also helped him with his studies at the RSAMD thanks to providing additional opportunities designed to continue his musical education in the holiday periods of the academic year. This provided him with a welcome break away from his studies but and enabled him to reaffirm what he was learning as part of his undergraduate degree. Additionally, during his postgraduate studies George hopes to be able to continue to participate in NYOS courses.

One aspect of NYOS courses which George enjoys is the opportunity to catch up with friends who he may have not seen in between NYOS courses during the social time that NYOS courses affords its students. However what George always looks forward to most is the music and having so many opportunities to travel to and perform in such a variety of places and meet such a variety of people.

Thanks in particular to his participation in Camerata Scotland, George feels now has a better understanding of what is required from those employed in a professional orchestra. The rehearsal process for example he thinks have more relaxed feel, where the musicians are expected to learn the music in their own time and only come together to rehearse the piece as a whole. Additionally thanks to the musicians who are older and play to a very high standard, he feels that the rehearsals are also more productive and as a result appear to go smoothly, which he is always pleased about and finds rewarding.

George says that now thanks to such extensive touring and performance experience which NYOS has afforded him, he doesn't really get nervous prior to a performance, he just feels the responsibility for his part to go well. He does believe though that the secret to feeling secure about a performance is in the practicing and knowing the music well.

He feels overall that NYOS, musically, is excellent for giving its students many opportunities to work with renowned conductors and soloists as well as providing a varied repertoire for each course. In addition to this he believes that NYOS is also beneficial for a young persons social skills, thanks to the large number and variety of other young people who participate as well as the conductors, soloists, tutors and house staff etc that students will interact with on NYOS courses.

