

REALISING AMBITIONS

Emma Barnett, Clarinet

Emma Barnett is a 12 years old clarinet player who has been playing the instrument since she was just 7 years old. Emma who lives in Kingswell, Aberdeen also plays the piano, and has participated in three courses run by the National Children's Orchestra of Scotland (NCOS).

FOCUS ON EMMA

The National Children's Orchestra of Scotland (NCOS), is a symphony orchestra for up to 120 children and young people aged between 8 and 14. Emma's first experience of this orchestra was in 2009. Prior to this in primary three aged seven, Emma had the option to play the violin but since her mum plays the clarinet and her enjoyment that this has had she chose instead to take up the clarinet.

Emma's first NCOS course was the 2009 Easter Course and Concerts where under the direction of American conductor **Randall Swiggum**, Emma played and performed alongside approximately another 120 children in both the Perth Concert Hall and the Glasgow Royal Concert Hall. Prior to these concerts Emma took part in the residential training course, which is a rigorous but fun period of rehearsals taking place in a nurturing setting where the children also have social activities timetabled in to their day to ensure an all round learning and confidence -boosting environment.

Emma especially likes playing the clarinet in the different groups, such as the small ensembles the children are put into during the rehearsal period. She says though that when she's not an NCOS courses and meant to be practising at home she really has to make sure she practises enough. She says that *"the thought of doing it is a bit unpleasant but one you get into it, its really enjoyable."*

Later that year Emma participated in the 2009 NCOS Summer Course and Concert under the direction of **NYOS' Chief Executive, Julian Clayton**, who in his own right is a renowned conductor. This course was in fact the first NCOS Summer course to have as its finale a public concert. Previous summer courses were concluded with an intimate performance to family and friends only, however in 2009 the orchestra gave its first public performance in the Queen's Hall, Edinburgh where Emma and the rest of the young musicians performed to an audience of nearly 450.

Emma subsequently gained a place in the 2010 Children's Orchestra and as such participated in the 2010 Easter Course and Concerts where she had the opportunity to work with conductor **John Grant** but the orchestra was also joined by guest artist, Bassoonist **Karen Geoghagan**, who herself is an alumnus of NYOS orchestras. The NCOS Easter Course and Concerts have for three years enjoyed the format of the Children's Orchestra performing in the first half of two public concerts, with The National Youth Jazz Orchestras of Scotland (NYJOS) performing in the second half.

Emma believes playing in NCOS has made her more confident especially when performing solos, which she says the thought of, is actually worse than the performance itself. She still does however get a little nervous when playing in front of friends and family, who she says all really enjoy the fact she she plays and performs in the National Children's Orchestra of Scotland. Emma also thinks that performing publicly makes her feel more responsible.

In addition to this Emma also feels that she is getting better in different situations thanks to the variety and volume of new people that she meets at each NCOS course. She likes to spend her spare time on the courses with both new and old friends she has made just *"chatting, spending time outside and sunbathing if the weather's good!"*

Emma says she gets really excited before NCOS courses and especially when she's travelling there! Emma says that her favourite things overall

about NCOS is meeting new people, playing in the full rehearsals as well as simply just having the opportunity to get better at playing the clarinet. Emma states that she is *"definitely a better player"* thanks to NCOS

Emma will take part in her fourth NCOS course during the NCOS Summer Course and Concert 2010, where she will play and perform under the direction of conductor Peter Stark. Emma will perform in the finale to this course in a public concert in the superb Perth Concert Hall to not only friends and family but the general public also.

