

EMMA JOHNSON

...one of the most prolific and well-known clarinet soloists of the past quarter century

(The Clarinet, America)

Emma Johnson MBE is one of the few clarinetists to have established a career as a solo performer. Emma grew up in London and her career was launched when, at the age of 17, she won *BBC Young Musician of the Year* followed by the *Young Concert Artists Auditions* in New York. Before embarking on a musical path she studied Music and English at Pembroke College, Cambridge University and since then she has given concerts all over the world.

Emma Johnson has made 30 recordings to date; tracks from her recent album, *English Fantasy*, have been streamed over 3 million times on Spotify. *Voyage* and *The Mozart Album* on the Universal label were also classical chart-topping successes and Johnson's CD of Brahms Sonatas with John Lenehan was described as "definitive" in the Observer, whilst her recording of Stanford and Finzi was nominated for a Gramophone Award.

Emma Johnson is also a composer; books of her arrangements and compositions have been published by Chesters and Fabers. *Songs of Celebration*, Johnson's composition for clarinet and choir, has recently been performed in Dublin, London and Tokyo and her new clarinet concerto, *Tree of Life*, will be premiered in 2022. A series of new solo clarinet pieces has also been published by Queen's Temple Publishing.

In 2020 Emma Johnson was awarded the Cobbett medal for distinguished services to chamber music from the Musicians' Company guild in the City of London. She loves to collaborate with other musicians and also directs her own ensemble, *Emma Johnson and Friends*, whose recent live recording of the Schubert Octet was critically acclaimed.

Working with artists as diverse as Sir Yehudi Menuhin and Dame Cleo Laine, Emma is known for eclectic programming; amongst the concerts she offers are *Tales of Vienna*, a celebration of Viennese music in its heyday and *Clarinet Goes to Town*, which raises the roof with jazz clarinet classics.

Emma Johnson's TV appearances have ranged from a recital for Sky Arts TV to chat shows and gala concerts, including a televised BBC Prom concert. Emma featured in the Channel 4 documentary about the jazz musician, Sir John Dankworth and she played the popular theme for *The Victorian Kitchen Garden* on BBC TV (winning an Ivor Novello Award). Videos of her performances and masterclasses can be viewed on her YouTube channel. Emma's radio work includes *Artist of the Week* for both BBC Radio 3 and Classic FM as well as for radio stations around the world and she has been a featured guest on BBC's *Woman's Hour* and *World at One*. Her radio broadcasts about composer Gerald Finzi and poet John Milton on BBC Radio 4 were both chosen as *Pick of the Week* and she is often invited to give talks including, most recently, *Comedy Classical*, an exploration of humour in music, for The Arts Society.

Emma has given masterclasses throughout the world and was a professor at the Royal College of Music, London. She also devised a project with composer Jonathan Dove involving UK school children recreating the story of the Pied Piper. Emma has appeared as soloist with many of the world's leading orchestras in repertoire which includes all the major clarinet works as well as pieces written for her by Sir John Dankworth, Will Todd, Matthew Taylor, Patrick Hawes and Sir Michael Berkeley.

Emma was also the first woman to be made an Honorary Fellow of Pembroke College, Cambridge and in 2017 the college commissioned a portrait of her.

She enjoys running and has completed 2 half marathons to raise funds for Unicef. She is a patron of ClicSargent, (www.clicsargent.org.uk), and of Ronald McDonald House Charities (<http://www.rmhc.org>).

Emma was honoured by the Queen with an M.B.E. in 1996.

Emma plays an instrument made by the English clarinet maker, Peter Eaton.

For more details please visit www.emmajohnson.co.uk Follow Emma on Twitter: @ClarinetEmmaJ