

# Events Guide

## VIGIL FOR THE MILLENNIUM TOUR

- 7.30pm Saturday, 16th October – **Bradford Cathedral**  
7.30pm Saturday, 6th November – **Bristol Anglican Cathedral**  
7.30pm Saturday, 13th November – **Manchester Cathedral**  
7.30pm Saturday, 27th November – **Linton Parish Church, near Grassington, Yorkshire**  
Saturday, 7.30pm Saturday 4th December – **Hull Methodist Central Hall**

*NB Attendance at the Vigils is free with an offering being taken to cover costs*

## MILLENNIUM FAREWELL CONCERT – HEREFORD CATHEDRAL

7.30 p.m. Friday, 3rd December 1999

*Tickets only available from the Hereford Cathedral Perpetual Trust  
bookings information and ticket hotline 01432 271 990*

## LITANY OF THANKSGIVING TOUR

- Saturday, 26th February 2000 – **Bristol Anglican Cathedral**  
Saturday, 4th March 2000 – **St Philip's Cathedral, Birmingham**  
Saturday, 11th March 2000 – **Manchester Cathedral**  
Saturday, 18th March 2000 – **Worcester Cathedral**  
Saturday, 1st April 2000 – **Bradford Cathedral**  
Saturday, 8th April 2000 – **Rochester Cathedral**

*NB Attendance at the Litanies is free with an offering being taken to cover costs*

## NEO CABARET EVENINGS

- Saturday, 7th October 2000 – **Grand Hotel, Birmingham**  
Saturday, 14th October 2000 – **Piccadilly Hotel, Manchester**  
Saturday, 21st October 2000 – **Jarvis International, Bristol**  
Saturday, 28th October 2000 – **The Vineyard, Dorking**

*Tickets available from 1st April 2000 on the NEO Freephone 0800 018 2695*

## CHRISTMAS CONCERT TOUR 2000

- Friday, 1st December 2000 – **The Bridgewater Hall, Manchester**  
Saturday, 2nd December 2000 – **Colston Hall, Bristol**  
Tuesday, 5th December 2000 – **Symphony Hall, Birmingham**  
London venue to be confirmed

*Tickets available from 1st September 2000 on the NEO Freephone 0800 018 2695*

# Newsletter **AUTUMN 5** 1999

## Vision for a new Millennium

It seems quite a while now since the NEO has brought a new idea into the public domain. Probably the last time was our particular brand of Vigil which as you know has become so popular. The New European Orchestra tried the format for the first time back in August and it was interesting to see the reaction of the Swiss audience. They clearly found it both moving and intellectually stimulating, but above all it was the novelty, the unusualness and the sheer audacity of it all that seemed to surprise them.

We have always enjoyed adventure in the NEO, often frightening those of a nervous disposition! I remember receiving a kindly meant letter from a well respected musical colleague, shortly before the very first concert of all. It read something like this: "From my vast experience of orchestral playing, I can assure you that what you are planning will be impossible to bring off". How glad I am that we did not crumble after receiving such advice, but our particular style of artistic innovation has always taken courage!

In the year 2000 the NEO is introducing two brand new musical concepts. The first is a Litany of Thanksgiving to be performed in six cathedrals up and down the country. This is a continuous 75 minute rolling programme which starts with the profound and stirring sounds of Gregorian

chant, and moves through Renaissance, Baroque, Gospel, Sankey and modern styles of spiritual music. There are special, highly evocative orchestral pieces, dance and new compositions by me. I don't think you will have witnessed anything quite like this before. The overall effect will be one, I think, of vastness, a mighty paean of praise at the beginning of a new millennium.

At the end of this great outpouring of music, everyone will disperse and there will be a ten minute break. Then comes another new experiment! A micro-service lasting 15 minutes precisely, called a Watch. At the heart of this liturgy is an act of devotion to Christ, specially designed for modern, 21st century man and woman.

The dancers are also developing something interesting to be performed at Worcester

Cathedral during the day of our Litany on Saturday, 18th March 2000. This is a series of short, site-specific dances with live music, which relate to various pieces of architecture, sculpture, or glass work in the cathedral itself. We hope that this will raise considerable interest in Worcester especially, and celebrate the gift of this great building, which has been used for so long during our present millennium to honour and glorify the “Author and Finisher” of the Christian faith.

But all this only takes us up until Easter 2000! After that there comes a fresh start to our Salzburg summer tours. You will hear about that as time goes by, but for the purposes of this article I must hurry on to our second new adventure of the year 2000. The thinking here is so different that we have not yet come up with a term which encapsulates all the different strands, so our working title is “NEO Cabaret” evenings.

The picture is of an audience of 500-700 people in a large plush hotel (such as where they hold TV awards ceremonies), sitting round tables enjoying a drink and other light refreshments. On the bill is what I call “music to fascinate” – very entertaining, unusual, stimulating – special arrangements of classics perhaps, music which does not readily fit into any preconceived box or compartment, but is above all interesting and great to listen to.

The Singers will be there and the Dancers too. But the pièce de résistance we are working on is that the music will be interspersed with Disputations. This is a form of (often hilarious)

argument conducted elsewhere by the Dominican order of monks. The tradition goes back to St. Thomas Aquinas. The NEO Disputations will however, be conducted by our own resident academics from the Singers and elsewhere. No topic will be safe from the searching eye of these razor sharp intellectuals, whether it be the relative merits of the Ford Mondeo as compared with the Vauxhall Vectra or Genetic Determinism and the Christian faith. The whole evening will be an explosion of fun and entertainment, so watch out for NEO at the Grand in Birmingham, or the Piccadilly in Manchester, or the Jarvis International in Bristol, or the ‘Vineyard’, Dorking (a genuine English wine making establishment where you can ‘tour and taste’!)

Yes, I suppose you could use the word ‘cabaret’ to describe the above, and yet that is not really quite right because that term evokes a sort of night club big-band jazz feeling, but this event will somehow be lighter, brighter than that – more intellectually stimulating. Make sure you come and see for yourself!

Phew! Then on top of all that we are back to our traditional Christmas Tour in December, plus occasional experiments with the New English Micro-Orchestra. I’ll tell you about that another time, since the micro concept is still in its infancy.

So what a year we have in prospect! I hope I’ll get to see you at many of the events - and please come to say hello at the end of the concert if you can.

**With best wishes,  
Nigel Swinford**

# Do you receive NEO publicity?

We certainly hope so because publicising our events is vital if we are to have audiences. But how exactly do we do it? Well primarily we rely on circulating copies of the publicity we produce to all those who are on our mailing list wherever the concerts are being held i.e. we do not limit, geographically, those to whom we send it. The reason for this is because we find that many who receive our publicity, even if they are unable to go to a concert themselves often pass on the publicity to a relative or friend who can, or someone else they know who lives in the vicinity of a concert venue. That is why we always send you 2 copies of the A5 flyers – one for you and one to pass on. Sometimes we also send you an A4 poster for you to arrange to put it up in a prominent place if you want to help us in this way. Some people ask for extra quantities of publicity and we are always happy to provide these.

This is why those of you who live in Birmingham, where we have many supporters, have been sent the Vigil publicity even though we are not performing there this autumn (because all of the venues were booked up !). So we are sorry for all those in Birmingham who are disappointed. However, we will be back in Birmingham three times next year and last year Birmingham was the only venue chosen for our massive Vigil for the Nation in July attended by 5,000 people (and all for free!!)



You will also have noticed that we are performing in Hereford Cathedral on Friday December 3rd – we have not sent publicity about this because this is a concert being arranged by the Hereford Cathedral Perpetual Trust and it is they who will be selling all the tickets and producing the publicity. For further information please see the back page.

We would also like to apologise for those who had hoped we would be having a Vigil in Cambridge this October – unfortunately those who had invited us were unable to confirm the invitation.

Finally, next year we will be reviewing our mailing list with you by sending a questionnaire to make sure you are receiving the information which you require.

More news of that in the next newsletter but in the meantime thank you for your continued support.

If you have any comments you would like to make in the meantime, please write to,

One of the most important ways that people who attend NEO events can keep in touch is through NEO Friends. Since taking over administration of the Friends membership it has given me an opportunity to get to know what many of you think and feel about the work and vision of NEO. It is vital to the work of the NEO to know the views of so many people and I warmly invite those of you who are not already Friends to seriously consider joining in order to forge a closer link to the NEO family. The support of the Friends is especially encouraging and appreciated by all in the NEO.

If you would like information please write to me at