

EVENTS (early warning) GUIDE



BIG BAND AND BAROQUE

(a new type of NEO entertainment concert to be performed in major concert halls early in 2003 – details of ticket prices and availability in the Autumn but do put the dates in your diary now to avoid disappointment)

26th February 2003 – Bridgewater Hall, Manchester

27th February 2003 – Symphony Hall, Birmingham

8th March 2003 – Colston Hall, Bristol

ARE YOU AN NEO FRIEND?

If not, you will miss our special summer gift.



The NEO Friends, set up in 1994, exists to enable those who are interested in the NEO to learn more of what we do, to support our work and gain insights into the way the Orchestra operates. The benefits of being a Friend include reductions in concert ticket prices (when they are not free!), special events and offers and, most importantly, Opus, the high quality bi-annual magazine produced exclusively for NEO Friends. The next edition features in-depth articles on the recent Vigil tour and the BBC broadcast, A Deep but Dazzling Darkness, in which the NEO performed as part of BBC Radio 4's poetry week; an article on NEO Connections and, most amazingly of all, **a free NEO recording of the Orchestral Collection** as our way of saying thank you to those who support us in this way.

If you would like information on the benefits of becoming an NEO Friend and want to take advantage of our special summer gift please send your cheque for £20 individual membership, or £30 for family membership made payable to New English Orchestra to:

(please note that there are special concessionary rates for performers and others – cost on application to Sue)



Newsletter

SUMMER
2002

2002 VIGIL TOUR A FANTASTIC SUCCESS

A legitimate claim judging by the feedback we received from some of the thousands who attended an NEO Vigil in the winter.

This year saw the NEO back with one of its longest tours of any kind ever – 8 cathedrals and large churches were visited starting in Cambridge on 26th January and finishing at Manchester Cathedral on 16th March. We hope that you had the opportunity to see these events which featured musical flavours from several continents including the sound of the tabla, the tambura and African drums mingling with traditional classical strings and wind instruments. Some of the poignant yet joyful music of Sting and Paul Simon (Graceland) stood beside Duke Ellington's Psalm 150, together with beautiful modern European church music, and special dances were composed to enhance the occasion.

“If I had known that it was going to be this good I would have insisted that my friends came.”

Audience reaction to the events was universally ecstatic, epitomized by a classic comment from a member of the audience who came to Cambridge (one of two new venues visited by the NEO, together with Watford) not knowing anything about the NEO:

“If I had known that it was going to be this good I would have insisted that my friends came.”

Well, we do try not to keep the remarkable performances of the NEO a secret but we also rely on you to pass on the word!!

Many other comments were received which provide a fascinating insight into how much people who come to NEO events value them. More feedback from the Vigils is given in the NEO Friends magazine, **Opus**.

Want to know how you can get hold of a copy? – see the item on NEO Friends on the back cover.

A DEEP BUT DAZZLING DARKNESS

On 19th – 21st April this year the BBC held their BBC Radio 4 poetry weekend at the Lowry Centre, Salford Quays. To quote the BBC, “ The poetry weekend in Manchester is a vibrant demonstration of BBC Radio 4’s belief in the power of the spoken word and our commitment to bringing it to life in all its rich variety.” Events ranged from the *Scrambled Sonnet Game and the Aqueous Humour Foyer* to performances by *Shenanigans*, *the Ad Hoc Dance Company*, and with readings by *Five New Poets*. The New English Orchestra were also there recording BBC Radio 4’s Sunday Worship, *A Deep but Dazzling Darkness*, which was broadcast the following morning at 8am.

The music included, *St Agnes and the burning train* (Sting) arr. Nigel Swinford for string quintet and vibraphone, *Arise my love* (P Burton) published St Paul’s Outreach Trust arr. Nigel Swinford (and available on the NEO’s Spiritual Songs recording), ‘Lord of all hopefulness’ Tune: Slane trad. Irish arr. Nigel Swinford; ‘Homeless’ and ‘Diamonds on the soles of her shoes’ (Paul Simon) arr. Nigel Swinford for string quartet and percussion and *Lacrimosa* (Zbigniew Preisner) published Chester arr. Nigel Swinford for soprano and tenor soloists and string quintet and flute.

The BBC were thrilled with reaction to the programme which included many expressions of appreciation including:

Re: programme transmitted this morning, what is the name of the wonderful soprano and what are the pieces she sang?

This morning’s service was a joy, especially the duet “Arise my love.”

What a treat. Congratulations on this morning’s broadcast...

May I say how utterly enthralled I was in listening to Radio 4’s Sunday Worship this morning

I am a visitor to Britain and was woken up on Sunday morning, 21 April 2002, by the most delightful programme...or rather, song!

(For more information in this event you will need to read the NEO Friends magazine, Opus)

newenglishorchestra.com and newenglishorchestra.co.uk

These are the domain names of our website which is currently under development but which we hope will be up and running by the autumn. We may well only opt for one of the domains but when we do the website will be a superb tool for the NEO to use and a much more effective method of keeping our supporters up to date with the regular and often unpredictable developments in the exciting work of the NEO.

Nigel Swinford

Nigel, as most readers of this newsletter will know, is the NEO's founder, Artistic Director and Principal Conductor. Having been seriously ill at the turn of 2000/01 we were thrilled to see Nigel back conducting in the recent Vigil tour with his characteristic vivacity having achieved a full recovery.

Among the Nations CD

Among the Nations has now been released on CD and includes a rich variety of orchestral music and songs from around the world including some which had such a powerful impact on our audiences during the recent Vigil tour:

O Praise the Name of the Lord and Glory be to God From Rachmaninov's Vespers

Moto, Mony Ocoro and Ami Zi Ama from Africa

Passacaglia for Violin and Viola on a theme of Handel – Halvorsen

Great and Wonderful

What Can Separate Us?

How Great Thou Art

Madrigal for Violin and Viola – Martinu

Oh, the Love that drew!



Copies of the CD, price £10 + 70p postage and packing are available, together with all other NEO recordings, from: