



**The Nation's Premier Female Organist, Gail Archer, Launches a New Album and Concert Tour in Celebration of J.S. Bach's 325<sup>th</sup> Birthday**

*"Gail Archer has become one of the world's few star organists." - Toronto Star*

**New York City (December 16, 2009) ---** As part of a year-long celebration of J.S Bach's 325<sup>th</sup> birthday, organist Gail Archer embarks on a Bach recital marathon in tandem with her latest album *Bach the Transcendent Genius* to be released February 2010 (recorded on a Fritts organ at Vassar College). Both, respectively, pay homage to the genius of the Baroque era and are rich with offerings that feature some of Bach's most famous works including *The Great 18 Leipzig Chorales*. This marks the third consecutive year Archer has performed composer-centric concerts; she wowed audiences last year with her Felix Mendelssohn worldwide tour and during the 2007-2008 season her Olivier Messiaen *A Mystic in the Making* cycle was cited as one of the "Best Classical Moments of 2008" (Time Out New York). (Tour schedule details are below.)

Described as playing "*with an unflagging power and aggressiveness...and a sense of vulnerability and awe*" (New York Times), Archer is thrilled to be sharing some of Bach's gems that have helped define the breadth and depth of his artistry. "*The Great 18 are the great hymns I sang at church with my family as a young girl,*" explains Archer. "*They are as much a part of my cultural heritage as any heirloom that I might receive from my parents or grandparents. In celebration of Bach's birth in Eisenach, it is a joy to share these extraordinary improvisations upon the old German hymns.*"

Demonstrating a wide-ranging interest in all types of organ literature, "The Great 18" Leipzig Chorales are virtuosic settings of Lutheran chorale melodies that Bach knew from his earlier years. The original chorale preludes were composed from 1708-1717 at Weimar, where Bach served as organist and chamber musician. Bach later developed the final versions of the pieces in Leipzig between 1739-1742 and then again from 1746-1747. Six of the chorales are cantus-firmus paraphrases - BWV 651, 655, 656, 657, 664, 665 - while another six are decorated melodies - BWV 653, 653, 659, 660, 662, 663. Only two pieces are trios, BWV 655 and 664; there is a single cantus firmus work without pedal, BWV 666, and two pedal cantus firmus chorales, BWV 661 and 665.

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**Gail Archer Bach Tour (con't.)**  
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### **About Gail Archer**

*"A passionate musician who is helping to change the image of the church organ."* -NY 1 TV Archer holds a DMA in organ performance from the Manhattan School of Music and earned an artist diploma from the Boston Conservatory. An active recitalist in both the United States and Europe; she was recently featured at the Dresden Musicfestspiel in May 2009. Ms. Archer lives in New York City and is college organist at Vassar College, a member of the organ and music history faculty at Manhattan School of Music and director of the music program at Barnard College, Columbia University. She serves as director of the Young Artist and Artist Organ Recitals at historic Central Synagogue. <http://www.gailarcher.com>

### **2010 Concert Tour**

#### **Gail Archer Bach the Transcendent NYC Tour:**

January 26 @ 8:00PM– All Souls Unitarian Church (1157 Lex @ 80<sup>th</sup> St, Train 6-77<sup>th</sup>/Lex)

February 7 @ 4:00PM– Church of the Transfiguration (1 E 29<sup>th</sup> St between 5<sup>th</sup>/Madison, Train 6-29<sup>th</sup>/Park)

February 25 @ 7:30PM– Holy Trinity Lutheran Church (3 W 65<sup>th</sup> St @ CPW, Train 1-66<sup>th</sup> St)

March 14 @ 3:00PM– St. Michael's Episcopal Church (225 W 99<sup>th</sup> St, Train 1/2/3-W 96<sup>th</sup> St)

April 21 @ 7:30PM– St. Paul's Chapel (117<sup>th</sup> St & Amsterdam, Train 1-Columbia/Broadway)

May 19 @ 7:30PM– Central Synagogue (123 E 55<sup>th</sup> St, Train E/V-Lex/55<sup>th</sup> St)

#### **Gail Archer Nationwide Tour:**

January 15 – Trinity Episcopal Church, Reno, NV

January 17 – St. Mary's Catholic Cathedral, San Francisco, CA

January 24 – Christ Episcopal Church, New Brunswick, NJ

February 15 – Grace and Holy Trinity Cathedral, Kansas City, MO

February 28 – United Church of Christ, Reading, PA

March 7 – First United Methodist Church, Brevard, SC

March 19 – St. Helena's Episcopal Church, Beaufort, SC

April 8 – Princeton University Chapel, Princeton, NJ

April 25 – First Wayne Street United Methodist Church, Fort Wayne, IN