

Organist Gail Archer Presents "An American Idyll"- a Quintet of Free NYC Concerts Featuring Works by American Composers



2012 NYC Concert Tour:

Jan 25 St. Paul's Chapel, Columbia University

Feb 11 R.C. Church of St. Agnes

Mar 23 St. Francis Xavier Church

Apr 27 Rutgers Presbyterian Church

May 23 Central Synagogue

New York City, NY (For Release 1.9.12) --- Internationally renowned star concert organist **Gail Archer** celebrates the distinctive voice of American organ music in *An American Idyll* - a five-concert series touring the churches and synagogues of New York City. Performing a colorful collection of organ music by 20th and 21st century American composers, Archer is slated to premiere two commissioned works: organ preludes *He Leadeth me! O Blessed Tho't!, Be Thou My Vision*, and *Eternal Father, Strong to Save* by Columbia alumnus Hayes Biggs; and a new work (title TBA) by Pulitzer-prize finalist and Vassar College professor Harold Meltzer. Hailed for championing contemporary organ music by female composers, Archer will also feature works by Joan Tower, Judith Lang Zaimont, Pamela Decker, Claire Shore, Libby Larsen, Emma Lou Diemer, and Kim D. Sherman. (Program details are below.)

Beautiful folk melodies, American hymn tunes and powerful sounds infuse the organ music of America. According to Archer, American organ music is a dynamic fusion of folk tunes, hymns, jazz, blues and European art music which reflects the remarkable diversity of our nation from great urban centers to wide open mountains and plains. "It is important to draw attention to the beautiful music composed by American women and men which deserves to be heard and celebrated," says Archer.

This isn't Archer's first nod to American organ music. Her 2008 album *An American Idyll* (Meyer Media) is a genuinely extraordinary collection of works by American composers – Vincent Persichetti, David Noon, Leo Sowerby, Joan Tower and others.

About Gail Archer

Gail Archer is an international concert organist, recording artist, choral conductor and lecturer who specializing in drawing attention to composer anniversaries with her annual recital series in New York City: Liszt, Bach, Mendelssohn and Messiaen. Archer was the first American woman to play the complete works of Olivier Messiaen for the centennial of the composer's birth in 2008. Her recordings include *Franz Liszt: A Hungarian Rhapsody*, *Bach, the Transcendent Genius*, *An American Idyll*, *A Mystic In the Making* on Meyer-Media LLC and *The Orpheus of Amsterdam: Sweelinck and his Pupils* on CALA Records, London.

Archer is college organist at Vassar College, and director of the music program at Barnard College, Columbia University where she conducts the Barnard-Columbia Chorus. She serves as director of the artist and young organ artist recitals at NYC's historic Central Synagogue. www.gailarcher.com

***An American Idyll /*General Tour & Ticket Information**

All Concerts are FREE and first come, first serve.

Wednesday, January 25th @ 7:30pm

Location: St. Paul's Chapel at Columbia University. 117th St. & Amsterdam Ave. Train 1 to Columbia University/Broadway.

Program: *Ascent* (Joan Tower), *He Leadeth me! O Blessed Tho't!**, *Be Thou My Vision*, *Eternal Father**, *Strong to Save** (Hayes Biggs), *Wondrous Love* (Samuel Barber), *Praeludium super Pange Lingua* (David Noon), and *Sonata for Organ* (Vincent Persichetti)

Info: For more info, call 212.854.0480 or visit <http://www.columbia.edu>.

Saturday, February 11th @ 4:00pm

Location: R.C. Church of St. Agnes, 143 West 43rd St. Train 4/5/6/7 to Grand Central.

Program: *Sonatina* (Leo Sowerby), *Organicity* (Richard Wilson), *Pastorale* (Ned Rorem), *I Seek the Lord* (Judith Lang Zaimont), and *Gospel Preludes: Book 4* (William Bolcum)

Info: For more info, visit <http://www.stagneschurchnyc.org>.

Friday, March 23rd @ 7:30pm

Location: St. Francis Xavier Church, 46 West 16th St. Train 4/5/6/N/Q/R/B/D/F/M to Union Square.

Program: *Preamble for a Solemn Occasion* (Aaron Copland), *Postlude* (Robert Moves), *Passacaglia on BACH* (Pamela Decker), *Variations on "America"* (Charles Ives), and *Sonata in Eb Minor Op.65* (Horatio Parker)

Info: For more info, visit <http://www.sfxavier.org>.

Sunday, April 27th @ 7:30pm

Location: Rutgers Presbyterian Church. 236 West 73rd St. Train 1/2/3 to 72nd St.

Program: *Passacaglia* (Virgil Thompson), *Pastorale on a Christmas Plainsong* (Thompson), *Oatlands Sketches* (Claire Shore), *Chromatic Study on the name of BACH* (Walter Piston), and *Aspects of Glory* (Libby Larsen) **Info:** For more info, visit <http://www.rutgerschurch.org>.

Wednesday, May 23rd @ 7:00pm

Location: Central Synagogue. 123 East 55th Street (between Park/Lex). Train F/N/R/W/4/5/6 to 59th

Street. **Program:** *Four Biblical Sketches for Organ* (Emma Lou Diemer), *3 Chorale Preludes* (Roger Sessions), *untitled** (Harold Meltzer), *Joyful Hymn* (Kim D. Sherman), and *Chasm* (William Albright)

Info: For more info, visit <http://www.centralsynagogue.org>.

*World Premiere

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Editor's Note: For photo permissions, interview requests, and tickets, please contact April Thibeault at AMT PR, 212.861.0990, april@amtpublicrelations.com.