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Leading Female Organist Gail Archer Completes Her Eastern European Trilogy with *Cantius*, a Recording of Polish Organ Music

“superb musicianship, masterly technique and programming savvy...informs the American organist Gail Archer” – *Gramophone*

“a trailblazing organist and rescuer of undeservedly obscure repertoire. She’s also been responsible for some of the most entertaining and often rewardingly unorthodox organ music programming in recent years.” – *New York Music Daily*

“her renderings exemplify all of the musicality for which she's become known” – *Textura*

New York, NY (For Release 04.15.22) — Hailed as one of this era’s most adventurous interpreters of the classical organ repertoire, leading female organist **Gail Archer** today announced the release of her 10th album: *Cantius* (TBR 05.03.22, Meyer Media). Dedicated to drawing attention to Eastern European composers through ongoing research, performances, and recordings, Archer continues her sonic journey with rarely performed works by six Polish composers of the 19th-21st centuries. Named in honor of St. John Cantius, a popular saint in Poland, the album was rightly recorded on the “Tina Mae” organ (built in 1907 and restored 13 times) at Chicago’s St. John Cantius Church. Known for entrancing listeners with her musicality, sensitivity, and visceral quality, Archer brings *Cantius* to life with a 2022 in-person album release tour (scroll down for complete schedule).

For this new compilation of Polish music, Archer brings a richness of imagination and dramatic flourish dominant in Eastern European minor and chromatic sensibilities. “Contemporary Polish organ literature contains some of the most unique, bold and audacious music in the world today,” says **Gail Archer**. “The composers understand the full sonic range of the organ and take advantage of every possible color combination available on the instrument.”

Archer has been performing in Poland nearly every year since 2003. She believes that the Poles’ deep appreciation for the organ and its literature is influenced by the strong Roman Catholic faith traditions in their country. “Playing in Poland gives one a remarkable sense of satisfaction because the performer and the audience participate in the music-making with such a vital, engaged spirit.”

Archer's recordings span the 17th-21st centuries, a festive discography that highlights her musical mastery on grand Romantic instruments as well as Baroque tracker organs. This latest album is the third in a trilogy of recordings of contemporary organ literature from Eastern Europe. Also released on Meyer Media, Archer’s *Chernivtsi-Contemporary Ukrainian Organ Music* (2020) was hailed as “a fine account of some organ repertoire which deserves to be heard” (*Choir & Organ*).

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According to Classical Modern Music Blog, “this is a volume any organ music modernist-appreciator will gravitate towards. Gail Archer casts a steady artistic light on the music in winning fashion.” The first was *A Russian Journey: Music of the Russian Five* (2017), that included music from the 19th-21st centuries by Russian composers Glasunow, Cui, Ljapunow, Slonimski, Shaversashvili and Mussorgsky.

About Gail Archer

Gail Archer is an international concert organist, recording artist, choral conductor and lecturer who draws attention to composer anniversaries or musical themes with her annual recital series including her 2021 series, *A Slavic Celebration*, and *Max Reger, The Muse's Voice, An American Idyll, Liszt, Bach, Mendelssohn and Messiaen*. Ms. Archer was the first American woman to play the complete works of Olivier Messiaen for the centennial of the composer's birth in 2008; *Time Out New York* recognized the Messiaen cycle as "Best of 2008" in classical music and opera. Her recordings include her new March 2022 release *Cantius*, and *Chernivtsi, A Russian Journey, The Muse's Voice, Franz Liszt: A Hungarian Rhapsody, Bach: The Transcendent Genius, An American Idyll, A Mystic In the Making (Meyer Media), and The Orpheus of Amsterdam: Sweelinck and his Pupils (CALA Records)*. Ms. Archer's 2019 European tour took her to the British Isles, Italy, Spain, Ukraine, Poland, Russia and Malta. Highlights include St. Giles Cathedral, Edinburgh, Scotland, the Basilica of Loyola, San Sebastian, Spain, St. Mary's Cathedral, Cracow, Poland, Holy Cross Church, Lublin, Poland, the Philharmonic of Lviv, Ukraine, and the Lutheran Cathedral of St. Peter and St. Paul, Moscow, Russia.

She is the founder of Musforum, www.musforum.org an international network for women organists to promote and affirm their work. Ms. Archer is college organist at Vassar College, director of the music program at Barnard College, Columbia University, where she conducts the Barnard-Columbia Chorus and Chamber Singers and a faculty member of Harriman Institute, Columbia University. She is artistic director of the artist and young artist recital series at historic Central Synagogue, New York City.

www.gailarcher.com



Cantius

Performer: Gail Archer (organ)

Release Date: May 3, 2022

Composers: Mieczyslaw Surzynski (1866-1924), Wincenty Rychling (1841-1896), Felix Borowski (1872-1956), Pawel Lukaszewski (b.1968), Henryk Mikolaj Gorecki (1933-2010), Felix Nowowiejski (1877-1946), Grazyna Bacewicz (1909-1969), Tadeusz Paciorekiewicz (1916-1998)

Tracks: 1. *Improvisation on a Polish Hymn*, 2. *Pastorale in F# Minor*, 3. *Meditation-Elegie*, 4. *Triptych for Organ*, 5. *Kantata for Organ*, 6. *Symphony No.8 for Organ*, 7. *Esquisse for Organ*, 8. *Tryptychon for Organ*

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CD Release Tour:

- 3.13 @ 3:00pm** Holy Ghost R.C. Church, Omaha, Nebraska
- 3.13 @ 7:00pm** St. Wenceslaus R.C. Church, Omaha, Nebraska
- 3.16 @ 1:00pm** First United Methodist Church, Corvallis, Oregon
- 3.20 @ 4:00pm** Cathedral of the Epiphany, Sioux City, Iowa
- 3.26 @ 7:00pm** Holy Cross R.C. Church, Minneapolis, Minnesota
- 4.03 @ 2:30pm** St. Francis of Assisi R.C. Church, Ann Arbor, Michigan
- 4.24 @ 2:00pm** Our Lady of Perpetual Help, Rapid City, South Dakota
- 5.22 @ 4:00pm** Holy Cross Cathedral, Boston, Massachusetts
- 6.12 @ 8:00pm** Internationale Zuger Orgeltage, Oberwil, Switzerland

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Online Streaming:

<https://promo.theorchard.com/hkHhBFS3CRFYhUgPfNTU>

Download Press Kit/Audio:

<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/suzschph6r3ab6s/AABQ-Oj-PV8tm5RBrxxTd4Uba?dl=0>