

CHOIR & ORGAN

SEPTEMBER 2022

Cantius

Gail Archer, Casavant Frères organ
Opus 1130 (1926), St John Cantius
Church, Chicago

Meyer Media MM122051 [65.1-4]

★★★



Gail Archer's
traversal of eastern
European organ
music continues

with this satisfying compendium of Polish pieces from the 19th to the 21st centuries. The shifting harmonic centre of Feliks Nowowiejski's Symphony no.8 catches the ear, as does Mieczysław Surzyński's eloquent *Improvisation on a Polish Hymn*, the swelling grandeur of Paweł Łukaszewski's *Icon*, and diaphanous modal alterations of Wincenty Rychling's miniature *Pastorale in F sharp minor*. Two familiar names – Górecki (the engorged chordal thunder of *Kantata*) and Bacewicz (her rhythmically vibrant *Esquisse*) – add ballast without ever overshadowing contributions by others. Archer puts a 1926 Casavant Frères to poetic use while also landing the occasional telling punch.

MICHAEL QUINN