quartet. Throughout the work, string quartet and orchestra exchange momentary whiffs of music literature that relate in some way to water, drawn from works by Smetana, Saint-Saëns, Händel, Wagner, Chopin, and Vaughan Williams (e.g., Chopin's "Raindrop" prelude or Händel's own *Water Music*). The textural palette in this final work on the recording is even more varied than in the compositions that precede it, ranging from slow, introspective unaccompanied solos to violent ensemble eruptions and clustering dissonances, sometimes colliding with a cascading amalgam of water noises. Crucial to a meaningful hearing of this music is a willingness to forgo anticipation of any narrative thread leading to a palpable sense of totality. Here, as in much of Schwartz's music, it is the intricately surprising, moment-to-moment encounter between musical thought and a raw (in this case watery) environment that rewards multiple hearings.

Both the string quartet and *Water Music* were recorded in the UK; although both recording sessions took place in churches, the acoustics were not overly live, and the quality of sound is clear, clean and appropriately resonant. Both *Memorial in Two Parts* and *Tapestry* were recorded live at the Library of Congress. Although audience noise is occasionally obvious, it is not enough to disrupt or distract from an otherwise gratifying experience.

Daniel Strong Godfrey

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Deems Taylor, Through the Looking Glass*; Charles Tomlinson Griffes,* Poem*;* The White Peacock; The Pleasure Dome of Kubla Khan*;* Three Tone Pictures*;* Bacchanale. The Seattle Symphony, Gerard Schwarz, conductor; Scott Goff, flute. Liner notes by Paul Schiavo. Naxos American Classics Seattle Symphony Collection 559724, [1990] 2012, CD.

I was first introduced to the music of Deems Taylor during the 1980s in a graduate seminar on American opera. My curiosity piqued by two excerpts of his opera *The King's Henchman* (1926), I started to explore the reasons behind his rise to prominence as a composer over the first three decades of the twentieth century, and his fall into relative obscurity shortly after his death in 1966.[1] When I embarked on my study of Taylor, the literature on his work as a composer was extremely limited and few commercial recordings were available. The 1923 version of *Through the Looking Glass*, the work appearing on this Naxos release, was released on commercial recordings three times prior to 1990: the first by the Columbia Broadcasting Symphony under Howard Barlow (ca. 1940); the second by the Eastman-Rochester Symphony under Howard Hanson (1954); and the third by the Interlochen Youth Orchestra (1965).

[1] Christopher E. Mehrens, "The Critical and Musical Work of Deems Taylor in Light of Contemporary Cultural Patterns" (Ph.D. diss., University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 1998).

Donna K. Anderson found herself in a similar situation when she began her doctoral research on Charles Tomlinson Griffes in the mid-1960s, and concluded that the state of Griffes research at that time was "for the most part, superficial and inaccurate."[2] Unlike the study of Taylor, however, interest in Griffes had never waned, as evinced by the 1943 major book-length biography by Edward M. Maisel[3] and the continuing performances of his music both live and on numerous commercial recordings.[4] Notable releases of his orchestral works prior to 1990 include those by Eugene Ormandy and the Minneapolis Symphony (1934); Charles Barlow and the Columbia Broadcasting Symphony (1939); Ormandy and the Philadelphia Orchestra (1965); and Howard Hanson and the Eastman-Rochester Symphony Orchestra (1956 and 1965).

When Delos International released *The Musical Fantasies of Charles Griffes and Deems Taylor*, his name was given first billing, despite the fact that *Through the Looking Glass* comprised the first five tracks of the release.[5] In the 2012 reissue of this important CD on the Naxos American Classics label,[6] Taylor's name is given prominence.

The first offering on this reissue is Deems Taylor's *Through the Looking Glass*, op. 12. At the close of the First World War, Taylor's publisher Oliver Ditson Company sent him a letter requesting a "peace cantata," but he declined, explaining that his memories as a war correspondent in France "did not inspire musical ideas" and that "his world of inspiration lay in fantasy."[7] The idea of creating a musical setting of the Alice books was in his mind almost four years earlier, as revealed by two entries in his 1913 sketchbook under the title "Alice in Wonderland."[8] The work was originally scored for chamber orchestra and was enormously well received when Carolyn Beebe and the New York Chamber Music Society premiered it in 1919. Eventually Taylor re-orchestrated the work for full symphony and the New York Symphony Society under Walter Damrosch first performed this version in 1923.

Subtitled "Five Pictures from Lewis Carroll," *Through the Looking Glass* depicts the story's poetic forward and four of its twelve chapters. The work is a four-movement program symphony, using lyricism and orchestral color to evoke the imagery of the Carroll tale. Taylor was a musically conservative composer, despite his support as a music critic of many of the more progressive composers of his time. Robert Stevenson has accurately observed that

[2] Donna K. Anderson, "The Works of Charles T. Griffes: A Descriptive Catalogue" (Ph.D. diss., Indiana University, 1966).

[3] Edward M. Maisel, *Charles T. Griffes: The Life of an American Composer* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1943).

[4] Anderson wrote that "Following Griffes's death, performances of his music seemed to be everywhere." Anderson, *Charles T. Griffes: A Life in Music* (Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1993), 174.

[5] *The Musical Fantasies of Charles Griffes and Deems Taylor*, Seattle Symphony, Gerard Schwarz, cond., Delos DE 3099, 1990, CD.

[6] This release is also available in streaming audio format via the Naxos Music Library.

[7] James A. Pegolotti, *Deems Taylor: A Biography* (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 2003), 53.

[8] The first entry under this title was dated 6 December 1914. Deems Taylor, *Sketchbook of Deems Taylor, February 28, 1913*, Deems Taylor Papers, Irving S. Gilmore Music Library, Yale University.

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> Taylor's music, like his critical work, never bores and is often witty, always deftly constructed and well timed; but it lacks sharp individual profile or sense of deep conviction. So skilful was he in blending European influences that even at his most derivative he is not easily labelled.[9]

Taylor felt that music should be accessible and in his writings he consistently emphasized that music was an emotional process and that more intellectual methods of composition did not serve this fundamental purpose.[10] He further believed that what distinguished the success of a work was not the method of composition but rather the spirit in which it was created. *Through the Looking Glass* was his first major work in which he was able to enact his musical philosophy. In the 1990 Delos release, Taylor's original program notes for the 1923 premiere were reproduced in whole, offering insight to the thought behind the work.[11] Unfortunately, these were only alluded to in the liner notes to the Naxos release.

The first movement of *Through the Looking Glass* is subdivided into the two parts: "Dedication" and "The Garden of Live Flowers." Based on the first stanza Carroll's "Poetic Foreword," "Dedication" is a gentle lullaby that expresses a child's "dreaming eyes of wonder."[12] A scherzo, "Garden of Live Flowers" makes use of rapidly moving staccato flutes and sixteenth-note figures in the strings to "reflect the brisk chatter of the swaying, bright-colored denizens of the garden."[13] The second movement is titled "Jabberwocky" and, as the poem is written in mirror imagery, Taylor makes use of a palindromic musical structure. The third movement, "Looking Glass Insects" is characterized by clichéd trill figures in the muted strings, flutter-tongued flutes, and arpeggiated figures on a piano which has tissue paper placed across the strings. The final movement, "The White Knight," has two themes: the first in the English Horn representing the knight as he initially appears, and a "sentimental" theme in a slower tempo with a reduced orchestration representing the knight's true nature—that of a "toy Don Quixote."[14] Under the expert baton of Gerard Schwarz, the Seattle Symphony deftly brings Taylor's vision to life, his fine musical craftsmanship, and above all his musical wit.

The remainder of the CD is devoted to the orchestral works of Griffes. Like *Through the Looking Glass*, the majority Griffes's works represented on this release were inspired by literature, were orchestral transcriptions of earlier compositions, and made use of an amalgam of musical styles and approaches. Of this last point, Donna K. Anderson has observed that

> Griffes spent his life in an incessant search for a music language that could fulfill his own artistic personality. . . . Griffes was, in the last analysis, a self-made artist. He was neither decisively shaped nor permanently influenced by any one person or any one musical style—

[9] Robert Stevenson, "Taylor, (Joseph) Deems," in *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, vol. 18, ed. Stanley Sadie (London: Macmillan, 1980), 604–6.

[10] Taylor's thoughts along these lines are best elucidated in his article "The Synthetic Muse." Deems Taylor, "The Synthetic Muse," *New York World*, 7 January 1923.

[11] Taylor, "Through the Looking Glass," *Program Notes* (New York Symphony Society, 11 March 1923).

[12] Taylor, "Through the Looking Glass."

[13] Taylor, "Through the Looking Glass."

[14] Taylor, "Through the Looking Glass."

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> inspired, yes; guided, of course, but never artistically dominated. . . . Griffes's artistic credo was uniquely his own—the product of his curiosity, his desire to assimilate and turn to his use every possible experience.[15]

The first Griffes work is the *Poem for Flute and Orchestra*. Composed in 1916 for flutist Georges Barrère and premiered by Barrère, Walter Damrosch, and the New York Symphony Orchestra in 1919, Griffes considered this work to be a significant "milestone in his career," as it was his first performance by a "major New York orchestra led by a renowned conductor."[16] Artfully crafted and orchestrated, the *Poem* evinces his emerging interest in the music of East Asia through melodic lines and spare use of orchestral resources that serve to highlight the solo flute.[17] Scott Goff's sensitive performance, supported by the fine accompaniment of the symphony, is a marvel and demonstrates why this work has remained a mainstay of the flute repertoire.

The subsequent works are musical settings of literature that clearly demonstrate Griffes's compositional skill with respect to melodic invention, harmonic language, and use of orchestration. In a letter dating from 1 September 1903, Griffes wrote to his mother about his visit to the zoological gardens in Berlin and how he had been impressed by the exoticism of a pure-white peacock.[18] Inspired by a William Sharp's poem *The White Peacock*, in 1915 he composed a piano work that captured his vivid memories from that September day some twelve years earlier.[19] At the request of dancer Adolf Bolm, he orchestrated the piano work, premiered in 1919 by the Rivoli Orchestra under the baton of Erno Rapee. In his program notes to a performance by the Philadelphia Orchestra, Griffes writes, "The music tries to evoke the thousand colors of the garden and the almost weird beauty of the peacock amid these surroundings."[20]

The Pleasure Dome of Kubla Khan also started life as a piano composition in 1912. Like the *White Peacock*, it takes a literary work as its inspiration, in this case the poem by Samuel Taylor Coleridge of the same name; the selection of this particular poem is further evidence of Griffes's increasing attraction to musical Orientalism. When he played the revised piano version for Ferruccio Busoni in 1915, Griffes wrote in his diary that Busoni remarked that it had a "very good oriental atmosphere in it and praised the themes. But he advised me to do it for orchestra or make it shorter for piano."[21] The orchestral version was completed in 1917 and was premiered by Pierre Monteux and the Boston Symphony Orchestra in 1919. In his program notes for that performance, Griffes observed, "I have given my imagination free rein in

[15] Anderson, *Charles T. Griffes*, 222.
[16] Anderson, *Charles T. Griffes*, 153.
[17] The orchestra consists of horns, harp, percussion and strings.
[18] Anderson, "The Works of Charles T. Griffes," 287.
[19] Anderson, "The Works of Charles T. Griffes," 281.
[20] Philadelphia Orchestra Notes, Season 1919–20, vol. 20, 311, cited in Anderson, "The Works of Charles T. Griffes," 501.
[21] Anderson, "The Works of Charles T. Griffes," 259.

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the description of this strange palace as well as of purely imaginary revelry which might take place there."[22]

With movements titled "The Lake at Evening," "The Vale of Dreams," and "The Night Winds," the *Three Tone Pictures* pay homage to the poetry of William Butler Yeats and Edgar Allen Poe.[23] The *Tone Pictures* were originally piano compositions dating from 1910 to 1912, later re-scored for chamber orchestra. The version performed on this CD received it premiere shortly after Griffes's death on 8 April 1920. Anderson mentions that Griffes's interests were wide and varied and included "delicately conceived watercolors"; this would also serve as an apt description of this sensual and moody trilogy.[24]

The final work, *Bacchanale*, is the orchestral version of Griffes's *Scherzo* for piano, op. 6 no. 3 (1913). The composer prepared the following prose description of the work, "From the Palace of Enchantment there issued into the night sounds of unearthly revelry. Troops of genii and other fantastic spirits danced grotesquely to a music now weird and mysterious, now wild and joyous."[25] Leopold Stokowski and the Philadelphia Orchestra first performed the orchestral arrangement in 1919. Griffes's orchestration appropriately makes use of large orchestral forces and effectively uses brass and percussion to accent the lyricism of the woodwinds and strings.

The spirit of Griffes's orchestral works is captured in this wonderfully engineered recording. Gerard Schwarz demonstrates a deep understanding of this composer's artistic aims and he draws out fine and nuanced performances from the Seattle Symphony. In particular, he has created an eloquent record of Griffes's music that deserves attention and careful consideration.

In a 2011 interview, Schwarz was asked about his recordings with the Seattle Symphony and his efforts to promote lesser-known concert music composed in the United States. He noted how, as a trumpet player, he was interested in "new" music and "lucky enough to be involved with many of the great living composers."[26] He went on to note that when he joined the symphony in 1985, he made a "determined" effort to encourage an appreciation of works by overlooked masters of the past. Schwarz has done us all a tremendous service with this CD which will ensure that future generations will be afforded the opportunity to rediscover the orchestral works of Deems Taylor and Charles Tomlinson Griffes, a repertoire that has at times been overlooked, but not forgotten.

Christopher E. Mehrens

[22] Donna K. Anderson, liner notes to *The Musical Fantasies of Charles Griffes and Deems Taylor*, Delos International DE 3099, 1990.

[23] "The Lake at Evening" is based on the Yeats's "The Lake Isle at Innisfree"; "The Vale of Dreams" is based on the Poe's "The Sleeper"; and "The Night Winds" is based on Poe's "The Lake." See Anderson, "The Works of Charles T. Griffes," 226–35.

[24] Donna K. Anderson, "Griffes, Charles T(omlinson)," *Oxford Music Online*, http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com.

[25] Anderson, "The Works of Charles T. Griffes," 263.

[26] Jeremy Siepmann, "Schwarz Interviewed by Jeremy Siepmann," Classical Music News from Naxos.com (18 January 2011). http://www.naxos.com.

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