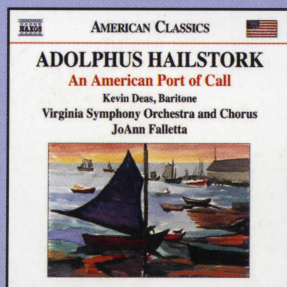
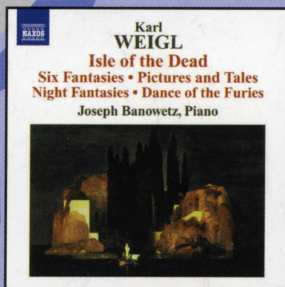


JANUARY / FEBRUARY 2013

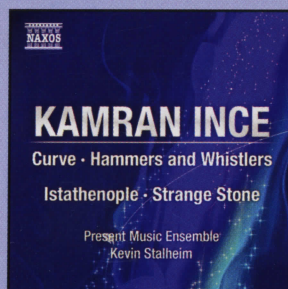
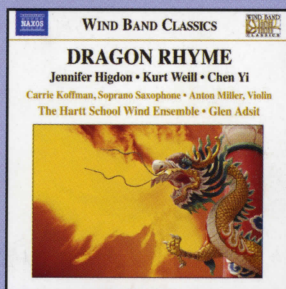
\$12.00

Janfare

The Magazine for Serious Record Collectors



Nine From Naxos



followed by single notes. Paradiso explains that she has embellished this work a bit by adding a few passing dissonances in the chords. There is one particularly dazzling variation in which the two hands of the keyboardist interlock in a sort of hocket style, which Paradiso plays with tremendous aplomb.

The little two-movement sonata by Pier Domenico Paradisi (1707-1791) uses a similar style of irregular meter (or, more accurately, uneven rhythm) to display an almost endless flow of ideas that follow one upon the other like water tumbling down a waterfall. The brief second movement (*Presto*) is built around unusual, upward-moving chromatic cells. Frescobaldi's music, generally better known, is equally light in mood, though this Toccata also contains a number of shifting tempos and moods within its nearly five minutes' length. Paradiso makes an interesting comment in the booklet that she uses an old style of fingering, described in Girolamo Diruta's book *Il Transilvano*, in which one uses different fingerings depending on the direction of the scales being played, which helps create the offbeat accents heard here.

Bach's famed F-Minor Concerto is given a somewhat low-key but smoldering interpretation by Paradiso and the string ensemble. Perhaps because she only uses a string quintet rather than a full string ensemble, Paradiso is able to create an even greater feeling of intimacy in this work, but I also ascribe it to her remarkably well-phrased and colorful performance. Listen, particularly to the last movement, which has tremendous feeling but is somewhat subdued, like capping a geyser.

Jean-Henri d'Anglebert's Suite No. 3 is in that refined, restrained French style which preceded Couperin, and to which the later composer was heir. Here there are fewer surprises, and those that exist are subtler. Paradiso shows that she understands and appreciates this style, too, and this is also evident in the last piece she performs, which is by Joseph-Nicolas Royer (1705-1755). In between we are treated to yet another of Frescobaldi's very imaginative pieces, in this case another Toccata.

My lone complaint about this disc was that there is absolutely no biographical information on Paradiso, even though she wrote the liner notes. Great disc – great music through and through – great performances. This one rates a 10. **Lynn René Bayley**

Maurice Saylor: An Interview in Five Fits and an Epilogue

BY RONALD E. GRAMES

Maurice Saylor's brilliant setting of Lewis Carroll's *The Hunting of the Snark: An Agony in Eight Fits* was released by Naxos more than a year ago, and I first reviewed it in June of last year. The idea of an interview grew out of my enthusiasm for the work in that review (finally published in this edition), though at first Saylor demurred, stating later, "I felt I had said what I wanted to say in my program notes, which are freely available at the Naxos site." The program notes are a good introduction to the work, but my interview with choral director Gisèle Becker, available elsewhere in this issue, suggested there was more to learn about this fascinating composition and its composer. Once we got going, it became apparent that Saylor had an abundance of things to say about the work, the Carroll poem, and about the clever and engaging film scores—three of which are included on the Naxos release—that he and his composers' consortium The Snark Ensemble create.

Fit the First: The *Snark* Setting and Its Genesis—The Composer's Speech

Q: To start, would you want to tell the story of how The Hunting of the Snark came about, and what attracted you to the Lewis Carroll poem?

A: I enjoy nonsense texts, partly because they revel in the sound of the words more than the meaning, aiming to tickle the ear and the imagination, but also because nonsense texts, like abstract art or absolute music, leave a great deal more room for individual interpretation. The less specific the work of art, the more room there is to fill in the blanks from within yourself.

Sometime in the 1990s I became enamored with the text of the *Snark* and memorized passages to regale friends at odd moments. After years of recitation, I developed a performance style that I wanted to capture in a musical setting. I knew I wanted to set the *Snark*, but what type of work would

best suit it? It has previously been transformed in different musical ways: concert pieces—with and without text—a cantata, a few musicals, even a 1903 work for solo cornet and military band called *An Epical Parody in Six Cantos*. My desire was to keep as much of the Carroll text as possible and without alteration. Setting it as a choral work, with the chorus as narrator, seemed the best way to keep the text just as it is. The use of soloists and characters would require the use of a libretto and entail changing a good deal of the way the text is written and the way it flows.

When I'm impressed by a non-musical work, I often think, "What could I do with this musically?" I suspect I'm not the only composer who performs this mental exercise. The vast majority of the time, after musing it over, I realize that adding music will not benefit the work and most likely will detract from its effectiveness. The work is best left just as it is.

When music is added to a pre-existing work, it both expands it and narrows it. It expands it with the extra interpretive potential of the music, and at the same time it limits it by adding specifics of the composer's own interpretation of the work. A composer must accept that music will alter the original work. Sometimes, to effectively transform and yet still capture the nature of the original work in the new medium, large-scale changes must be made. As sung texts nearly always take a great deal more time to spool out than spoken texts, I felt that cuts in the *Snark* text were necessary; at the pace of my setting, using the full text would have put it on a timescale with the longest of the Mahler symphonies, which I think would have done greater harm to the playful nature of the original than any cuts may have done.

In 2002 when I became composer-in-residence for the Cantate Chamber Singers, I suggested setting the *Snark* to Gisèle Becker, Cantate's conductor and artistic director. A few months after the green light, I played Gisèle the wild ride that is the first fit. Her face became a bit ashen, and then she took a gulp and simply said "OK." I felt a bit guilty that Gisèle, a brilliant and bold conductor who presents a great deal of new music and is always up for a new challenge, may have been a bit shaken at her first introduction to the *Snark*. She took the reins, nonetheless, and led a terrified chorus and a perplexed pit band to a triumphant success—twice—at the 2004 premiere and again in 2008 for a performance which was later recorded for Naxos.

Q: Terrified chorus? Perplexed pit band? I love it. What specific kinds of responses did you get, in addition to Gisèle blanching a bit at the audacity of the opening? I especially love the music in the first fit, by the way.

A: I confess I'm playing with words, but the point is that I chose to create a sound world for the *Snark* that would be a musical analog to Carroll's texts. So I wanted at least a few things out of the ordinary and needed to have bodacious musical partners for the adventure. I'm happy to report that my friends of Cantate met the challenge boldly, and set out to achieve what I asked for. I can't help but think they must have had more than a bit of doubt that some sounds would work. The uvular trills in the chorus—a sort of tremolo, to use the voices as instruments—took a bit of discussion, then trial and error, to keep from sounding like motor boats, but they got it. I believe the chorus may have had less of a challenge with the unorthodox vocal production than when I asked them to blur words into unintelligible sounds, considering they are trained and constantly reminded specifically not to do that. As a composer I'm grateful to have found musicians willing to help me realize the sounds I heard in my inner ear.

Q: Any funny (or touching, or telling) stories from the rehearsals and performance?

A: When the Snarkestra was being hired, they were having difficulty finding an accordion player, at least one who could play more than just polkas. At one point they were preparing to contact a player in Colorado. I told them to hold off on that. I went to Andrew Simpson and said, "I admire the way you take a leap into the dark in everything you do in music and, in the end, always land in a wonderful new realm with great triumph." Touched, he said, "You came by just to tell me that?" and I said "Yes, OK, bye."

Before he could shut the door I stuck my foot in the jamb. "By the way, will you learn accordion to play in the Snarkestra? I can get you lessons and you have three weeks to prepare the part." Dumbstruck, he reminded me he doesn't play the accordion. I told him he was the only person I could trust with the part and knew he could do it. He went home and told his wife, Sarah Ferrario,

of my outlandish proposal and she responded, "This is Maurice! How can you say no to him?" So he did learn the accordion and played it beautifully at the premiere.

A week after the performance I got a call from a union contractor wanting to hire Andrew to play the tour of the musical *Oliver!* while it was at Wolf Trap. When Andrew received the call he said, "Look, I have to be honest, I've only been playing accordion a few weeks." There was a slight pause, then the voice on the phone said, "It's good money." So Andrew played in a union pit with less than a month's time clocked on the accordion.

Q: Could you tell about the decision to use those "reviled" instruments in that particular configuration? (Saylor writes for a Snarkestra, a collection of instruments including the accordion, that gives a whole new meaning to the concept of a "broken consort.") How did you make it work? Were there problems with balance and mixture that you had to work out when the band assembled—obviously this is not an ensemble that is covered in any orchestration text—or did it end up sounding pretty much as you heard it in your head?

A: It's true, a *Snarkestra* is not a standard ensemble, so there weren't any scores I could consult to see what has been successful in the past. When I first conceived of the *Snark* as a choral work, I first heard in my mind the sound of a solo harmonica floating over a humming chorus (Fit the Third, bar 198). Bit by bit, rather like Carroll writing the text, other combinations of sounds came to mind quite naturally: multiple piccolos; harmonica, accordion with electric violin; piccolo, orchestral bells and vibraphone; a choir of clarinets; using the chorus as instruments, and such.

I used five wind doublers playing on 17 instruments to add combinations of wind color not available in a standard ensemble, particularly not an ensemble as small as the *Snarkestra*, which is only thirteen players. Wind doubling, a tradition used in musical theater pits, is uncommon in the concert hall apart from simple piccolo/flute, oboe/English horn, etc. In the end, the gods of balance smiled on me. In rehearsal and performance the instruments were just as I heard them in my inner ear. I only recall one adjustment to the scoring: clarinet choir rather than sax choir under the final baritone solo.

Fit the Second: A Tale of Size and Scale

*Q: As you mentioned earlier, you had to make decisions on what to excise when you were setting a text of such epic proportions while needing to keep the piece down to 45 minutes in duration. You explain the why; a Mahler Third-length *Snark* (or longer) would be a daunting piece...*

A: I don't fear the daunting as much as I fear losing the sparkle of the original. I suppose someone could write a 90-minute *Snark*—or a setting of a Shakespeare Sonnet of that length for that matter—and they might even be wonderful works. Still, there is something to be said for keeping the narrative's sense of flow close to the proven successful length of the original. Most audio recordings of the *Snark* run about 30 minutes, with incidental music about 45 minutes.

Q: Okay, so I'm now curious about the how. What criteria did you use for making the choices regarding what to keep and what to skip over?

I set about half the Carroll text. Fits One through Four, plus Fit the Eighth, are essential for the narrative and had to be kept even if trimmed. The bits that were excised were often the lines that didn't speak to me musically. I may be taken to task by Carroll enthusiasts, but I see Fits Five through Seven as diversions. (Boris Karloff cut Fit the Sixth from his recording.) I wanted to keep at least a sampling of the diversions, and the "Beaver's Lesson" I found the most inspiring. One reviewer commented that I made nonsense (yay!) of this fit, since I removed the Butcher's lesson to the Beaver. For the sake of musical form, and so as not to dally too much on the way to the conclusion of the work, in my setting the Beaver gets an object lesson rather than an instructional lesson.

Such changes can get one into an adaptational quagmire: what to do when descriptions from the original no longer fit? Should I have changed the title to "The Beaver's Tale" or some such thing? I knew I couldn't set all eight fits, but the thought of the subtitle *An Agony in Six Fits* sounds flat-footed. This is partly the reason for my adding the two "Snarkestral outbursts"—to give a representational nod to that which is otherwise missing.

Q: I'm not sure I know what you mean by "diversions" regarding Fits Five through Seven.

A: I merely meant they are not part of the main narrative which involves the Baker and the

Boojum. I love the Barrister's dream, but for my setting I chose to focus on the Baker, both for artistic reasons and because of the nature of the commission.

I was asked to supply a major choral work: under an hour. When writing a work, a composer must consider the ensemble, the audience, and the guidelines set by the commission. If someone requests a bowsprit they don't want to be handed a rudder; better yet, if one is commissioned to write a Snark it is best not to hand them a Boojum. If I didn't feel the Snark text could be effectively trimmed, I would not have suggested the work.

Fit the Third: Charles Dodgson's Nonsense

Q: While I certainly understand the practical realities, I must say, that I enjoy the Butcher's wonderfully nonsensical proof, which really must be a parody of such things by the mathematician and logician Charles Dodgson (Lewis Carroll's real name.). And I love the delicious satire of the Barrister's dream, and the knowing jabs at Biblical logic—the three-fold repetition, for instance—coming from the ambiguously Anglo-Catholic parson Charles Dodgson. How can this be pure nonsense? Or is that what you mean by diversions?

A: I see your point about the parodies: how can something be a parody if it is pure nonsense? Well, it is nonsense but not pure nonsense. If it were baby babble, it wouldn't hold our attention for long. With Carroll, the English is impeccable—and beautiful—but the words seem more to be the methods of a dreaming mind, filing away unrelated items next to each other.

Q: So you accept Carroll's claim that he only meant nonsense, not that he was being coy so as not to have to explain it?

A: I do believe he meant nothing but nonsense, but I concede that the human mind seeks to create order and meaning, even if the creator is not conscious of it. From my experience, a good deal of art is created in the subconscious, if that's what is really at work here. Some artists' minds work that way. I know mine does. When I reach a compositional problem, I like to nap or sleep on it and often wake with a solution. Other times, during the writing or sometimes after, I will find some connection I was not aware of. I find it a great joy when someone else will point out one of these little revelations.

Fit the Fourth: Smiles of Harry and Charley

Q: I would also like to explore your silent movie scoring. The Snark Ensemble actually predates the Snarkestra, does it not? Was that part of the inspiration for the extraordinary pit band?

A: The Snark Ensemble was a spin-off of the Snarkestra. After *The Hunting of the Snark* premiered in 2004, I found I still had a great deal more interest in writing for odd combinations of instruments. I have a great passion for cinema, particularly silent films and those from the dawn of sound. I had long wanted to try my hand at writing silent film scores but, with no experience, not surprisingly, no company releasing silent films called me.

It occurred to me that a mini-Snarkestra would lend itself well to silent film scores, allowing a different sound world for each film. So in 2005, the Snark Ensemble made a quiet but encouraging debut. The Snark Ensemble has allowed me to combine the two passions, providing me adventure and great satisfaction.

The back story: In 1997, Andrew Earle Simpson came as a professor of theory and composition to The Catholic University of America where I have been contentedly serving as an information wrangler of music for over 30 years now. He and I quickly became friends and nearly from the start of this friendship I began showing him silent films, enticing him into a venture where we would create and perform new scores for these films. Andrew is a wildly talented composer and performer/improviser. I was never much of a performer, so my original notion was that he would play the scores on piano and I, knowing the films well, would add the sound effects. Andrew, like many classically trained musicians, had a dim view of film scores, so it took a while to convince him that this project was a bold adventure, not madcap. Well, perhaps it has been that, too. It was my idea of the Snark Ensemble, and that I tricked him into learning accordion for the premiere of *The Hunting of the Snark*, that finally convinced him to take a leap into the dark: accompanying silent films.

As a side note, while playing in the Snarkestra, Andrew wowed the folks of Cantate with his newly learned accordion skills. Still, it was at the after-performance party, when Andrew improvised a quodlibet of *Hunting of the Snark* tunes over the famous ground from *Dido and Aeneas*—the com-

panion piece at the premiere—that Gisèle decided Andrew would be the next composer-in-residence. That began a string of alternating residencies—two each—producing four large choral works including Andrew's *Crown of Stars*, also recently recorded by Cantate and released on the Albany label.

Back to the back story: My concept for the Snark Ensemble was to form a bodacious trio of composer/performers who would share the task of writing the scores and, to make the project financially viable, would perform the scores ourselves. Andrew would be on keyboards including accordion, Phil Carluzzo—at the time a student at CUA—on frets and percussion, and myself on woodwinds, which I needed to learn for this project. I had dabbled in a little oboe and clarinet, but for this project I would need to amass a wide array of instruments: over two dozen to date. After some performances, I realized that the lone wind player was bound to be heard as the lead instrument, and I didn't have the chops for that. I posed the idea of having guest artists for greater versatility and better sound. I suggested my friend the classical/jazz clarinetist Ben Redwine, who became the guest artist on nearly all of our scores. I was happy to take on the role of reed two, focusing on the lower and slower instruments such as the contra-clarinets. I gathered my hoard by buying neglected instruments on eBay which I took to instrument technician Dale Barton. As it turned out, Dale could play most woodwinds, accordion, frets, and just about anything else handed to him. He became our next regular guest artist. Early on we were hired by AllDay Entertainment to provide music for two 4-DVD sets, *Lost and Found: The Harry Langdon Collection* and *Becoming Charley Chase*.

Q: I should tell you that I found the online recording of the interview that you did on the radio regarding a 2008 Harry Langdon festival. I enjoyed it a lot, especially the live performances (thekojonnamdishow.org/shows/2008-02-07/silent-movies-their-music). I also purchased the AllDay Entertainment sets and have viewed some of the films that the Snark Ensemble scored.

A: The company does excellent work. I think you will like the collections. If I may make a viewing suggestion, for either set, start on disc 2. The sets are in chronological order and the earlier films are enjoyed more once you see the mature work of the artist. Plus, we do light scores for the earlier films. The Snarks provided nearly all the scores for the Langdon set; we were given a year. But the Chase set had only a six-month lead time, so we took on only part of the set. The Chase was released just as the economy crashed a few years ago, so the company didn't print the beautiful booklet that was prepared. The Snark Ensemble paid to have the booklet printed for our copies. There's a PDF at alldayentertainment.com/BCCbooklet.pdf. The booklet to each set has a lot of great info. The Langdon booklet even lists the composer for each score and the instruments played. There is also a nicely done documentary in the Chase set, *The Sounds of Silents*, about our process. It is nice to cover this work in the interview since the CD includes three of our scores and most reviewers have only mentioned them in passing.

Q: The pieces on the CD are actually the film scores, aren't they, rather than excerpts of the scores?

A: We create our film scores so they can stand as concert pieces. We feel in this way the structure and flow of the music can assist the pacing of the films, which, due to a great deal of improvisation particularly in the early shorts, is often freewheeling. Most of our live performances accompany films, though we have played scores as concert pieces as well.

Our sessions for Naxos were the first time we recorded our film scores as independent pieces. Here we performed the scores without the straight-jacketing confines of the click track that is used to keep the music in sync with the film. This allowed us a great deal more room for interpretation. No changes were made to the scores.

Q: So, what is the Snark Ensemble collective like? How do you decide who writes for which film, for instance.

We Snarks are a band of close-knit friends, so working together is a great joy. The sad thing is that it's not uncommon for us to blow off the second half of a rehearsal to drink and shoot the breeze.

When it's time to divvy up films in a project, we used to set aside a day to watch the films to see which appeals to each of us or which we think might be good for someone else. That never worked as, after a day of unabashed merriment, we soon found that the day was done but the work was not. Now we watch the films on our own time, taking notes. We then meet for an evening of

dinner and drinks and divvy up the films in the last 10 minutes.

You can see a fair representation of this process in that documentary in the Charley Chase set. David Kalat of AllDay Entertainment had given us a video camera to capture our work process. The fact that we would never remember to take the thing out of its case until we were half lit perhaps adds a bit of humor to the proceedings.

Q: I got a chance to watch a disc-full of the Charley Chase, which are delightful, as are the contributions by the Snark Ensemble and Andrew Simpson solo. Do the composers and artists of the non-Snark/Simpson scores have any connection to you guys?

A: One of the other artists in the set is Ben Redwine, who is the main clarinetist in the Snark Ensemble and who heads up a trio called Redwine Jazz. The scores that they play in the Langdon set were written by Snark composers, save one. On the Chase set, Ben and his trio perform Ben's compositions. Ben was not a composer, but started writing scores out of necessity for these sets, because we were no longer able to take the time to write them for him. His only score on the Langdon set was his first. I convinced him to give composition a try, as no one else had time to write the score. His wife was out of town, so I told him to come stay the weekend with me, during which time I would show him how to compose, and he would teach me how to play clarinet more artfully. Sadly, all the time was spent working with his composition, so I was on my own for the clarinet.

It is not uncommon for a Snark member to learn a new instrument just before a recording session. I often have grand plans to really take the time to learn, playing a little every day for a few months leading up to the session. As it often turns out, I'm too busy writing scores and never have a chance to obtain or learn the instrument until a few days before we record. Once, I let it slip until 10 p.m. the night before. With dread, I got out the instrument and found I couldn't get a note out of it. Rather than staying up late to cram, I thought a good night's sleep would do me more good. I slept well and went to the session never having played the instrument. I learned each passage by rote before each take and somehow it worked out at least well enough that I can no longer recall which score this happened on. So my playing couldn't have been that bad...

Ben Model is the house accompanist for MoMA, one of the best in the business, and a friend. There are a few scores provided by an ensemble called the West End Jazz Band. I didn't know their work before this release.

Fit the Fifth: The Vanishing, Too

This Naxos release is Maurice Saylor's first commercial CD release, but *Snark* is not his first work by any means. His website MauriceSaylor.net lists dozens of compositions in a variety of genres, and has links to sound files for many of these and for a number of film scores. There are some wonderful pieces to discover; a favorite, his lovely Second String Quartet, is but one of many works that deserve greater currency. There are also links to a site that offers downloads of the scores for a number of works, including *Snark*. Before we ended the interview, I wanted to find out what else he had waiting in the wings.

Q: I do want to know if there are any more clever and/or unusual texts that you have committed to memory that may find their way into a future composition.

A: I have not committed to memory anything more than bits and pieces from my upcoming text-based projects, but I am excited by them all the same. I am enamored by the playful poems of Hilaire Belloc's *Cautionary Tales for Children* and the moral lessons they provide children—usually through a child's terrible demise—such as “Henry King, *Who chewed bits of String, and was early cut off in Dreadful Agonies.*” *Songs of Intolerance* is a wildly different project, gathering a wide array of rantings from obscure sources. One text from the early 20th century is a virulent tirade from one Christian denomination against another. After spewing 100-plus words such as “It is the pollution and rottenness of the decay of ages. It is the cesspool, the recipient, the reservoir of lust, of vile thought and communication, adultery; the birthplace of sexual criminality with men's wives and young girls...”—the author adds the final kicker, “... I speak in love.” Interestingly, the text—hateful as it is—is colorful and tickles the ear and imagination. This is a trick used by those spouting derision and hate. In this case, the text—and the music it stirs in me—is truly terrifying. I am fear-

ful to write the set but feel I must because, if done right, it will be remarkable and unlike much of anything else. Call me foolish, but the challenge calls me.

I also plan a set of humorous songs on texts from personal ads. Perhaps here you might see a pattern in my taste for O'Henry-style texts. In one ad, a string of mixed egotistical and undesirable attributes are offered (playful, creative, sensitive, gorgeous, genius WM, suffering mid-life crisis; can't afford food and mortgage), then, just in case there was still one woman in the world thinking, "I should answer this ad," the author kills any hope of that by signing off with: "P.S.—herpes."

Lastly—15 years in the planning—an opera called *The Alleviations of Monogamy* based on George Bernard Shaw's 1912 one-act play *Overruled*. It's difficult to describe this work succinctly, but I will try. It's a gender-blind, voice-interchangeable, alternative-passage-laden, role-swapping-self-double-billed, comic opera in one act which constitutes an unrelenting examination of relationships and their foibles. Would you like to come see it?

Epilogue

Indeed I would come to see it; Maurice Saylor does not trade in the ordinary. But that is obvious from the first few minutes of *The Hunting of the Snark*, or from the clever scores to delightful but mostly forgotten silent films that he has helped bring back to life, or from his Web bio where he describes his day job as "information wrangling."

Speaking of which, I asked about that: "My official title is Music Librarian, but I feel that the word *librarian* and all its pejorative connotations don't suit me and my life of adventure, rabble-rousing, and romance."

Saylor did not choose to define *adventure*, *rabble-rousing*, or *romance*, but enough said.

SAYLOR *The Hunting of the Snark*.¹ *Publicity Pays*.² **CARLUZZO** *Stolen Goods*.² **A. SIMPSON** *Too Many Mammals*.² • ¹Cantate C Singers; ¹Holton-Arms Lower School Ch; ¹Snark Pit-Band; ²Snark Ens • NAXOS 8.572685 (73:59)

Maurice Saylor is a Washington, D.C.,-based composer and performer best known for tuneful and quirky scores. His music blurs the boundaries of style and genre and is often played by unusual combinations of instruments. Despite its light and amusing aura, the eight-part *The Hunting of the Snark*, Maurice Saylor's musical version of Lewis Carroll's turn of the century nonsense poem, is an important work. Saylor's music is intellectually engaging despite its thoroughly individual language, and his "Snarkestra" plays with gusto, letting all the edgy sounds of its unexpected combination of instruments collide in the hunt for the unknown. The music is at least as much fun to hear as Carroll's wonderful poem. *The Snark* is a fascinating piece for chorus, but there are times when the orchestra seems to overshadow the words. The text is not given in the booklet that accompanies the disc, but it can be found at: etext.virginia.edu/toc/modeng/public/CarSnar.html. The Cantate Chamber Singers is known to be one of the finest choral ensembles in our nation's capital. This group, together with the children's chorus from the Holton-Arms Lower School, romps through the work with great enthusiasm and a large helping of musicality.

The final three works on this disc: *Stolen Goods* by Phil Carluzzo, *Publicity Pays* by Saylor, and *Too Many Mammals* by Earle Simpson, are grouped together as New Music for Silent Film Comedies, and are played by the Snark Ensemble, a smaller group. In it, Saylor plays clarinets, saxophones, melodica, and glockenspiel. Phil Carluzzo plays percussion and frets while Earle Simpson plays keyboard instruments. *Stolen Goods* is an amusing jazz piece that recalls the twenties, prohibition and the fancy ladies that accompanied mobsters on their evening rounds. *Publicity Pays* starts off in a classical manner, but its theme soon becomes a folk dance and eventually becomes the perfect background for musical horse play. After a bit of suspense, its finale is a cousin to *Pop Goes the Weasel*. I hope that someone will eventually choreograph *Too Many Mammals*. It's a wildly rhythmic jazz piece that would be fabulous on stage. So many dance companies have three girls for every boy, it wouldn't be at all hard to cast. The clear, warm sound on this disc makes you feel that you are listening to these performers in an intimate hall. Both singers and instrumentalists seem to have had a wonderful time making this recording and I enjoyed listening to it. I expect my readers will love it too. **Maria Nockin**