

Taylor A. Greer is an associate professor in music theory and analysis. Born in Lincoln, Nebraska, he earned a BA in music and philosophy as well as a Ph.D. in music theory, all from Yale University. His teaching interests include harmony, counterpoint, turn-of-the-century French art song, early modernism, music semiotics, exoticism, American folk music, and Schenkerian theory.

His recent research is encapsulated in a book entitled *The Pastoral in Charles Griffes's Music: Aesthetic of Ambivalence* to be published by Indiana University Press in May 2024. Charles Griffes was a visionary American composer at the turn of the twentieth century whose music synthesized many sources of inspiration including French sensuality, British Aestheticism, non-Western folk music drawn from China, Java, and the Arab peninsula as well as a wide range of poets including Oscar Wilde, William Sharp, and Walt Whitman. His book argues that Griffes revived and reinvented the eighteenth-century pastoral tradition, and that a new interpretive framework, called the ambivalent pastoral, is needed to calibrate his stylistic eclecticism.

Griffes's pastorals also reflect the tensions in his personal life: his perpetual motion between urban parade and rural retreat as well as the challenges faced by a gay man living in a heterosexual world. Overall, Griffes expanded the pastoral's emotional spectrum—from the bright colors of serenity to the darker hues of grief, spiritual longing, and irony. This study integrates Greer's interests in analysis, music semiotics, aesthetics, and the rich historical cross currents in late-Victorian and fin-de-siècle French culture.

Greer's first book was devoted to the thought of Charles L. Seeger, the twentieth-century American composer, theorist, and philosopher, for which he was awarded a fellowship from the American Council of Learned Societies in 1991. In *A Question of Balance: Charles Seeger's Philosophy of Music* (University of California Press, 1998), Greer argues that Seeger's aesthetic philosophy served as the seed from which his writings in music compositional theory, criticism, and musicology all grew. Greer contributed an essay on the mutual influence between Seeger and his wife Ruth Crawford entitled "Philosophical Counterpoint: A Comparison of Seeger's Composition Treatise and Crawford's Folksong Appendix" for the collection *Ruth Crawford Seeger's Worlds* (University of Rochester Press, 2007). In addition, he has published essays and reviews in *Journal of Music Theory*, *Theory and Practice*, and *In Theory Only*, and has delivered papers at the Society for Music Theory, the American Musicological Society, the Society for American Music, the Semiotic Society of America, and the Institute for Musical Studies, University of London.

Greer has also developed an interest in popular music traditions, as shown by a paper entitled "Joni Mitchell's Ambivalent Laments," which he delivered at a regional music theory conference at Yale University in April 2023. He is also interested in the pedagogy of aural skills and co-authored *Sight Singing Complete*, 8th edition (2014).

Finally, in 2007, he received the Faculty Award for Outstanding Teaching from the College of Arts and Architecture.

### Selected Publications

Essay entitled "A Tale of Two Cadences: Charles Griffes's Prelude to Musical Irony" in *The American Journal of Semiotics* 39: 1-4 (Fall, 2023): 47-70.

Essay entitled "Charles Griffes's Xanadu: A Musical Garden of Opposites" in *The Routledge Handbook of Signification*, ed. Esti Sheinberg and William Dougherty, 154-63. Abingdon, UK: Routledge Press, 2020.

Essay entitled "The Unfolding Tale of Charles Griffes's 'White Peacock'" published in *A Music Theoretical Matrix: Essays in Honor of Allen Forte, (Part II)*, ed. David Carson Berry, *Gamut*, 3/1 (2010): 167-203.