tragedy staged as a play within the play. The 1791 edition included the Russian translation of this text (entitled *Ob"yasneniye* (Explanation); at 4–8 in the present volume), which was signed by Nikolay L'vov. This differs from the French original by the addition of learned bibliographic references, probably ascribable to the translator, who was also the author of the engravings that decorated the first edition (for instance, Plate 2 in this volume). L'vov was an expert in ancient Greek culture, and in the Introduction to his *Sobraniye russkikh pesen* (Collection of Russian Folk Songs) he suggested that Russian popular music derived from ancient Greek music. In establishing a philological link between the Russian Empire and its (assumed) Greek ancestor, Catherine's mission to make Russia the heir to Byzantine tradition could be legitimized. By blending Russian and Greek elements, the music that resulted from this collaboration epitomized this consciously erected affinity, perfectly fitting Catherine's political plans.

The importance of this work for Russian culture fully justifies the publication of this critical edition. In practical terms, the score is well laid out and easy to read, and it is rigorous on a philological level. As declared in the 'Editorial Methods' section (353–354), Brover-Lubovsky aimed to create a usable document that follows modern practice in the handling of accidentals and other notational aspects, and which corrects numerous errors and inconsistencies in the source (354). If shortcomings must be reported, I will say that I would have wished for the literary text to be equally legible, and its editing more consistent with the editorial approach to the music. The choice of the GOST system of transliteration is not the best for enabling easy reading (from the perspective of an Italian native), and the system is so complex as to sometimes create some inconsistencies in the editor's own writing (for instance, 'Xrapovitskij' versus 'Xrapoviczkij' at xv; 'V universitetskoi tipographij' versus 'V universitetskoj tipografii' at xvi). While this is a minor factor in a work for which editing and proofreading must have been challenging, more jarring is, perhaps, Brover-Lubovsky's decision to retain the archaic spellings in the literary texts: these could have been modernized even while preserving the sounds produced by the original singers (for instance, 'e' vs 'ѣ'), as it is currently usual in critical editions of coeval authors (for instance, Nikolay M. Karamzin, *Istoriya gosudarstva rossiyskogo* (History of the Russian State), ed. Vitaly Afiani, Viktor Zhivov and Vladimir Kozlov (Moscow: Nauka, 1989)). Finally, it is a bit distressing to see some contributions excluded from the bibliographical references (for instance, Domenico Cimarosa, *Coro dei guerrieri*, ed. Carmine Colangeli and Francesco Quattrocchi (Bologna: Bongiovanni 2009)), although this is surely to be ascribed to these works' limited availability.

Nevertheless, Brover-Lubovsky and A-R Editions are to be congratulated for this very welcome addition to the series Recent Researches in the Music of the Classical Era. The work's publication may help to remedy its long-standing absence from the stage. But more to the point, this new edition of a crucial witness to Russian culture provides improved access to Russian primary sources of this period, documents whose dissemination still lags far behind that of Western European sources.

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JOHN SHEELES (1695–1765), ED. MICHAEL TALBOT
SUITE OF LESSONS FOR THE HARPSICHORD OR SPINET, BOOK 1 (1724)
SUITE OF LESSONS FOR THE HARPSICHORD OR SPINET, BOOK 2 (c1730)
Launton, UK: Edition HH, 2018
pp. xiv + 36 / xvi + 40, ISBN 978 1 910 35068 6 / 978 1 910 35969 3

John Sheeles, generally little known, is a composer about whom there has been some buzz in early-keyboard circles lately. Biographical research by Andrew Pink and Michael Talbot has recently been published in the

pages of *Early Music Performer* (issue nos 30, 42 and 43). Fernando de Luca has recorded all of Sheeles's harpsichord music; digital albums are available through the major online music services. Talbot's editions of these works continue the flurry of interest. Although much of Sheeles's music, including both keyboard books, is freely available online in facsimiles via IMSLP, these editions earn their keep.

The Introductions, printed in English and German, draw on and summarize Talbot's biographical articles in *Early Music Performer* ('More on the Life of and Music of John Sheeles (1695–1765) Part 1: Origins and Early Years', *Early Music Performer* 42 (2018), 3–10; 'Part 2: Later Years and Legacy', *Early Music Performer* 43 (2018), 3–9). Modern lexica lack articles on Sheeles and mention him only as the composer of a fugue once attributed to Handel (HWV Anh. B558, which is the fast section of the overture in the fourth suite of Book 2) – a misattribution that itself could be taken as a sign of this composer's merit. Sheeles's obscurity may be due to the fact that he ceased publishing music in the last decades of his life, though he continued to teach music at a boarding school run by Ann Elizabeth Irwin, his wife. Likewise, it appears that Sheeles's music library was taken to Kolkata by his son Thomas, where it was dispersed in the late eighteenth century, and so escaped scholars' attention until recently (see Ian Woodfield, *Music of the Raj: A Social and Economic History of Music in Late Eighteenth-Century Anglo-Indian Society* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 33–36). By the mid-eighteenth century, Talbot informs us, Sheeles 'cultivate[d] a gentlemanly lifestyle' away from London's public music scene (v). Accordingly, Sir John Hawkins's history refers to Sheeles's connections to the London playhouses only in passing, and Charles Burney, despite having moved in the same social circles as Sheeles, mentioned him not at all in his history.

Yet, in addition to the two books of keyboard music, Sheeles was a prolific composer of songs, and contributed frequently to the six-volume anthology *The Musical Miscellany* (1729–1731) and other songbooks. He also wrote a hymn collection, *The Sky Lark* (London: William Smith, 1741), from which the hymn 'The Spacious Firmament on High' (styled variously as 'Addison's', 'London' or 'Kettering') is still commonly known. As a Fellow of the Royal Society, a Freemason and a man of means (thanks to his wife's career), Sheeles represents, both in his music and social connections, the cosmopolitan imperialism of eighteenth-century England.

Sheeles's keyboard music is a compelling stylistic blend, with dance movements in the post-Restoration tradition of Purcell and larger through-composed or binary movements drawing on newer Continental influences. Echoes of Handel and Corelli are fluent and effective, and there is deep pathos in Sheeles's Adagios, presumably reflecting the influence of Italian musicians and music. Sheeles has a special ear for texture, moving freely from full chords in both hands to two-part writing and every shade in between; yet the harmony remains full and convincing throughout the chiaroscuro changes – a real accomplishment when dropping down to two parts. Talbot also hears 'hints of Domenico Scarlatti, especially where the bass employs octave-doubling' (v), but nearer precedents can be found in the keyboard music of John Blow, William Croft and, of course, Handel.

Each of Sheeles's 'suites of lessons' is a fresh approach to one of two basic plans. The one is a series of formal dances, (Prelude–)Almand–Corant–Jig, expanded with lighter, theatrical dances or lively fugues in a Handelian manner. Several subtypes of 'Corant' are discernible, including the usual melodic type with a violinistic right hand and continuo-bass left hand, as well as a vigorous motivic type reminiscent of the polonaise. The jigs are mostly of the Italian type, with broken-chord textures and satisfying rich harmonies, while a few are a lighter English type leavened by Scotch snaps, or a more sophisticated type employing imitation or canon. Even in these 'short' dance forms Sheeles's phrasing is modular, and certain movements extend to some eighty bars.

The other basic plan resembles a sonata: (slow–)fast–slow–fast. In three of these sonata-type sets, a French overture comprises the first slow–fast pair of movements. The inclusion of overtures is an innovation perhaps borrowed from the suites of Charles Dieupart (*c*1667–*c*1740), whom Sheeles knew when he still worked in the London theatres; the overtures are an example of how Sheeles's music brings orchestral, theatrical splendour into the domestic realm. Talbot notes the interesting feature that the slow sections of overtures close in the tonic, and in this way are independent of the fugal sections they precede, a feature that may stem from the

fact that the overtures take two slots in the sonata plan (volume 2, 36). The last movement of several of these sonata-type sets is a 'Jigg' or 'Giga', showing the connection to Corelli's sonatas. The fugues, either as stand-alone movements or the second parts of overtures, are especially excellent pieces – *freistimmig*, using texture and register to evoke an orchestral sound, and with grand, adagio perorations; they show Sheeles's strength as a composer and keyboard player.

The engraving and layout is elegant and practical. The books are saddle-stitched and lie open on the music desk – a practical binding, if not the most durable. The music is printed clearly on off-white paper, and the page turns are mostly conveniently located. The excellent critical apparatuses (in volume 1, 31–36; in volume 2, 34–40), which include not only the details of the textual revisions but also insightful commentaries, reflect Talbot's careful and sympathetic study of the music. Talbot's discussion of Sheeles's particular use of two different symbols for the 'undershake' or mordent, which Talbot proposes must distinguish between a long ornament starting from the lower auxiliary note (the usual English undershake) and a short ornament from the main note (like a *pincé*), is persuasive, and illustrates again how Sheeles's language marries the old with the new.

The recovery of obscure music often leads too quickly to a call to reassess the importance of the (supposedly unjustly) unknown worthy. But the proof of any pudding is in the eating, and Sheeles's music proves a treat. It is a pleasure to report a fine edition of fine music. Talbot 'hope[s] that those who play and study these suites will warm to their attractive qualities and rescue them from their past neglect' (vi). Perhaps he could give us an edition of the three verse anthems he mentions in his Introduction (v), if they are of similarly high musical quality.

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RECORDINGS

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LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN (1770–1827)
THE LATE QUARTETS
Quatuor Mosaïques
Naive V5445, 2017; three discs, 188 minutes

The proverbial good that comes from waiting: roughly thirty years elapsed between the time Beethoven first envisioned setting Schiller's *An die Freude* and the first performance of the Ninth Symphony; the release of the late Beethoven string quartets by the Vienna-based Quatuor Mosaïques in autumn 2017 also came on the thirty-year anniversary of the group's inception. Not only does this recording represent a milestone in the quartet's own journey, their 'maturation' with Beethoven and with one another, as Andrea Bischof (second violin) describes it (liner notes, 22), but the set is of great historical moment for Beethoven, for music of the long eighteenth century and for the historically informed performance (HIP) or early-music movement. Before this release, an HIP collection of the Beethoven quartets remained piecemeal and incomplete: Op. 18 (Mosaïques and Turner); Op. 59 (Kuijken); Op. 74 (Eroica and Turner); Op. 95 (Eroica and Chiaroscuro); Op. 130 with Große Fuge finale (Edding); Op. 132 (Terpsychordes); Op. 135 (Eroica Quartet). Op. 127 and Op. 131 had remained unrecorded. This Mosaïques release is the first and only recording of the last five (with the original Große Fuge finale for Op. 130) in an HIP setup: instruments dating from 1700–1800, fitted with gut strings tuned at A = 432, and played with early nineteenth-century bows (recorded in their concert home, the Mozart-Saal, from 2014 to 2016).