

**The selling process of French books printed  
in the XVIIIth and sold at auctions throughout time**

Catalogue

# Introduction

This catalogue is the result of a study entitled "The selling process of French books printed in the XVIII and sold at auctions throughout time" as part of the completion of the master's programme Rare books and Digital Humanities.

This catalogue has been created to present a possible catalogue model, based on a comparative analysis of catalogues from different auctions around the world. The catalogue has also become a visualisation of the results obtained during the research process. If you would like to read the study you can visit the [website](#).

A catalogue devoted to books on musical subjects (sheet music, operas, comedies, songs) printed in France in the 18th century and sold at auctions in 2019-2020. The data was taken from the [Auction.fr](#) website, including lot descriptions. The catalogue is divided into 3 parts according to the date the books were printed. Thus you will find sections such as 1700-1740, 1741-1780 and 1781-1800. At the beginning of the catalogue you will also find some statistics about the analysis of the lots in the catalogue.

*Enjoy the reading!*

# Statistics on lots auctioned

The period considered was from 2019 to 2020. The lots under consideration and analysed included books on musical subjects printed in France in the 18th century. The statistics were made on the basis of the data prepared for import into the database. The data analysis included several aspects:

- identify sales uplifts based on the date the book was sold (before the pandemic and a time of lockdowns that prevented regular auctions and a period of getting used to online auctions);
- identify authors' sales statistics, and plot their birthplace and place of business, to what extent creators have moved from place to place;
- the main price parameters within the appraised value of the lot and the final price;
- geography and timing of book publishing;
- auctions and their geography.

Turning to the results of the statistics.

The first aspect is "identify sales uplifts" (cf. Figure 1).

## Sales uplifts based on the date of auctions



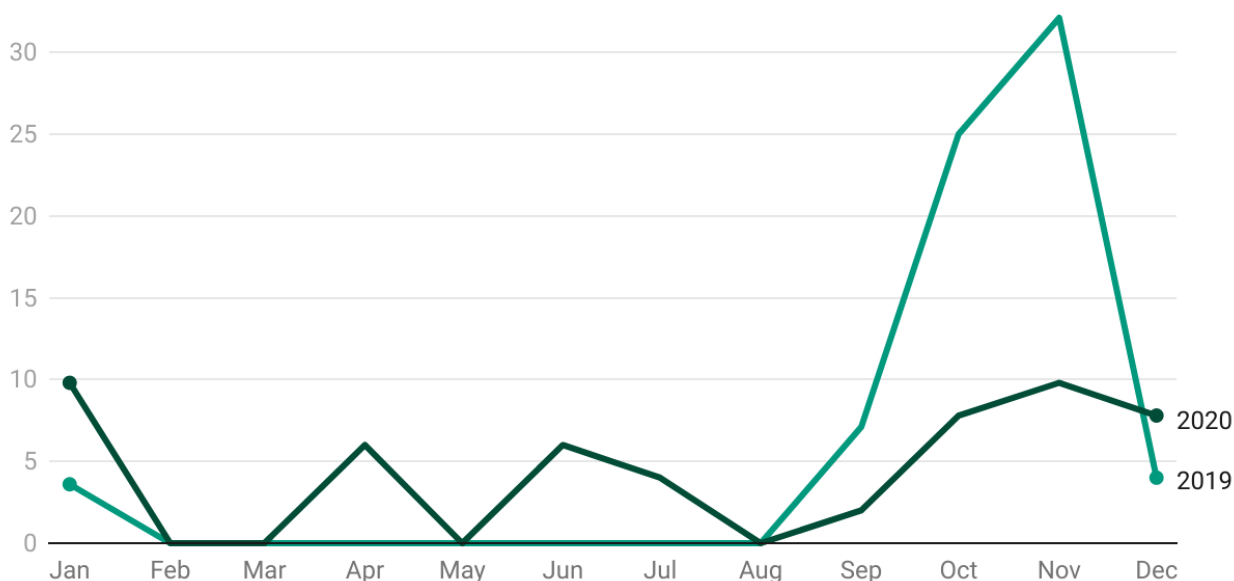
Created with Datawrapper

Figure 1: Books in the music category printed in France and presented at auctions in 2019-2020

The graph shows two lines that reflect two years - 2019 and 2020. The graph shows that in early 2019 there were no music-themed books. The reasons may be different, a lack of interest from buyers and therefore unprofitability, or a lack of interesting copies of the subject matter. Only in mid-August did the number of books being auctioned start to climb. From February 2020 to July, a gradual growth in the

presentation of lots can be seen until they reach a peak. August already shows a decline in demand, which is the same period when gradual easing was introduced as part of the fight against coronavirus, but in September we can see active growth again and a sharp decline by December 2020. Comparing the two graphs we can see activity in several similar months such as January and from August to December. However, it should be noted that the activity is not the same and is not equal. At this stage it can be noted that as such the pandemic has not had such an impact in terms of dynamics on the market, but in terms of quantity it is evident. It can be assumed that the online auctions allowed the distribution of sales in autumn 2020, given the experience of the first lockdown in March 2020. However, experts note that online auctions do not generate the same income as conventional auctions.

## Book sales at auctions in 2019-2020



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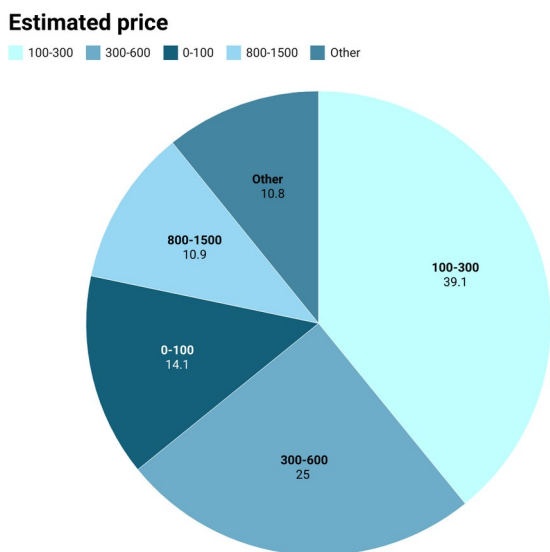
*Figure 2: Books in the music category printed in France and traded at auctions in 2019-2020*  
Book sales (cf. Figure 2).

In 2019, there were several important moments, namely the instant jump in sales in November and the lack of any activity from February to August. Auctioneers are consequently more active from September onwards, when the summer season ends and life takes on a weekday character. In 2020, we should note a fairly even development of sales, however, with a few sales spikes. The most significant uptick in sales was in November. It can be noted here that in winter and spring, people stayed at home due to the coronavirus measures introduced and spent more time online. In September 2020, life returned to normal. However, at the end of October, restrictions were imposed again and people actively went back online. But this time it was more conscious, as these were not the first measures that had been introduced, so it was more likely to have a positive effect on sales.

Regarding the two years, it can be noted that the increase in sales was recorded in September-December, but the number of books sold varies considerably. So, the theory can be deduced that the covid has affected the number of books sold and the lockdown has forced auctions to switch online and people to invest more time online.

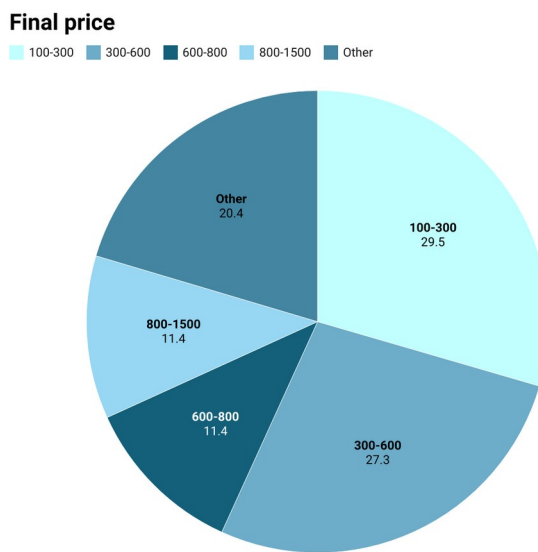
### The main price parameters within the appraised value of the lot and the final price.

As can be seen on the chart (cf. Figure 3), the most frequent prices were between 100 and 300 euros and between 300 and 600 euros. As we can notice, the prices are not that high. The smallest category in terms of number of lots was 5000+ euros, with not a single book registered within this framework.



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Figure 3: Appraised price of books that have been auctioned off



Created with Datawrapper

Figure 4: Graphs of the final prices of books sold at auctions

As part of the final price analysis (cf. Figure 4), it was found that the lowest category was 2500+ euros, while the category from 5000+ increased to 6.6%, indicating buyer interest. Some categories as a consequence increased and decreased. A similarity between the two pies should be noted - the two largest categories were also 100 to 300 euros and 300 to 600.

During the analysis, several of the most dramatic differences between the appraised value and the final value were observed, as reflected in the chart below (cf. Figure 5).

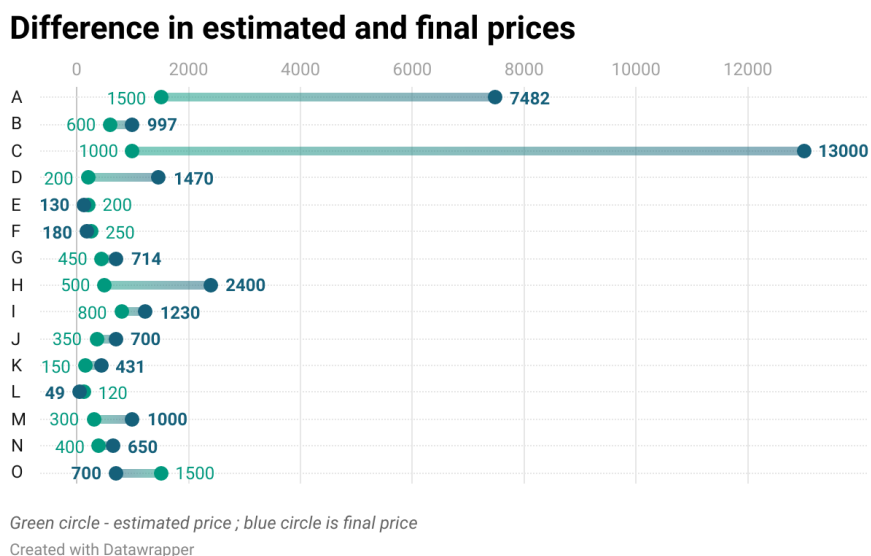


Figure 5: Reflection of price increases from estimated to final price

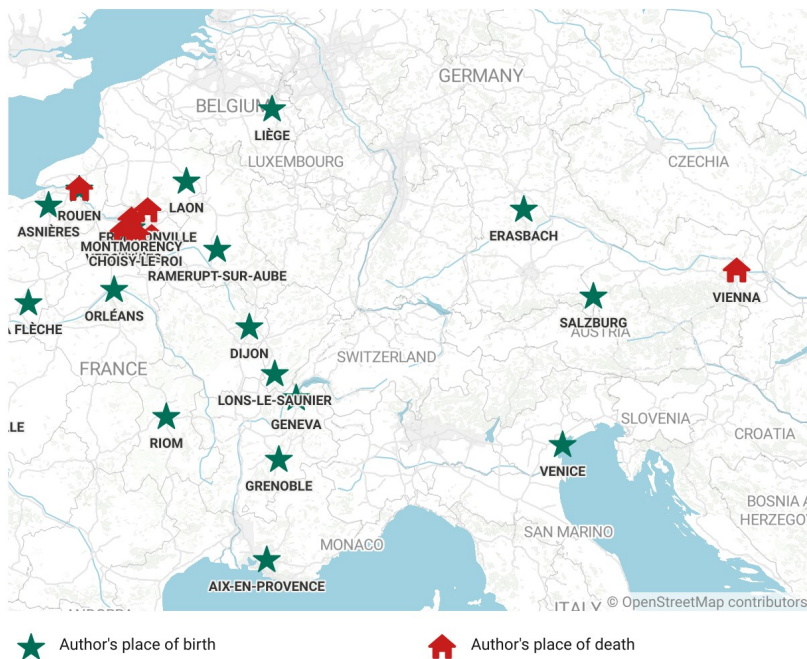
A variety of factors influence both the appraised value and the final value of the lot. In the context of book sales, the bibliographic description is important, which should be concise yet detailed, making it clear to the interested buyer what is special about the book and what value it represents as a physical object as well as a substantive one. Covid has undoubtedly made an impact on sales.

**Identify authors' sales statistics, and plot their birthplace and place of business, to what extent creators have moved from place to place.**

In the context of author data analysis, the place of birth and place of death were also analysed to determine the authors' movements along Europe during their period of activity (Figure 6).

**Map of the authors' birth and death places**

This map shows the birth and death places of the authors whose books were analysed in the study.



Created with Datawrapper

*Figure 6: Interactive map of birth and death places of authors*

The analysis noted that all authors aspire to move to a big city, such as Paris or Vienna. But there were authors who were born in Paris, but moved to a smaller city, or were born in a small city, but close to a big city. So statistically, nine authors were born in Paris and 21 died. This suggests that Paris was the centre of literature and authors needed to live there to develop their careers. But an interesting case was found concerning the author Jean de Serré de Rieux, who was born in Saint-Malo and moved to Versailles. The question is why the authors moved and the possible reasons for this. To achieve this, it was decided to research the biographies of the authors who were moving around. Several reasons for relocation have been highlighted in this way:

- persecution and personal reasons;
- study;
- duty/job;
- revolutionary movement.

In most cases, the authors moved to Paris, as it was a cultural centre as well as more opportunities for career development. For example, serve with royal families. It is also worth noting that many authors were involved in politics and science in addition to music and literature. This also influenced their location.

## Geography and timing of book publishing.

As part of the analysis I used a map that was created automatically from the database data on the Heurist platform (cf. Figure 7). From the overall statistics, all books were printed in three cities: Paris, Lyon and Villefranche. Therefore, it can be said that Paris was the largest printing centre. To confirm this point, it was decided to study the main printing centres of France in the 18th century.

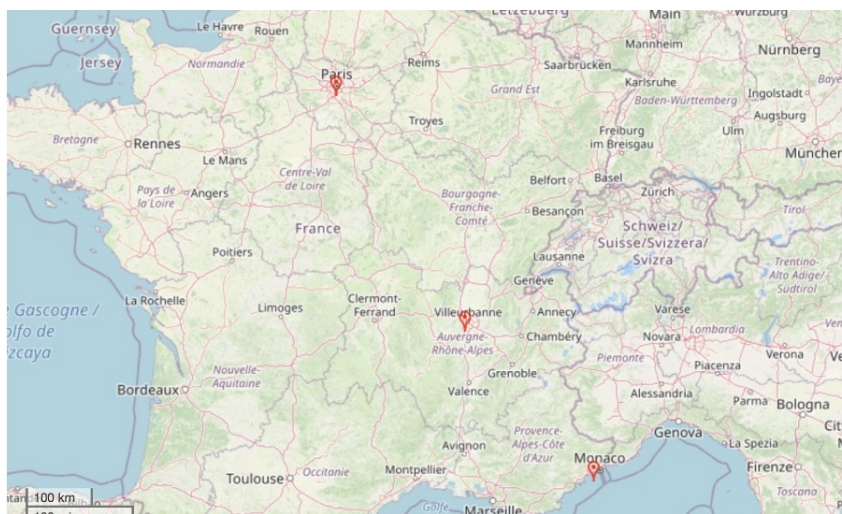


Figure 7: Map of book printing places

It is worth noting, therefore, that the historical framework reflects the fact that music literature was printed under the privilege and was also fairly monopolised. It is also noted that many of the notes were handwritten. This may have been due to the equipment on which the editions were printed. Also the history of book printing in the 18th century shows that books were printed mainly in a few major cities, and distributed throughout France at the expense of booksellers. This explains the reason why most of the lots represented were printed in Paris.

**1700-1740**



[SERRÉ DE RIEUX (Jean)] & Jean-Baptiste MORIN.

[La chasse du cerf, divertissement chanté devant Sa Majesté à Fontainebleau le 25me d'août 1708](#)

1709, Paris

Estimated price: 800-1000 €

Final price: 13000 €

[SERRÉ DE RIEUX (Jean)] & Jean-Baptiste MORIN.

La chasse du cerf, divertissement chanté devant Sa Majesté à Fontainebleau le 25me d'août 1708... Paris, Christophe Ballard, 1709.

In-8 oblong, 24,5 x 19 cm, 2 ff., 180 + 8 pp., veau brun moucheté, armes dorées sur le premier plat, phylactère doré sur le second plat, dos à nerfs orné de motifs dorés (reliure de l'époque).

Unique édition rare dédiée à la princesse de Conti. Le texte de Serré de Rieux est mis en musique par Morin, ordinaire de la musique du duc d'Orléans.

Les feuillets contenant le texte ont été reliés à la fin et non pas avant la musique comme prévu.

Bon exemplaire aux armes et portant le nom de Joseph Bonnier, baron de la Mosson (OHR 687, nos 1 & 2, cet exemplaire).

Étiquette de la librairie Nourry à Paris. Mors, coupes et coins frottés. Rousseurs.

Thiébaud 378-379 (« Ouvrage fort rare »).

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[Old books 17th-19th century]

[Les Dons des Enfants de Latone](#)

1734, Paris

Estimated price: 150-300 €

Final price: 150 €

La Musique et La Chasse du Cerf, Poèmes dédiés au Roy. [Jean de Serre de Rieux]. Prault, Desaint (et) Guerin, 1734. 8vo, leather, title on spine in red and gilt stamping, marbled endpapers, half title, illus. frontispiece by Le Bas, title with vignette, XII,330 pp., 14,4,32 numbered pages with music scores and 6 full-page engravings (incl. frontispiece) by Le Bas after Oudry accompanying the poem Diane. Pages 297-316 with the play Nouvelle Chasse du Cerf are not bound along here.

In original binding. First and only edition of this complex work which among other things contributed greatly to the development of opera in France in the 18th century. It also contains fanfares by the Marquis de Dampierre. Despite the missing chapter on "new deer hunting", an interesting and important work.

**1741-1780**

[ARMES]

2 ouvrages in-8° dans des reliures plein maroquin rouge du XVIIIe s. aux armes. 1) Mercure de France , dédié au roi

1748, Paris

Estimated price: 400-600 CHF

Final price: 997 CHF

[ARMES]. 2 ouvrages in-8° dans des reliures plein maroquin rouge du XVIIIe s. aux armes. 1) Mercure de France , dédié au roi. Janvier 1748. Paris, Vezve Pissot, 1748. In-12, dos à nerfs orné et doré de fleurs de Lys, plats frappés d'armes dorées et triple filet doré en encadrement, roulette dorée aux coupes et int., gardes de papier dominoté étoilé doré. 214 pp. [1] f. 1 planche dépliant de musique. Exemplaire aux armes de la Reine Marie Leczinska épouse de Louis XV. Très bon état2) DUHAMEL DU MONCEAU (Henri-Louis).

Supplément au traité de la conservation des grains. Paris, H.L. Guerin & L.F. Delatour, 1765. In-8°, dos orné et doré, plats frappés aux armes dorées, triple filet en encadrement, roulette int., tr. dorées. XXXI, [1] p., 160 pp., 164 pp. (numérotées 144).

4 planches dépliantes. Exemplaire aux armes du Duc de Choiseul. Ex-libris de la "Bibliothèque de Madame de la Borde" et du viconte E. L'Enor, et les tampons de M. Grandirat et [Z]huzoros. Très bel ensemble dans des reliures de qualité

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[ALEMBERT, D']

Éléments de musique, théorique et pratique, suivant les [...]

1752, Paris

Estimated price: 180-250 €

(Music) - [ALEMBERT, D'] Éléments de musique, théorique et pratique, suivant les principes de M. Rameau. Paris, David l'ainé, Le Breton, Durand, 1752 In-8° : xvi-171-[1] pp.; 10 h.-t. (rouss. et piq. passim, qq's taches aux pl.). Demi-veau à coins mod., dos à nerfs, pièce de titre de cuir brun, tr. rouges de l'ép., gardes de la rel. d'origine cons. Édition originale de cet ouvr. dans lequel D'Alembert entreprend de populariser les théories musicales de Jean-Philippe Rameau. Ill. (complet) de 10 planches dépl. de musique gravée. Les pl. 6-10 transcrivent un air tiré de l'"Armide" de Lully. Approbation signée par Condillac. Réf. Conlon 52:364. - Cioranescu 7501. - Fétis I, p. 64. Prov. J. de Raoulx (mention ms. au titre et longues notes techniques de sa main sur la garde blanche et le faux-titre, ainsi que dans les marges de plusieurs ff., fin XVIIIe s.).

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MILANDRE.

L'Année musicale. Ouvrage périodique mêlé des Parodies des [...]

1752, Paris

Estimated price: 60-80 €

Musique - MILANDRE. L'Année musicale. Ouvrage périodique mêlé des Parodies des plus jolis airs italiens. Paris, chez l'auteur, Duchesne et aux adresses ordinaires, 1755.

In-8 veau ép., dos lisse orné. Feuillet de titre gravé avec jolie vignette de titre au bouquet gravée sur bois en

couleurs. 196 (airs notés, partitions et paroles), (4) (index) pp. entièrement gravées.

Reliure très usagée, nombreux frottés, bords des plats rongés. Lég. mouillures marginales sinon bon état intérieur.

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[ALEMBERT, D']

Éléments de musique, théorique et pratique, suivant les principes de M. Rameau

1752, Paris

Estimated price: 180-250 €

(Music) - [ALEMBERT, D'] Éléments de musique, théorique et pratique, suivant les principes de M. Rameau. Paris, David l'aîné, Le Breton, Durand, 1752 In-8° : xvi-171-[1] pp.; 10 h.-t. (rouss. et piq. passim, qq. taches aux pl.).

Demi-veau à coins mod., dos à nerfs, pièce de titre de cuir brun, tr. rouges de l'ép., gardes de la rel. d'origine cons. Édition originale de cet ouvr. dans lequel D'Alembert entreprend de populariser les théories musicales de Jean-Philippe Rameau. Ill. (complet) de 10 planches dépl. de musique gravée. Les pl. 6-10 transcrivent un air tiré de l'"Armide" de Lully. Approbation signée par Condillac.

Réf. Conlon 52:364. - Cioranescu 7501. - Fétis I, p. 64. Prov. J. de Raoulx (mention ms. au titre et longues notes techniques de sa main sur la garde blanche et le faux-titre, ainsi que dans les marges de plusieurs ff., fin XVIIIe s.).

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LA BORDE (Jean Benjamin de).

Choix de chansons mises en musique

1773, Paris

Estimated price: 1000-1500 CHF

Final price: 7482 CHF

LA BORDE (Jean Benjamin de).

Choix de chansons mises en musique. Paris, Lormel, 1773. 4 vol. in-8° reliés plein maroquin bleu nuit, dos à nerfs ornés et dorés, triple filet doré en encadrement des plats et fer à la lyre en écoinçons, dentelle int., gardes de maroquin rouge frappées aux armes de la famille Poilloüe de Saintpérier, chiffre couronné doré en écoinçons, tr. dorées (Reliure signée Chambolle-Duru).

Ouvrage entièrement gravé illustré d'1 titre gravé, 1 dédicace aux armes de Marie-Antoinette, 1 portrait de l'auteur, 3 frontispices et 100 figures par Moreau le Jeune, Le Barbier, Le Bouteux et Saint-Quentin gravées par Masquelier et Née, texte et musique gravés par Moria et Mlle Vendôme. "Ce livre, l'un des plus beaux du XVIIIème siècle, est peut-être, avec les "contes de la Fontaine", le plus agréable par la grâce des sujets et la variété des costumes qui y sont représentés" (Cohen).

Très bel exemplaire Ex-libris armorié d'Alain de Suzannet Provenance : Collection d'un bibliophile bâlois

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D'Alembert

"Éléments de musique ... suivant les principes de M. Rameau"

1779, Lyon

Estimated price: 200-300 €

Final price: 350 €

D'Alembert "Elemens de musique ... suivant les principes de M. Rameau", Lyon Bruyset 1779, un vol. in 8°, 10 planches de musique dépliantes.

**1781-1800**

[ANONYME]

Chansons choisies, avec les airs notés

1782, Paris

Estimated price: 100-150 €

Final price: 160 €

[MUSIQUE] - [ANONYME] - Chansons choisies, avec les airs notés - [Paris] ; Sans nom [Cazin], 1782 - 4 volumes In-16° - Frontispice gravé et 114 planches de musique gravée in fine de chaque volume - Reliure de l'époque veau havane raciné (coins frottés) - Plats encadrés de pointillés, d'1 filet et d'1 roulette dorés - Filet aux coupes - Dos lisses ornés de lyres et de petits paniers dorés - Pièces de titre et de tomaison maroquin rouge - Tranches dorées - Étiquette du libraire Lyonnais Bohaire au 1er contre plat - Bel exemplaire.

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Chansons choisies avec des airs notés

1782, Paris

Estimated price: 400-600 €

Final price: 400 €

[...]. Chansons choisies avec des airs notés.

[Paris, Cazin], 1782, 4 vol. in-12, maroquin rouge, filets dorés autour des plats, dos lisses ornés, tranches dorées (reliure de l'époque). Un frontispice non signé et 115 planches de musique.

Joint dans une reliure identique : Nouveau Recueil de Chansons choisies avec les airs notés. [Paris, Cazin], 1785, 4 vol. in-12. 88 planches de musique.

Dimensions intérieures : 12,4 x 6,6 cm. Cohen, Guide de l'amateur de livres à gravures du XVIIIe siècle, T. I, col. 224.