



A Castrato's Songbook By Louis XVI



7 500 EUR

Signature : Albanese

Period : 18th century

Condition : Bon état

Material : Paper

Width : 25

Height : 20

Description

Songbook of a Castrato of Louis XVIAn exceptional handwritten collection of music that belonged to Antoine Albanèse (1729-1800), a castrato singer and composer of Italian origin who settled in France in 1747 at the age of eighteen. He was engaged by the King's Chapel at Versailles and became one of the singers of the Concert Spirituel, where he performed notably between 1752 and 1762. An oblong volume containing 21 arias, duets, romances, rondeaux, and scenes, all handwritten. An old bibliographic note pasted on the inside back cover describes the work as an "autograph manuscript," consisting of 59 folios of text and music, and indicates that it bears the inscription: "This book belongs to Mr. Albanese. 1784." Behind these pages lies the extraordinary story of a child. Born in Albano, in

Dealer

Le Printemps des Siècles

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Puglia, Italy, Albanese was castrated at a very young age in order to preserve his voice and enable him to pursue the career then reserved for castrati. The collection is particularly interesting for the diversity of its content. It includes, notably, duets, pastoral arias, rondeaux, dialogues, and pastoral pieces, several of which were already noted in the previous bibliographic entry as likely unpublished. In addition to his career as a singer, he was also a composer. The Bibliothèque nationale de France currently holds numerous editions and compositions that bear witness to his musical output. Antoine Albanèse (1729-1800) Collection of 21 arias, duets, and romances Musical manuscript, 59 folios Dated 1784 Dedicated to the Marquise de La Coste Antique binding, oblong format France, Louis XVI period