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Jean-Étienne Desprésaux, Bibliophile

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Jean-Étienne Desprésaux, Bibliophile

Paper presented by
Dominique Bourassa

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Introduction¹

In *The Library at Night*, Alberto Manguel writes, “Every library is autobiographical (...) Our books reflect who we are and who we have been.”² As a librarian, I find this quote compelling. For some time now, I have been wondering what I could learn if I could browse the bookshelves of dance professionals of the past. Did they own works of their peers or works of the past? Were their reading interests varied? Were they influenced by their readings? To find out, I have been searching for evidence of book ownership by pre-twentieth-century dance professionals.³ My little hobby horse yielded little success until last year when I came upon the earliest detailed records of books owned by a dancing master that I have found so far, that is, the sale catalog of the library of Jean-Étienne Despréaux.⁴

This paper delves into the life and career of this versatile figure, as *read* through the sale catalog of his library. In addition, it explores the fascinating story of Despréaux’s own copy of Thoinot Arbeau’s 1589 edition of the *Orchésographie*, from its acquisition by Despréaux to its current resting place in the library of the Nederlands Muziek Instituut in The Hague.⁵

1. Despréaux, the versatile artist

Despréaux was born in Paris in 1748 and died there in 1820. During his long life, he wore many hats: dancer, parodist, lyricist, director of public festivals, inspector-general of the Opéra, dancing master to Napoleon’s second wife, Empress Marie-Louise, Duchess of Parma (1791-1847), teacher of deportment and dance at the École royale de musique et de déclamation, and more.⁶ He was the husband of the famous dancer Marie-Madeleine Guimard (1743-1816); the author of *Mes passe-temps: Chansons suivies de L’art de la danse*, a collection of song lyrics followed by a poem on dance modeled after Boileau-Despréaux’s *L’Art poétique*⁷; the inventor

of a musical chronometer (or metronome)⁸; and the inventor of an unpublished, innovative system of dance notation⁹, and an avid reader.

2. Despréaux, the reader

“I read everything, and I know nothing; But what does it matter? this amuses me.”¹⁰ So wrote Despréaux in one of his songs. Despréaux’s love of reading, or as he calls it in his manuscript memoirs, his “mania to read,” began at the age of ten when he found books at his eldest brother’s house.¹¹ As soon as he had money, he spent it on books. He claimed he spent all day practicing dance, and all night reading.¹²

In “My library or The Nightmare,” a song he wrote during the French Revolution (in 1795), Despréaux recounts having to sell some of his books during a difficult financial period.¹³ The lyrics include over sixty literary references: to French writers such as Molière, Jean Racine and Jean-Jacques Rousseau; foreign authors from ancient to modern times, like Plato, Virgil, Erasmus and Isaac Newton; and specific works, including Voltaire’s *Candide* and Miguel de Cervantes’s *Don Quixote*. On the basis of this song, we can assume that, by 1795, Despréaux had a fine library.

3. The Estate Sale

Despréaux’s belongings were sold at a five-day long estate sale held at his home in July 1820. The public notice of the sale reads: “Sale of furniture, linen, books, objects of curiosity, jewelry, silverware, and other household items following the death of Mr. J. Etienne Despréaux, former professor of dance, and inspector general of court spectacles.”¹⁴

The detailed list of items sold each day give us a rare opportunity to peek at the contents of the house of a well-to-do dancing master who seemed to have navigated the French Revolution unscathed. On the first day were sold various household items; the next day, “good personal and household linens”; the third day, furniture of all kinds, including a mahogany bookcase. Despréaux’s books, “numbering 2,000,” were sold on the next three nights. Among the highlights were books “on dance and opera.”¹⁵ On the last night were sold art works, curiosity objects, jewelry, musical instruments and scores. Of significance to dance scholars are busts of Gardel and Vestris and a pochette given by Louis XIV to his dancing master, Pierre Beauchamp. The public was informed that a “notice of books” was available at the auctioneers Olivier and Royer, and at the bookseller Brunet.¹⁶ This notice of books is in fact the catalog of Despréaux’s library.¹⁷

4. The Library Catalog

The catalog is a 15-page booklet compiled by the Paris bibliographer Jacques-Charles Brunet.¹⁸ It details the content of Despréaux’s library in 231 lots. It reveals the titles of 302 books in 1,034 volumes and shows that Despréaux was a reader with a wide-range of interests. It is important to point out that, while the catalog is very detailed, we will probably never know the full extent of Despréaux’s library because some lots contain multiple unidentified items. For instance, lot 145 includes “other plays,” and lot 150, “other works of the same category.”¹⁹ This can explain, at least in part, the difference between the number of volumes listed in the catalog and the number advertised in the notice of the estate sale.

Despréaux collected mostly books published after 1750. The median date of publication of his collection is 1784. The newest book he owned was published in 1819, the year before his

death. But Despréaux also collected older books: he owned twenty-three books published before 1700, the earliest one dating from 1574.

The catalog is divided into four sections. The first section, the shortest, consists of thirty-eight books about theology, jurisprudence, and sciences and arts, among which are a French translation of the Koran and a book on illnesses caused by masturbation.²⁰ The second and largest section, literature, lists 119 books. Among these books are the complete works of Voltaire in ninety-two volumes, several issues of an almanac for gourmands (note the library of a gourmand on the frontispiece of the 1803 issue), dictionaries of rhymes that would have come handy when Despréaux wrote parodies, poems and songs, and two copies of his own book, *Mes Passe-Temps*.²¹ The final section, history, contains sixty-one books, including travel literature, such as the voyages of James Cook in French.²²

Between the literature and history sections is an unusual section labeled “Dramatic arts, Music, Art of the dance, Public celebrations, Costumes, etc.”²³ This section collocates eighty-three books that would have been inserted in different sections in typical sale catalogs of the period. Books about dance, for instance, would have been buried among books about gymnastics, at the end of the sciences and arts section. This section highlights the singularity of Despréaux’s collection and suggests a connection between performing arts, which is unusual in book catalogs of this period.

As you can see, books about dance constitute the second largest category in this section. They represent eight percent of Despréaux’s entire book collection. Books about dance are rare in sale catalogs and bibliographies of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.²⁴ For instance, there are only eight amongst the nearly 18,000 books listed in the 1820 edition of Brunet’s *Manuel du libraire et de l’amateur du livre*, the indispensable handbook of its time for

booksellers and book lovers.²⁵ That Despréaux managed to acquire twenty-five dance books fairly evenly distributed between 1589 and 1811, five of which are listed in Brunet's *Manuel du libraire*, is extraordinary. The collection, listed on your handout,²⁶ is well rounded, although chiefly French. It comprises reference works, books about dance history, theory, technique, notation, and treatises on social and theatrical dance. It anticipates the modern notion of a canon of historical dance monuments. The earliest dance work is the 1589 edition of the *Orchésographie*; the latest, J.H. Gourdoux-Daux's 1811 *Principes et notions élémentaires sur l'art de la danse pour la ville*. In addition, Despréaux's library included many other books that were pertinent to the study of dance, such as compilations of ballets, ballets-pantomimes, and operas, books on the history of the Paris Opera, on gesture, mime, and theatrical action, along with books on medicine, including one on therapeutic gymnastics.

We know that Despréaux read books in his library and used them in his works. His poem *L'art de la danse*, for instance, quotes from many books that are in his library, such as Louis de Cahusac's *La danse ancienne et moderne*.²⁷ But the proof that Despréaux did not collect books simply for the pleasure of possessing them can be seen in one specimen that is now kept at the Nederlands Muziek Instituut in the Hague, and that is Despréaux's copy of Arbeau's *Orchésographie* that I will now refer to simply as the *Orchésographie*.

5. Despréaux's *Orchésographie*

The *Orchésographie* is a fascinating book that includes some sixteenth-century annotations. As you can see on the screen, in this 1597 inscription, someone is called drunkard, fool, and bastard, among other insults²⁸. On the cover, Despréaux wrote "Orchésographie (...)
This book belongs to Jean-Étienne Despréaux, born in 1748."²⁹ On the front endpaper,

Despréaux's personality shines! It is evident that he was pleased with his acquisition. He notes that this book was given to him on June 24, 1810, by Papillon, a former dancing master at Versailles, in exchange for a golden snuffbox. He adds a personal stamp of ownership. He lists his professional titles from *répétiteur* of imperial ceremonies to man of letters. He even describes himself in a charming song dated in Paris, on January 1st, 1811:

Songwriter and parodist
I rhyme from time to time
Very happy, thus I exist
Since more than sixty years
Despite my fragile health
I laugh at all my pains
I, native of this city
Jean-Étienne Despréaux.³⁰

At the time Despréaux acquired his copy, Arbeau's *Orchésographie* had been considered a rare book for nearly a century.³¹ However, Despréaux's annotations prove that he did not acquire his copy only for its value as a rare book, but to read it and gain knowledge from it. Regarding the etymology of the title *Orchésographie*, Despréaux notes on the cover: "this word in Greek means danse écrite [written dance]."³² He remarks that the basse danse is a dance with no jumping.³³ He makes connections between "Les Tricotets," a dance he had described in his poem *L'art de la danse*, and the *tricornie*, a dance described by Arbeau.³⁴ He records that, in the notation of the basse danse, an uppercase R stands for reverence and a lower case b for branle.³⁵ He observes that the "pied élargi," a step to the left at the beginning of a double step, is the same as a "pied écarté."³⁶

Despréaux's manuscript choreographic notation system is very different from Arbeau's.³⁷ For this reason, Régine Astier wrote: "It is hardly likely that Despréaux would have looked as far back as" Arbeau "to create his new *langage chorégraphique*."³⁸ We now have proof that

Desprésaux owned the *Orchésographie* and actively read it at around the same time as he was writing his manuscript. In addition, we know, from his library catalog, that he was exposed to other forms of choreographic notation, such as Beauchamp-Feuillet notation.³⁹ It is therefore likely that these systems did inform the development of his notation. In fact, Desprésaux refers to the *Orchésographie* on the title page of his manuscript. He remarks that *Orchésographie* is the genuine title of his work. However, he explains that he cannot use this word as the title of his work on dance because the Greek word (*orchestra*) has been used for over a century to designate the place where musicians play. Instead, he reuses two words he had inscribed on the cover of the *Orchésographie* as the first part of the title of his manuscript: “Danse écrite– ou Terpsi=coro=graphie, ou Nouvel essai de la théorie de la danse.”⁴⁰

One may wonder if Desprésaux was developing his notation system as he was reading and annotating his *Orchésographie*. Did he decide to associate letters with positions and steps in his notation system because he was influenced by the notation of the basse danse in the *Orchésographie*? Did he decide to choose the letter E to represent a second position or “*piéd écarté*” for the same reason?

6. An *Orchésographie* Through Time

Traces of ownerships allow us to follow the journey of the *Orchésographie* through time. As we saw, Desprésaux recorded that he acquired the *Orchésographie* in 1810 from the dancing master Papillon who lived at Versailles. A signature on the back endpaper reveals that the book also belonged to “Anatole, ballet master of the Theatre Royal in London and ‘pensionnaire’ of the Royal Academy of Music of Paris.”⁴¹ Anatole is Auguste Anatole Petit, known as Monsieur Anatole (1789-1857). Evidence suggests that Anatole acquired the *Orchésographie* during the

sale of Despréaux's library because he owned another book sold during this event, a copy of Brunet's *Histoire générale de la danse*, now housed at the Bibliothèque de l'Opéra.⁴² This is the only other book owned by Despréaux that I have located so far.

The next traceable owner of the *Orchésographie* is the ballet master Henri Justamant (1815-1893), whose library was sold on May 15, 1893.⁴³ The catalog of the sale confirms the provenance of Justamant's *Orchésographie*: it lists previous known owners, Papillon, Despréaux and Anatole, and describes and quotes inscriptions.⁴⁴ In addition, the catalog reveals that Justamant owned many books about book collecting and bibliophilia, along with limited editions and rare books. We can therefore infer that, unlike Despréaux, Justamant acquired the *Orchésographie* chiefly for its value as a rare annotated volume with a distinguished lineage of former owners.

A sheet tipped into the *Orchésographie* reveals the initials of a later owner in the form of three musical notes on a staff.⁴⁵ This is the bookplate of Daniël François Scheurleer (1855-1927), a Dutch banker and amateur musicologist who owned a private music library and museum in The Hague.⁴⁶ Scheurleer acquired the *Orchésographie* sometimes between 1893 and 1902.⁴⁷ In his library catalogue published in 1910, he only indicated that his copy was "the exemplar belonging to the dancing master of the Empress Marie-Louise of France, Despréaux, who wrote some notes in it."⁴⁸ From then on, catalogs describing this *Orchésographie* only name Despréaux as its previous owner. Papillon, Anatole, and Justamant, who, from a dance historical perspective, enrich the story of this copy, are no longer included in its provenance.

In 1932, five years after Scheurleer died, the *Orchésographie*, along with most of his collection, was sold by his son Constant to the city of The Hague and moved to the library of the Municipal Museum (Gemeentemuseum Den Haag).⁴⁹ The stamp of the museum appears on the

front endpaper. Finally, in December 2000, the *Orchésographie*, was relocated to its current resting place in the Nederlands Muziek Instituut.⁵⁰ Thus in less than 200 years, the *Orchésographie* journeyed through the libraries of four dance professionals, one amateur musicologist and his son, and two cultural institutions.

Conclusion:

Let me conclude as I started: “Every library is autobiographical (...) Our books reflect who we are and who we have been.”⁵¹ Despréaux’s books, as listed in the sale catalog of his library, reflect who he was: a dancing master with a wide range of interests, eager to build a comprehensive collection of books about dance before the existence of a canon of historical dance monuments. The sale catalog of his library confirms that he owned books he cited in his own works. His *Orchésographie* demonstrates how he actively read books he owned, annotating them along the way. The marks of ownership Despréaux and others left in the *Orchésographie* allow us to follow its 200-year journey from owner to owner, from Versailles to The Hague.

As I was studying Despréaux’s library and his *Orchésographie*, I kept wondering what the other books he owned could reveal. Above all, I would love to find his copy of Noverre’s *Lettres sur les arts imitateurs en général et sur la danse en particulier* which includes, according to the sale catalog, manuscript notes by Despréaux. Please, don’t forget to let me know if you find it.

¹ An Apple Keynote Presentation accompanied this lecture. For a copy, contact the author at dominique.bourassa@yale.edu.

² Alberto Manguel, *The Library at Night* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008), 194.

³ For a history of reading in France, see James Smith Allen, *in the Public Eye: A History of Reading in Modern France, 1800-1940* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1991).

⁴ [Jacques-Charles Brunet], *Notice des livres de la bibliothèque de feu M. J.-E. Despréaux* (Paris: Olivier, Royer, and Brunet, 1820) (herefter cited as *Notice des livres de Despréaux*).

⁵ Thoinot Arbeau, *Orchesographie et traicte en forme de dialogue, par lequel toutes personnes peuvvent facilement apprendre & practiquer l'honneste exercice des dances* (Langres, 1589). Nederlands Muziek Instituut request

number NMI Kluis B 16. I am grateful to Drs. Paula Quint, music librarian at the Nederlands Muziek Instituut, for sending me a digitized copy of this item. All citations to Arbeau's *Orchésographie* refer to the Nederlands Muziek Instituut's copy.

⁶ The earliest biography of Despréaux I found is: "Despréaux (Jean-Étienne)," *Annuaire nécrologique ou Supplément annuel et continuation de toutes les biographies ou dictionnaires historiques* 1 (1820): 82-83. For a biography of Despréaux based on his manuscript notes, see Albert Firmin-Didot, "Souvenirs de Jean-Étienne Despréaux, danseur de l'Opéra et poète-chansonnier, 1748-1820 (d'après ses notes manuscrites)," *Revue d'art dramatique* 8, vols. 29-30, nos. 173-76 (March-Apr. 1893): 257-63, 341-51, 10-26, 90-106.

⁷ Jean-Étienne Despréaux, *Mes passe-temps: Chansons suivies de L'art de la danse, poème en quatre chants calqué sur l'art poétique de Boileau-Despréaux*, 2 vols. (Paris: Chez l'auteur, Defrelle, Petit, 1806).

⁸ On this subject, see Roger Mathew Grant, *Beating Time and Measuring Music in the Early Modern Era* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 183-185. The title page of *Nouveau chronomètre musical établi sur les bases astronomiques inventé par J. L. [sic] Despréaux* ([Paris], n.d.), notes that Despréaux's chronometer was adopted by the "Conservatoire de Musique" in 1812 and approved by the "Institut [imperial de France]" in 1813.

⁹ Despréaux, "Danse écrite ou Terpsi=coro=graphie ou Nouvel essay de théorie de la danse", ms. Paris, Bibliothèque-Musée de l'Opéra, Fonds Deshayes F-Des P 4 (hereafter cited as Despréaux ms.).

¹⁰ "Je lis tout, et je ne sais rien; Mais qu'importe, cela m'amuse." Despréaux, "La fumée," *Mes passe-temps*, 1:94.

¹¹ "Rage de lire." Despréaux, cited in Firmin-Didot 8, vol. 29, no. 173 (March 1893): 259.

¹² *Ibid.*, 259.

¹³ Despréaux, "Ma bibliothèque ou Le cauchemard," *Mes passe-temps*, 1:53-57.

¹⁴ "Vente de meubles, linge, livres, objects de curiosité, bijoux, argenterie et autres effets mobiliers, après le décès de M. J. Etienne Despréaux, ancien professeur de danse, et inspecteur général des spectacles de la cour." [Affichette de la vente après décès du linge, livres... et autres effets mobiliers après le décès de Jean-Etienne Despréaux] ([Paris]: C. Ballard, [1820]). A copy of this rare sale poster is preserved at the Bibliothèque nationale de France and available on Gallica <https://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/btv1b52510652w>.

¹⁵ "Bon linge de corps et de maison"; "les livres au nombre de deux mille volumes"; "ouvrages sur la danse et sur l'opéra."

¹⁶ "La notice des livres se distribue chez Me. Olivier, Commissaire-Preneur (...). Me. Royer, Commissaire-Preneur (...). M. Brunet, Libraire (...)." Jean Ferdinand Olivier (?-?); Charles Jean Désiré Royer (1788-?); Jacques-Charles Brunet (1780-1867). Isabelle Rouge-Ducos, *Le crieur et le marteau: Histoire des commissaires-preneurs de Paris (1801-1945)* (Paris: Belin, 2013), 449, 464. For information on auctioneers in France, see also Alain Quemin *Les commissaires-preneurs: La mutation d'une profession* (Paris: Anthropos, 1997).

¹⁷ Brunet, *Notice des livres de Despréaux*.

¹⁸ For information about Brunet, see Roger E. Stoddard, *Jacques-Charles Brunet, Le Grand Bibliographe: A Guide to the Books He Wrote, Compiled, and Edited and To the Book-Auction Catalogues He Expertised* (London: Quaritch, 2007). For a history of book sale and their catalogs, see Annie Charon and Élisabeth Parinet with Dominique Bougé-Grandon, *Les Ventes de livres et leurs catalogues, XVIIe-XXe siècle. Études et rencontres de l'École de Chartes*, 5 (Paris: École des chartes, 2000).

¹⁹ "Et autres pièces de théâtre"; "et autres ouvrages du même genre." Brunet, *Notice des livres de Despréaux*, 10.

²⁰ Brunet, *Notice des livres de Despréaux*, entries 1-27, pp. 3-4.

²¹ *Ibid.*, entries 28-123, pp. 4-9

²² *Ibid.*, entries 185-231, pp. 12-15.

²³ "Art dramatique, musique, art de la danse, fêtes publiques, costumes, etc." Brunet, *Notice des livres de Despréaux*, entries 124-84, pp. 9-11.

²⁴ After 40 years of research, the dance teacher Gustave Desrat deplores the scarcity of dance books in book sale catalogs in his *Dictionnaire de la danse, historique, théorique, pratique depuis l'origine de la danse jusqu'à nos jours* (Paris: Librairies-Imprimeries réunies, 1895), 381. He explains that the rarity of antiquarian dance books is due to the fact that they were published in small numbers and disappeared quickly because they were written for specialists always anxious for new knowledge.

²⁵ Jacques-Charles Brunet, *Manuel du libraire et de l'amateur du livre* (Paris: Chez l'auteur, 1820), 4:178-79. John Carter and Nicolas Barker write in *ABC for Book Collectors*, 8th ed. (New Castle, DE: Oak Knoll Press and London: The British Library, 2004), 54, that Brunet's *Manuel du libraire* "is still valuable as the last and greatest summation of all the desirable books published in Europe from the invention of printing; of some rare books, it remains the sole citation."

²⁶ See handout on pp. 13-14.

²⁷ See, for instance, Despréaux, *Mes passe-temps*, 2:305.

²⁸ Arbeau, *Orchésographie*, 48r.

²⁹ “Orchésographie (...) Ce livre appartient à Jean-Étienne Despréaux né en 1748.”

³⁰ “Chansonnier et Parodiste, / je Rime de temps en temps. / fort heureux ainsi j’existe / depuis plus de Soixante ans; / Malgré mas Santé fragile / je me ris de tous mes maux / moi natif de Cette ville, / Jean Etienne Despréaux.” This song is set to the tune of “Aussitôt que la lumière,” which appears in *Mes passe-temps*, vol. 1, “Quatre-ving-dix airs notés pour servir aux chansons des deux volumes,” no. 9.

³¹ For example, in 1724, Jacques Bonnet notes the rarity of Arbeau’s *Orchésographie* in his *Histoire générale de la danse, sacrée et profane* (Paris: Chez D’Houry fils): “on ne le trouve plus, ou du moins il est devenu fort rare.”

³² “Ce mot en Grec veut dire Danse-Ecrite.”

³³ Arbeau, *Orchésographie*, 4v.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, 4r.; Despréaux, *Mes passe-temps*, 2:203, 268.

³⁵ Arbeau, *Orchésographie*, 25v.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 70v.

³⁷ Despréaux ms.

³⁸ Régine Astier, “An Earlier Voice,” *Dance Chronicle* 34 (2011): 135-136. doi:10.1080/01472526.2011.548996. For a description of Despréaux’s choreographic notation system, see Flavia Pappacena, “La ‘Terpsi-choro-graphie’ di J.-E. Despréaux (1813): la trasformazione della notazione coreutica fra il XVIII e il XIX secolo,” *Chorégraphie: Studi e ricerche sulla danza* 4/7 (1996), pp. 26–30; *Idem*, “I sistemi di notazioni a vision vertical e a scrittura orizzontale: La Terpsi-choro-graphie di Jean-Étienne Despréaux,” In Arthur Saint-Léon, *La Sténographie 1852*, ed. by Flavia Pappacena (Libreria Musicale Italiana, ©2006), 4-5; *Idem*, “Danse écrite ou La Terpsi-choro-graphie ou Nouvel Essay de Theorie de la danse: manuscript dated 1813 by Jean-Étienne Despréaux kept at the Bibliothèque of the Paris Opéra,” *Society of Dance History Scholars Proceedings: Thirtieth Annual Conference Co-sponsored with CORD, Centre national de la danse, Paris, France, 21-24 June 2007* ([s.l.]: Society of Dance History Scholars, 2007), 498–99.

³⁹ According to Brunet’s *Notice des livres de Despréaux*, p. 11, Despréaux owned at least two books that describe Beauchamp-Feuillet notation: Claude-Marc Magny, *Principes de chorégraphie* (Paris, 1765) and N. Malpied, *Éléments de chorégraphie contenant la description de plusieurs pas et les mouvemens en usage dans l’art de la danse* (Paris, 1762).

⁴⁰ “Orchésographie [sic] est le véritable [sic] nom de cet ouvrage; mais comme le mot Grec (Orchestra) veut dire dansoir ou Salle de danse, et que depuis plus d’un siècle [sic] il sert a [sic] designer [sic] la place que doivent occuper les musiciens: je ne puis me servir de ce mot pour le titre d’un ouvrage sur la danse.”

⁴¹ “Anatole, maître des ballets du Théâtre Royal de Londres, et pensionnaire de l’academie [sic] Royale de Musique de Paris.”

⁴² The front end paper includes Despréaux’s stamp of ownership and the signature “Anatole, maître des ballets du Théâtre Royal de Londres pensionnaire de l’academie [sic] Royale de Musique de Pairs.” Bibliothèque nationale de France, RES-768. <https://catalogue.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/cb43989317t>.

⁴³ *Catalogue de livres anciens et modernes et des manuscrits originaux, des ballets et des divertissements de M. Henri Justament* (Paris: Ém. Paul, L. Huart et Guillemin, 1893).

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 2-3.

⁴⁵ The sheet is tipped between the cover and the title page.

⁴⁶ On the history of Scheurleer’s music museum and library, consult Frits Zwart, “A New Music Institute in the Netherlands,” *Fontes Artis Musicae* 50:1 (Jan.-March 2003), 62-68; For photographs, see Eene wooninge in de welcke ghesien worden veelderhande gheschriften, boecken, printen ende musicaale instrumenten (’s Graven-Haghe, 1913). At the death of Scheurleer in 1927, his collection was “considered the largest private collection of musical instruments, scores and books concerning music in Europe.” Zwart, 63.

⁴⁷ The earliest publication I found that lists the *Orchésographie* as belonging to Scheurleer is Julius Röntgen, arr. *Nederlandsche Dansen der 16de Eeuw: Voor Vierhandig Klavier, met eene Inleiding van D.F. Scheurleer*, Der Vereniging voor Noord-Nederlands Muziekgeschiedenis, uitgave XXV (Amsterdam: Frederik Muller & Cie; Leipzig: Breitkopf & Härtel, 1902), 1:32: “Schrijver dezes bezit eene uitgave van 1589, het exemplar, dat heft toebehoord aan Despréaux, den dansmeester, welbekend uit Madame Sansgène.”

⁴⁸ “Exemplar toebehoord hebbende san de dansmeester van Kreizerin Marie Louise van Frankrijk, J.B. Despréaux, di er eenige aantekeningen in schreef.” *Catalogus der Muziekbibliotheek van D.F. Scheurleer*, 2de vervolg (S. Gravenhage, 1910), p. 78.

⁴⁹ Between 1927 and 1932, Scheurleer’s collection was owned and managed by his son, Constant Willem Lusingh Scheurleer (1881-1941). On this subject, see Zwart, pp. 63-64. The Hague Municipal Museum or

Gemeentemuseum Den Hague is described as “a modern palace of the arts.” Its name will change to Kunstmuseum Den Haag in fall 2019. For more information, consult the Museum’s website: <https://www.gemeentemuseum.nl/en>.

⁵⁰ Zwart, 66. For information on the Netherlands Music Institute Library (Nederlands Musiek Instituut), consult its website at <http://www.nederlandsmuziekinstituut.nl/en>.

⁵¹ Manguel, *The Library at Night*, 194.

Jean-Étienne Despréaux, Bibliophile
by
Dominique Bourassa

HANDOUT

Notice of Despréaux's estate sale

[Affichette de la vente après décès du linge, livres... et autres effets mobiliers après le décès de Jean-Etienne Despréaux]. Paris : impr. de C. Ballard, [1820]. Digitized version available at Gallica: <https://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/btv1b52510652w>

Sale catalog of Despréaux's library

Brunet, Charles Jacques. *Notice des livres de la bibliothèque de feu M. J.-E. Despréaux, inspecteur général des spectacles de la cour (...)*. [Paris], juillet 1820. Digitized version available at Gallica: <https://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/bpt6k322028b>

Chronological list of dance books owned by Despréaux

(List generated from OCLC bibliographic records)

- Arbeau, Thoinot. *Orchésographie et traicté en forme de dialogue, par lequel toutes personnes peuvent facilement apprendre et pratiquer l'honnest exercice des dances*. Lengres, 1589. Despréaux's copy owned by: Nederlands Muziek Instituut (NMI Kluis B 16).
- Negri, Cesare. *Nuove inventioni di balli*. Milano, 1604.
- Meurs, Johannes van. *Ioannis Meursi Orchestra, sive, De saltationibus veterum, liber singularis*. Lugduni Batavorum, 1618.
- Vincent, Philippe. *Le procès des dances débattu*. La Rochelle, 1646.
- Lettres patentes du roy pour l'établissement de l'Académie royale de danse en la ville de Paris*. Paris, 1663.
- Menestrier, Claude-François. *Des ballets anciens et modernes selon les regles du theatre*. Paris, 1682.
- Feuillet, Raoul-Auger. *Recueil de contredances mises en chorégraphie*. Paris, 1706.
- Bonnet, Jacques. *Histoire générale de la danse, sacrée et profane*. Paris, 1724. Despréaux's copy owned by: Bibliothèque nationale de France, Bibliothèque-musée de l'opéra (RES-768).
- Sol, C. *Méthode très facile et fort nécessaire pour montrer à la jeunesse de l'un & l'autre sexe la manière de bien danser*. La Haye, 1725.
- Rameau, Pierre. *Abbrégé de la nouvelle methode, dans l'art d'écrire ou de tracer toutes sortes, de dances de ville*. Paris, 1725.
- Rameau, Pierre. *Le maître à danser*. Paris, 1748.
- Boulenger de Rivery, Claude-François-Félix. *Recherches historiques critiques sur quelques anciens spectacles, et particulièrement sur les mimes et sur les pantomimes, avec des notes*. Paris, 1751.
- Cahusac, Louis de. *La danse ancienne et moderne, ou Traité historique de la danse*. La Haye, 1754.

- Malpied, N. *Éléments de chorégraphie contenant la description de plusieurs pas et les mouvemens en usage dans l'art de la danse*. Paris, 1762.
- La Cuisse, Sr. de. *Le répertoire des bals, ou Théorie-pratique des contredanses, décrites d'une manière aisée avec des figures démonstratives pour les pouvoir danser facilement, auxquelles on a ajouté les airs notés*. Paris, 1762.
- Magny, Claude-Marc. *Principes de chorégraphie*. Paris, 1765.
- Dorat, Claude Joseph. *La danse*. Paris, 1767.
- Guillaume, Simon. *Almanach dansant, ou, Positions et attitudes de l'allemande*. Paris, 1770.
- Compan, Charles. *Dictionnaire de danse*. Paris, 1787.
- L'Aulnaye. *De la saltation théâtrale, ou Recherches sur l'origine, les progrès, & les effets de la pantomime chez les anciens*. Paris, 1790.
- Moreau de Saint-Méry, M. L. E. *De la danse*. Parme, 1803.
- Berchoux, J. de. *La danse, ou Les dieux de l'Opéra*. Paris, 1806.
- Petit, L. S. O. *Observations sur les moyens de perfectionner la tournure des jeunes demoiselles*. Londres, 1806.
- Noverre, Jean Georges. *Lettres sur les arts imitateurs en général et sur la danse en particulier*. Paris, 1807.
- J. H. G. *Principes et notions élémentaires sur l'art de la danse pour la ville*. Paris, 1811.