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Reconstructing the Leuven Chansonnier Unica

In 2014 a music manuscript was sold at a Brussels auction house and subsequently brought to the Alamire Foundation in Leuven for examination. It turns out that the book is a previously unknown fifteenth-century chansonnier. Given the importance of the find, steps were taken to preserve it in the public domain, and it is now deposited permanently with the Alamire Foundation. The book contains 50 pieces, twelve of which are unica. The present paper discusses the challenge of dealing with unique pieces that nonetheless present corrupt readings. The discussion will focus on aspects of music, but it should be noted that the texts also sometimes require reconstruction.