# Contents

Acknowledgements 0

List of Illustrations 0

Foreword 0

**Part I: Noverre at work**

1. Jennifer Thorp 0
   From *Les fêtes chinoises* to *Agamemnon revenged*: Ange Goudar as commentator on the ballets of Jean-Georges Noverre

2. Samantha Owens 0
   “Just as great as Noverre”: the ballet composer Florian Johann Deller (1729–73) and music at the Württemberg court

3. Kathleen Kuzmick Hansell 0
   Noverre in Milan: a turning point

4. Adeline Mueller 0
   A peep into Mozart and Le Picq’s *Serraglio* (Milan, 1772): Noverre’s tragic reworking of a comic ballet

5. Edward Nye 0
   Outrageous dancing and respectable Noverre

6. Bruce Alan Brown 0
   *Weiβ und Rosenfarb*: the end of Noverrian ballet in Vienna and the beginnings of the *Wienerischer Musenalmanach*

7. Michael Burden 0
   Regular meetings: Noverre and Gallini in London, 1756-1795

8. Anna Karin Ståhle 0
   Jean-Georges Noverre applying for jobs
Part II: The English translation of Noverre’s *Lettres sur la Danse*

Introduction and editorial note

The Works of Monsieur Noverre translated from the French *(1782-3)*

Volume 1 - *An essay on the art of dancing* Part I

Dedicatory letter by Noverre to the Prince of Wales, 1782.

Preface: A brief history of dancing and its various forms in and since antiquity.

Three letters to Noverre from Voltaire, 1763-1772.

*An essay on the art of dancing:*

Letter I: The present state of dancing: it should be a faithful copy of nature, particularly in dramatic scenes, but is too often superficial, mechanical and lacking in expression.

Letter II: The need in pantomime-ballets for expression of the sentiments, an appropriate subject, and a clear dramatic structure, is not understood by all ballet-masters.

Letter III: The noblest passions are the proper objects of pantomime-ballet, and should be displayed with taste and imagination.

Letter IV: Ballets are fashionable diversions on the French stage; *divertissements* and an indulgent public perpetuate the worn-out practices of opera dancing.

Letter V: The extensive knowledge required by a ballet-master to assist creative inspiration.

Letter VI: Everything in the universe is a suitable theme for a ballet-master, and he should study social types, their activities and their surroundings, in order to reflect them accurately.

Letter VII: The characteristic features of pantomime-ballets as *ballets en action* or mute conversation.

Letter VIII: The great poetical genius required by ballet-masters divising opera dances, in order to make their ballets relevant to the opera and not mere *divertissements* or *entr’acte* dances. Ballet-master, machinist, scene-painter and composer should all work together.

Letter IX: The need for variety in performance, and recommendations for making stage costumes more meaningful.

Letter X: Physiognomy is the most useful interpreter of an individual’s feelings; Garrick is the model for expression through these means.
Letter XI: Arguments in favour and against the use of masks; the importance of the face and eyes in expressing the changing passions.

Glossary of terms.

Volume 2 - An essay on the art of dancing Part II

Letter XII: “Action” in dance means pantomime, the art of conveying different expressions by characteristic and intelligible gestures; not to be confused with low buffoonery.

Letter XIII: Dance is more than physical ability or exertion; the dancer must feel justly and express with feeling, to capture the soul of the imitative arts.

Letter XIV: The requirements of a dancer: willingness and ability to correct personal defects, and good teachers.

Letter XV: Personal defects: weaknesses of, and remedies for, the dancer who is jarreté (knock-knee’d)

Letter XVI: Personal defects: weaknesses of, and remedies for, the dancer who is arqué (bow-legged); observations on the proper motions of the arms, and on beaten steps.

Letter XVII: Personal defects: turnout of the legs, the importance of good training early on and the dangers of the tourne-hanche.

Letter XVIII: Common causes of injury, and further observations on jumps and beaten steps.

Letter XIX: Observations on how best to co-ordinate steps, preserve equilibrium and ensure harmony of movements in dancing.

Letter XX: Musicality in dancing: the importance of hearing and observing the measure, and knowing how to time steps and movements exactly.

Letter XXI: Chorography (dance notation): the systems of Arbeau, Beauchamp, Feuillet are a fine record of the past but inadequate for current needs.

Letter XXII: Proposal to reform the Academy of Dancing and return it to its former pre-eminence in training dancers and dancing-masters.

Letter XXIII: The limitations of the French Academy of Dancing and the article “Chorographie” in the Encyclopaedia: dance notation would have been more useful if illustrated, by leading artists and engravers, with images of dancers performing the dances, and explanations of the expressions depicted as they danced.
Letter XXIV: Chorography is useless as a tool for creating new works, as it is inadequate for recording embellishments, sight-lines, and the complex structures of pantomime-ballets.

Letter XXV: Written descriptions of ballets are useful only for outlining the intrigue in pantomime-ballets: description of Noverre’s Les caprices de Galathée [The whims of Galathea].

Letter XXVI: Description of Noverre’s The toilet of Venus, or the frolics of love, an heroic pantomimical-ballet.

Letter XXVII: The costumes of The toilet of Venus, and the use of expressive pauses in the music; description of Noverre’s The jealousies of the seraglio.

Letter XXVIII: Descriptions of Noverre’s Love turn’d pirate, or a voyage to Cythère; The jealous man without a rival; and discussion of de Cahusac’s and Diderot’s ideas on danse d’action.

Volume 3 – The Ballets
Dedication by the translator to the Duchess of Devonshire.
Preface.
Scenarios and dramatis personae of Noverre ballets:-
1. The Danaides, or the daughters of Danaus. A tragi-pantomime-ballet.
2. Rinaldo and Armida.
3. Adela of Ponthieu (with Noverre’s dedication and verse to the Duchess of Devonshire).
5. The Horatii and Curiatii. A tragic ballet.
8. The amours of Venus, or Vulcan’s revenge. An episodical ballet.
9. Alceste, or the triumph of conjugal love. A tragic ballet.

Contributors
Bibliography
Index