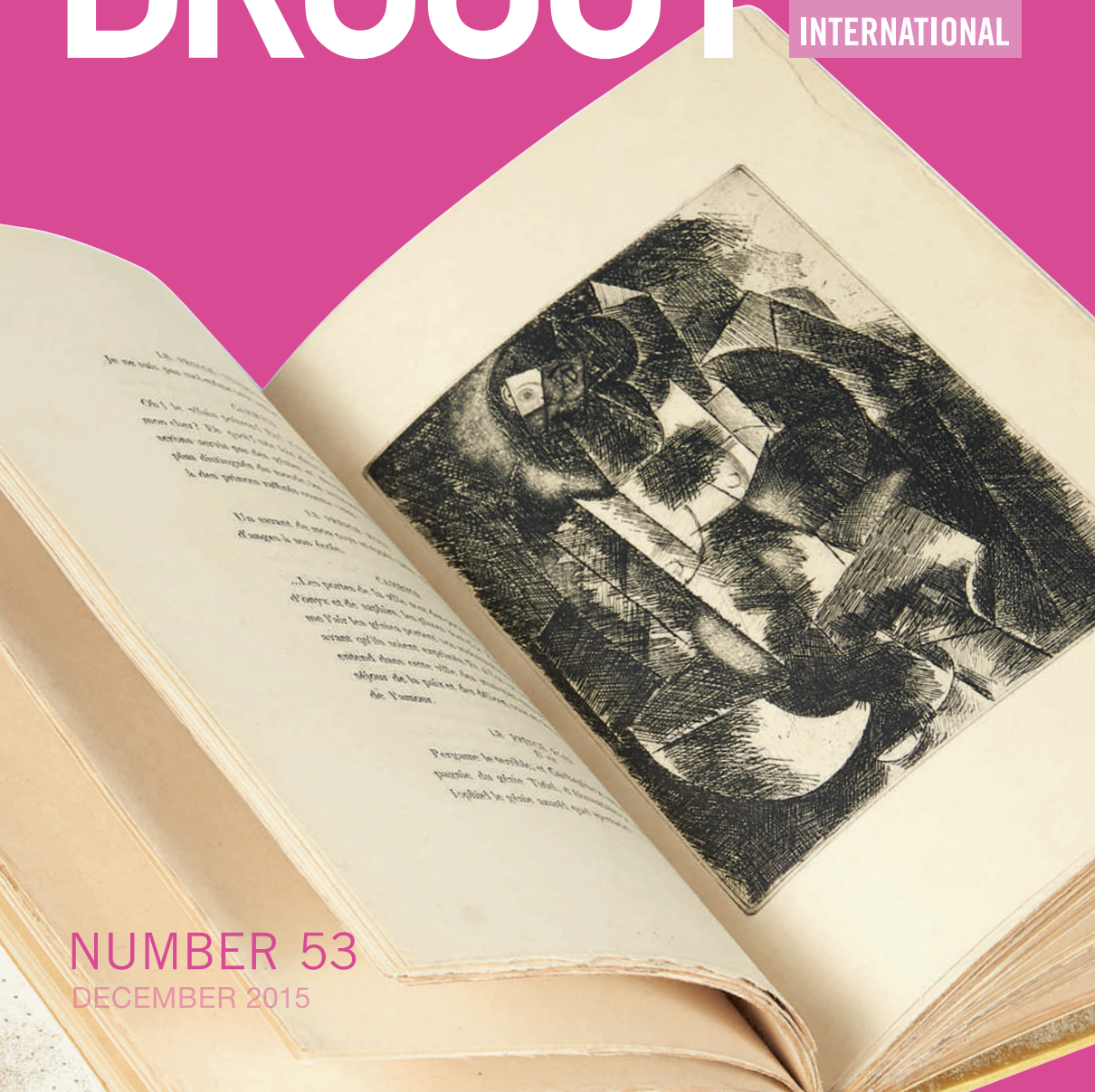


LA GAZETTE DROUOT

INTERNATIONAL



NUMBER 53
DECEMBER 2015



Alessandro Magnasco, an unconventional painter

A few days after its presence at Paris Tableau fair, Canesso Gallery is presenting an exhibition on Alessandro Magnasco (1667-1749), focusing on "the mature years of an anti-conformist painter". It is benefiting from a first-class partner, as Genoa's Musei di Strada Nuova are loaning several works. The exhibition will be moving to the Palazzo Bianco in the artist's native city from 25 February to 5 June 2016. A neat way of doing justice to a painter whose extremely free and personal style, highly popular with the great lords of Milan, where he spent half his life, was ridiculed by the Genoese on his return to the city in 1735. Although famous in his lifetime, with several imitators but no pupils, Magnasco rapidly sank into oblivion before being rediscovered in the early 20th century. Viewers can now appreciate his touch, tense to the point of anxiety, in the twenty paintings on show. While "Entertainment in a garden at Albaro" seems reminiscent of Watteau, this unclassifiable painter shows us a far less civilised vision of nature in "Saint Augustine at the Seashore", where the landscape breaks free of convention to depict an unbridled nature that would have impressed many 19th century artists. Magnasco thus oscillated between religious themes and dark subjects of disturbing reality, evoking Callot, Salvator Rosa and Goya. He darkened his palette at the end of his life, making brilliant play with chiaroscuro, as in "Il Pittor Pitocco" ("The beggar painter" *photo*), lent by a private collector.

Sophie Reysat