



PROANTIC
LE PLUS BEAU CATALOGUE D'ANTIQUITES

Laure Albin-guillot (photographs). Paul Valéry. The Cantata Of Narcissus. Paris, Artra, 1941



10 000 EUR

Signature : Laure ALBIN-GUILLOT & Paul VALÉRY

Period : 20th century

Condition : Très bon état

Material : Paper

Length : in-4°

Width : in-4°

Description

Laure ALBIN-GUILLOT. Paul VALÉRY. La Cantate de Narcisse. Paris, Imprimerie Artra, 1941 (29 January 1942). A quarto volume, loose as issued between two mahogany boards (outer sides varnished), the front board decorated with a hand-painted narcissus flower; two silk ribbons run from the front to the back cover. In the publisher's cardboard slipcase. Contents: 6 unnumbered leaves, 41 leaves of text, 3 unnumbered leaves (on Arches wove paper); 20 photographs, each preceded by a captioned tissue guard (on Savoyeux OCF paper). A unique and exceptionally rare edition, limited to only THIRTY copies not for sale. It contains TWENTY FULL-PAGE PHOTOGRAPHIC IMAGES by Laure Albin-Guillot (1879-1962), each SIGNED by the artist. Printing completed on

Dealer

MAZARIN

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29 January 1942. A numbered and personalized copy, made for a major 20th-century bibliophile. The Belleville-Douelle copy (Ader sale, 2014) is described as printed on Rives wove paper; the present copy is on Arches watermarked wove paper. According to the Phlit website (*Répertoire de la Photolittérature Ancienne et Contemporaine*), the photographs are silver prints. Each photograph was individually hand-brushed and signed by the artist. Some photographs depict male nudes; Laure Albin-Guillot was the first, in the 1930s, to produce such images. According to Christian Bouqueret, "the photograph of the male nude still seemed an impossible subject in the 1930s. Whether published or exhibited, a photographic nude could show neither body hair nor sexual organs. Thus Laure Albin-Guillot, to avoid the need for retouching, refrained from frontal views and, when portraying a full-length profile, avoided any post-photographic correction through skilful cropping. (...) She was among the rare few who, between the wars, profoundly structured the modern gaze, enriched a vocabulary so often stereotyped, and brought to this nascent and still fragile art a discipline without which it could no longer endure. Nothing spectacular, no showy effects or flashes of brilliance in this tireless worker, but a tenacity and artistic will whose contrapuntal series of hands might well be both symbol and key." (Christian Bouqueret, *Laure Albin-Guillot ou la volonté d'art*, Paris, Marval, 1996, pp. 15-20). The text accompanying the photographs is the one Paul Valéry published in 1939. At the beginning of the book appears this "Libretto," with Valéry's clarification: "This little work is distinct from, and wholly different from, *Narcisse* in its two earlier versions, published long ago and more recently. It was written, from April to November 1938, at the request of Madame Germaine Tailleferre, to serve as a libretto for a cantata composed by that eminent musician." The work was printed on 29 January 1942, on a special hors-commerce copy made for

the Bibliothèque nationale de France. Each photograph is accompanied by a captioned tissue guard. For this edition, a mahogany cover decorated with a stencilled narcissus flower--different for each copy--was created.

Sold exclusively by subscription, it required the substantial sum of 2,500 francs. A perfectly preserved copy, in mint condition. A newly discovered copy, never before on the market. OF THE HIGHEST RARITY. Notice to collectors:

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