

ON 9 MAY 2015, FONDAZIONE PRADA OPENS ITS NEW PERMANENT MILAN VENUE AND PRESENTS A NEW EXHIBITION IN VENICE

Milan, 2 May 2015 - The new Milan venue of Fondazione Prada opens to the public on Saturday 9 May 2015. In conjunction with the Milan spaces, the Fondazione venetian outpost will continue to operate in the 18th century palazzo Ca' Corner della Regina, where a new exhibition launches on the same date.

The architectural project developed by OMA, led by Rem Koolhaas, expands the repertoire of spatial typologies in which art can be exhibited and shared with the public. Characterized by an articulated architectural configuration which combines seven existing buildings with three new structures (Podium, Cinema and Torre), the new venue is the result of the transformation of a distillery dating back to the 1910's. In the project conceived by OMA, two conditions coexist: preservation and the creation of a new architecture which, although separate, confront each other in a state of permanent interaction. Located in Largo Isarco, in the south of Milan, the compound develops on an overall surface of 19.000 m²/205,000 ft². Torre (tower), currently undergoing construction work, will be open to the public at a later stage.

Fondazione Prada was created in 1993 as an outpost to analyze present times through the staging of contemporary art exhibitions as well as architecture, cinema and philosophy projects. The diversity of the new spaces has become the incentive to develop an experimental, stimulating program in which different languages and disciplines, though independent from each other, coexist in order and activate an ever-changing evolving intellectual process. Various interests and researches are pursued and examined through a flexible approach, founded on the idea that culture is an effective knowledge and learning tool. Fondazione Prada relies on an open structure, whose program is the result of a confrontation between the curatorial departments of the Fondazione, coordinated by Astrid Welter, Mario Mainetti and Alessia Salerno, the Thought Council, a group whose members will vary over time and founded by Shumon Basar, Nicholas Cullinan and Cédric Libert, soon to be joined by Elvira Dyangani Ose and Dieter Roelstraete in May, the Presidents Miuccia Prada and Patrizio Bertelli and the artistic and scientific Superintendent Germano Celant.

The exhibitions 'Serial Classic' (Milan, 9 May – 24 August, 2015) and 'Portable Classic' (Venice, 9 May – 13 September, 2015)—conceived by Salvatore Settis—ideally join the two venues of the Fondazione throughout the summer. The two exhibition projects, for which OMA has designed the display, analyze the themes of seriality and the copy in classical art and of the reproduction of Greek-Roman statuary on a small scale from the Renaissance to Neoclassicism, respectively.

Exhibition 'Serial Classic', co-curated by Salvatore Settis and Anna Anguissola, is open in Milan from 9 May to 24 August 2015 and occupies the two levels of the Podium. 'Serial Classic' focuses on classical sculpture and explores the ambivalent relationship between originality and imitation in Roman culture and its insistence on the circulation of multiples as an homage to Greek art. We tend to associate the idea of classical to that of uniqueness, but in no other period of western art history the creation of copies from great masterpieces of the past has been as important as in late Republican Rome and throughout the Imperial age. The exhibition comprises more than 70 artworks and opens with an in-depth analysis of lost originals and their multiple copies, represented by two particularly renowned series such as the *Discobolus* and the *Crouching Venus*. Two other important sections are devoted to the materials and the colours of classical bronzes and marbles. The *Kassel Apollo*, for instance, is presented in two recent plaster casts which reproduce the original bronze surface of the lost Greek original and the colours of its Roman marble copies. Another section of the exhibition illustrates the technologies and methods used in the making of the copies, presenting two essential moments such as the creation of the plaster cast and the translation of proportions and measurements on the new block of marble. Two famous series are also featured in the exhibition, the *Penelope*, and the *Caryatides*, on the prototype of the Erechtheion in Athens.

Exhibition 'Portable Classic', co-curated by Salvatore Settis and Davide Gasparotto, is presented in Venice from 9 May to 13 September 2015. 'Portable Classic' explores the origins and functions of miniature reproductions of classical sculptures, showcasing more than 80 artworks on the ground and first floor at Ca' Corner della Regina. Both in ancient Rome and modern Europe a true 'canon' of sculptures was created, considered as an undisputed peak of excellence of a given subject. Their prestige was so high that, since it was almost impossible to acquire the originals, their reproductions, even on a small scale, were eagerly sought for by well-read audiences. An example of this is the *Farnese Hercules*, displayed in a 317 cm high plaster cast exhibited next to a series of modern smaller-scale reproductions in marble, bronze and terracotta, measuring 15 to 130 cm.

Some classical small-scale masterpieces are presented along with Renaissance multiples, through the examples of the *Marsyas* (*'Ignudo della paura'*) and the *Crouching Venus*. Another section of the exhibition is devoted to important art collectors from the 1500's. In a selection of paintings by Lorenzo Lotto, Tintoretto and Bernardino Licinio, the subjects are portrayed among classical sculptures and plaster casts from their personal collections. Starting from the emblematic cases of the *Belvedere Torso* and the *Laocoön*, the exhibition illustrates how Renaissance artists employed small-scale copies to elaborate hypotheses on the missing portions of the classical originals.

At the Milan venue of the Fondazione, three different exhibition projects which use the Collezione Prada as a research and investigation tool are presented. The Sud gallery and part of the Deposito, the imposing warehouse located on the west limit of the compound, host 'An Introduction' (9 May 2015 – 10 January 2016), an exhibition showcasing more than

70 works. Intertwining research and a passion for art which has acquired both a private and a public status, the curiosity, impulses and aspirations which have contributed to the creation of the collection and led to the opening of a foundation are explored. The exhibition starts in the 1970's artistic realm, from New Dada to Minimal art, with works by Walter De Maria, Yves Klein, Piero Manzoni, Donald Judd and Barnett Newman. It testifies a love for socially engaged, critical art with works by Pino Pascali and Edward Kienholz. It proceeds with a *studiolo* dating back to the end of the 15th century, as a symbol of the continuity of knowledge through history. A *quadreria* including works by various artists, from William N. Copley to Lucio Fontana, from Mario Schifano to Jeff Koons, from Gerhard Richter to Goshka Macuga, documents the transformation of personal notions and passions into a collection animated by a multiplicity of artistic and cultural interests which encompass contemporary times. The exhibition ends with a series of 'artists' cars', realized by Elmgreen & Dragset, Carsten Höller & Rosemarie Trockel, Tobias Rehberger, Gianni Piacentino and Sarah Lucas among others, an immersion into a dimension where life is intertwined with the artists' personal and artistic contributions, toward a more extended horizon represented by the activities of the Fondazione.

Exhibition 'In Part', curated by Nicholas Cullinan, is staged in the Nord gallery, one of the former industrial structures originally included in the compound. Built around a thematic group of works selected from the collection, the exhibition explores the idea of the fragmented body in the sculptures of Lucio Fontana and Pino Pascali, through the representation of ruins in the work of John Baldessari, David Hockney and Francesco Vezzoli, in the use of the photographic close-up to crop the body in the paintings of William Copley, Michelangelo Pistoletto and Domenico Gnoli, in the collaged and defaced portraits of Lynn Foulkes, in the partial silhouettes of Yves Klein and in the superimposition of figures in the painting of Francis Picabia. What all these works have in common is the concept of the synecdoche, or the use of the part to refer to an absent whole. Additional works by Charles Atlas, Bruce Nauman, Robert Rauschenberg, Man Ray and Richard Serra, on loan from international museums and private collections and some not exhibited publicly before, round out this investigation of the tension between the part and the whole.

The spaces of the Cisterna, a preexisting building made up of three adjacent vertical structures, host 'Trittico'. The project, conceived by the Thought Council, presents three works from the collection on a rotational basis, juxtaposed to create an interplay of formal cross-references, conceptual affinities and exceptional concentration. The first selection for 'Trittico' includes *Case II* (1968) by Eva Hesse, *Lost Love* (2000) by Damien Hirst, and *1 metro cubo di terra* (1967) by Pino Pascali, three works that all develop minimalistic geometries by associating objects and elements of nature with the shape of the cube.

The Cinema hosts a project titled 'Roman Polanski: My Inspirations'. In this documentary conceived by Roman Polanski for Fondazione Prada and directed by Laurent Bouzerau, the sources of inspiration behind Polanski's cinematographic work are retraced by analyzing some of the films that have most influenced him, such as Orson Welles's *Citizen Kane* (1941), David Lean's *Great Expectations* (1946), Carol Reed's *Odd Man Out* (1947), Laurence Olivier's *Hamlet* (1948), Vittorio de Sica's *The bicycle thieves* (1948) and Federico Fellini's *8 ½* (1963). These six films, along with a selection of 15 motion pictures by Polanski, will be screened in a dedicated film festival every Friday and Saturday from 22 May to 25 July 2015.

The Cinema foyer houses a historic work by Lucio Fontana. *Battaglia*, a fluorescent painted polychrome ceramic frieze, was created by the artist in 1948 for the Cinema Arlecchino in Milan, designed by architects Roberto Menghi and Mario Richini. It is a reference to the artistic and cultural rebirth of the city in those years, marked by the restless rhythms of post-war reconstruction. The experimental use of ceramic and its luminous effects allowed Fontana to explore the fourth dimension of sculpture in this work, anticipating Spatialism.

An underground space of the Cinema houses Thomas Demand's permanent installation *Processo grottesco* (2006-07), which was presented for the first time in Venice in 2007. In *Processo grottesco* the public can explore the different phases that led to the realization of Demand's famous photograph *Grotto*. The installation presents the visual material (postcards, books, tourist guides, photographs and catalogues) collected as the iconographic source for the elaboration of the final shot and the 36-ton cardboard model made up of 900,000 sections that reproduces every last detail of one of the Cuevas del Drach on the island of Majorca. In this work, Demand creates a short-circuit between reconstructed form and real vision, and uses the impersonal instrument of the camera to provide a personal interpretation of the image.

The secluded spaces of the Haunted House, a four-story building at the center of the compound, host a permanent installation conceived by Robert Gober and two works by Louise Bourgeois. On the higher floors of the building works by Gober, whose art explores sexuality, relationships, nature, politics, and religion, are exhibited.

The American artist combines new installations with existing works, spatial interventions with objects and sculptures incorporated in the different rooms. Gober's works, which reverberate connections to childhood and to body parts, find a counterpart in Louise Bourgeois's *Cell (Clothes)* (1996) and *Single III* (1996), displayed on the first floor of the building.

From May 2015, in conjunction with the ongoing activities at the new venue in Milan, the educational program at Accademia dei Bambini, a project conceived by neuropediatrician Giannetta Otilia Latis, will also get under way. The design of the space has been developed in collaboration with 18 students from the École Nationale Supérieure d'Architecture de

Versailles, coordinated by professors Cédric Libert and Elias Guenoun. The Accademia devoted to children between the ages of four and ten is an ideal place to host workshops and events that are not necessarily linked to the foundation's program, where a dialogue between grownups and children is fostered as well as a wide range of creative and learning experiences. It is a flexible and multifunctional platform which brings together six different archetypal and spatial configurations: Palestra (gymnasium), Tavolo (table), Studio, Museo (museum), Camera (bedroom) and Teatro (theatre).

On the occasion of the opening of the new Milan venue, a temporary artistic intervention by Andreas Slominski titled *Die Geburt des Buches aus dem Geiste der Natur* (The birth of the book as the spirit of nature) is also presented. In the room adjacent to the Accademia dei bambini, the German artist has created an installation with multiple hints to the future destination of this space, which will house the library of the Fondazione. The intervention comprises sculptures *Himmel* (sky) and *Erde* (earth), an overturned truss and toilet box, usually employed at construction sites and a series of 16 paintings.

The Bar Luce, conceived by American film director Wes Anderson and located in the entrance building of the new venue, recreates the atmosphere of a typical Milanese café. The ceiling and wall decorations suggest a miniature version one of the city's landmarks, Galleria Vittorio Emanuele; while the formica furniture, chairs, and terrazzo floor pay homage to Italian movies of the 50's and 60's, especially to two Milanese films in particular: *Miracle in Milan* (1951) by Vittorio De Sica and *Rocco and His Brothers* (1960) by Luchino Visconti. Although inspired by the cinema, Anderson says his intention was "to design not a set but a space for real life – but maybe it will be a good place to write a movie."

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SUPREMELY ORIGINAL

CLASSICAL ART AS SERIAL, ITERATIVE, PORTABLE

Extract from the essay by Salvatore Settis published in the catalogue "Serial / Portable Classic", pp. 58-62

Twin shows with a single theme: the uses and reuses, nature, functions and destiny of classical art. The starting point for "Serial Classic", held in exhibition spaces designed by Rem Koolhaas for the Fondazione Prada in Milan, is what is missing: namely, the bronze originals, here represented by a number of fragments of bronze statues from the Classical period, discovered during excavations in Olympia, that embody a dramatic loss, a gap, a bereavement. According to Pliny the Elder, there were three thousand bronze statues in Olympia alone (though equally in Athens, Delphi and Rhodes). In his description of the Sanctuary at Olympia, which fills much of Books V and VI of his *Description of Greece*, Pausanias mentions two hundred bronze statues, mostly of athletes who had won events at the Olympic Games. If we add to these the surviving bases of statues, we arrive at a minimum of five hundred statues. Archaeologists argue that this number has to be increased, with estimates varying between one and three thousand statues at Olympia alone. "The ground must still be full of them," wrote the scholar Bernard de Montfaucon in 1729, and it was also for this reason that in 1875 the German archaeological mission began the excavation work that continues to this day. Although meticulous, the dig has only unearthed a few dozen fragments, often minute: eyes, fingers, feet, hands, genitalia, eyelashes, ears... During the long eclipse we call "the end of the ancient world," leading after 1,200 years to the abolition of the quadrennial Olympics, even the statues of the most famous masters were hacked to pieces: scrap metal had greater value than any "work of art."

The humble testimony offered by these Olympian fragments symbolizes what happened throughout the ancient world: there are only about one hundred more or less undamaged Greek bronze statues of significance in the world, almost all of which have been discovered during the last 120 years, often recovered from the sea thousands of years after the ship transporting them elsewhere was wrecked. In the exhibition "Serial Classic," we have represented the lost originals with an empty pedestal on which we have placed ancient literary sources that speak of Myron's *Discobolus*, Polyclitus's *Doryphorus* or a *Satyr* by Praxiteles. Next to them is a selection of Roman copies of their respective originals: the uneasy relationship between original and copy becomes one of the exhibition's main themes. Some of the copies have also reached us in a fairly damaged condition: today all we need is a hand holding a discus to recognize a fragment of Myron's *Discobolus*, but in the past the torso of other copies of the same work, that nobody was able to identify as such, were often "restored" arbitrarily as, for example, a fallen warrior.

Serial production was not, however, purely a characteristic of the copies. We have dedicated another display in the exhibition to a flashback, the series of terracotta busts from Medma (a small Greek city on the Tyrrhenian coast of Calabria) produced between 500 and 460 B.C., whose great resemblance is due to the fact that they were made using a mold. Just like the costly marble *korai* on the Acropolis in Athens, the terracotta works from Medma incessantly

repeat the same exemplar while varying the hairstyle, ornaments and narrative details of individual figures (such as a flower being held in the hand). In the past, at least, the color would also have varied, but this has since faded away (the marble *korai* on the Acropolis in Athens were also painted).

Bronze, marble, terracotta: the assortment of materials used (and their respective techniques) expresses in different ways the shared relationship with typological repetition. Even the large bronze originals, fabricated in separate pieces using the lost-wax technique (which included the use of molds) and subsequently assembled, may have been produced in series, with or without variants. According to Carol Mattusch, even the Riace Bronzes would “surely be produced for a dedication of a good deal more than two images,” all made in series based on the same model and using the same molds, probably made of terracotta. “It was while each working model was being detailed, before casting, that the two figures acquired their markedly different appearances, while retaining virtually identical measurements and outlines. If this hypothesis is true (though in the case of the Riace Bronzes there are many who disagree), the bronze originals, having been created with mechanical repetition from a mold, would paradoxically be even more “serial” than marble copies, in which the reproduction process requires the copyist’s hand and scalpel on the block of marble, and thus entails greater diversity between the copies, as well as between the copies and the original.

To the Greeks, different materials implicated a hierarchy of values and therefore also possessed narrative significance. Bronze was considered more precious than marble, and more suited to expressing the dignity and character (*ethos*) of a god, hero, victorious athlete or ruler. In Greek this understanding was expressed using a word that is difficult to translate: *prepon*, roughly “that which stands out,” which “is appropriate” or “is suitable” for a given situation and the related horizon of values. *Prepon* is thus a relational term: it indicates what is appropriate in a given image with respect to what it is supposed to represent. Even the material used to make a statue reflected this categorization, and in this sense bronze is more appropriate than marble for a *Discobolus* or a mythological character like, very probably, the Riace Bronzes.

In this balance between constants and variants, in addition to materials and typology, there was a third factor: color. We are accustomed to thinking of ancient marble statues as white and ancient bronze statues with their dark green patina, but in antiquity the marble works were mostly colored, sometimes brightly, and the bronzes were made using other materials as well (lips in copper, teeth in silver, eyes in colored stone or glass paste). Their “skin” was intensely brightened by dyes and other devices. The study of ancient polychromy is one of the busiest and most unsettled areas of archaeological research. The exhibition “Serial Classic” alludes to this by incorporating an experimental bronze reconstruction of Polyclitus’s *Doryphorus* (with “blond” hair) made in Stettin in 1910 and the bronze and marble color “tests” carried out in 1991 on two casts of the *Kassel Apollo*, a famous copy of an Attic original of the fifth century B.C. Next to these now “historic” experiments is the newly assembled reconstruction of one of the Riace Bronzes (Statue “A”) mentioned above.

This experimental recreation highlights the aesthetic and emotional potential of this field of research: recast in bronze with the addition of missing elements integrated (helmet, shield and spear), and with the surface colored in accordance with ancient custom, this famous statue takes on a new narrative significance that will be further heightened as soon as the reconstruction of the similar, yet different, Statue "B" occurs.

There is no precedent for this experiment, yet it was born of two procedures divided by many centuries, which get to the heart of classical art and its repeatability. The first, already widespread in the Roman era, is the practice of making plaster casts of bronze originals so that marble copies could be made of them. The second is the custom of archaeologists to attempt to reconstruct, using plaster, an ancient original only known through copies. The "Serial Classic" exhibition emphasizes, among other themes, both procedures and the manner in which they interconnect.

Sought after by collectors in Roman times, as shown by the section "The Passion for Seriality" at the exhibition in Milan, repetition and serial production of ancient sculptures was not limited to copies, nor to terracottas and bronzes. Thanks to the generous collaboration of the National Museum in Tehran, we have been able to exhibit the wonderful *Penelope*, a marble original from circa 450 B.C., with the complete series of six fragmented copies from the Roman age.

But what are they copies of? The original, currently conserved in Tehran, was discovered during the excavation of Persepolis, among the wreckage of the king of Persia's palace left behind when Alexander the Great destroyed it in 331 B.C. Although fairly similar to the Persepolis statue, the copies carved in Italy five or six centuries later must have been made from a second original (in marble or bronze), which had remained in Greece. These copies are therefore evidence of a twin seriality: that of the copies and, long before, that of the originals.

The *scale* of ancient sculptures, including copies, also has a strong narrative significance. We have attempted to explore this factor in the exhibition "Portable Classic" by displaying, alongside the cast of the gigantic *Farnese Hercules* (3.17 m tall), a sequence of eight replicas, in progressively smaller size (down to 15 cm), made between the sixteenth and eighteenth centuries. Made from bronze, marble, terracotta and porcelain, reduced copies of this statue tell us a great deal about not only its identity, pose and fame, but also its ubiquity, its pervasiveness in workshops, manufactories, drawing rooms, bookshops and *studioli*, and its tendency to become a "quotation" as well as the symbol and metaphor for a culture, an aesthetic taste and a social rank.

The appropriation of ancient culture and art we call the "Renaissance" inherited and increased the ancients' compulsion for repetition (including small scale copies), though in a very different setting. "Portable Classic" emphasizes this comparison by presenting a selection of "miniature masterpieces" from the Roman age, such as an exquisite *Crouching Venus* made from rock crystal (8.6 cm high) alongside another variant of the same type in bronze (h. 20 cm). These and other miniatures of ancient sculptures are a prelude to the (re)birth of the small bronze sculpture, and of the small-scale copies of ancient works that

proliferated in private collections from the fifteenth century, becoming increasingly popular and varying not only in their dimensions but also their materials, coloring, gestures and narrative details. In the magnificently domestic setting of Ca' Corner della Regina, we have developed the theme of reduced-format copies of classical masterpieces made during the Renaissance rather than their reproductions on a 1:1 scale (also frequent) or their greater-than-original size equivalents (much rarer), such as the enormous eighteenth-century copy of the *Farnese Hercules* (more than 9 m high) that still towers above a pavilion in the royal park in Kassel.

The immense destruction of ancient art left very little behind, but once it became fashionable to build collections of ancient sculptures in the early fifteenth century by removing them from the ruins of Rome, a small number of masterpieces (such as the *Belvedere Apollo*, the *Laocoön*, or the *Crouching Venus*) established themselves as the zenith and epitome of all Greek and Roman art. Their prestige was increased by the nobility of the places in which they were preserved, foremost being the Belvedere Courtyard in the Vatican, but also in princely collections, as with the *Hercules* in Palazzo Farnese. These masterworks were often replicated on a 1:1 scale and occasionally rendered nobler by being cast in bronze for particularly prestigious patrons. Around 1540 an Italian artist, Primaticcio, arranged several 1:1 bronzes for the king of France, Francis I, and one hundred years later, the greatest of Spanish artists, Velázquez, did the same for Philip IV of Spain. Small replicas, though, were much more common and widespread. Once they were made portable, the ancient masterpieces in the emerging canon came to reflect, like so many shards of a broken mirror, the image of ancient Rome, multiplying and heightening its presence. The portraits of collectors, some of whom appear in the exhibition, such as Lorenzo Lotto's *Andrea Odoni* (1527) and Tintoretto's *Giovanni Paolo Corner* (1561), are a snapshot of an upper-class social ritual, that of the collector showing his friends and visitors the brightest jewels in his collection, which we may also take as an indirect allusion to collectors of the Roman age, about whom we know very little.

Reduction (in scale) and reproduction (in increased numbers) are the two agents that led to the widespread dissemination of the classical canon to centers of learning, courts, artists' workshops and domestic settings. This was no passive process but a continual reinvention into which ancient models were absorbed, reinterpreted and sometimes made more precious with the addition of gilding, as in the *Venus Felix* and *Belvedere Apollo* by Pier Jacopo Alari Bonacolsi who, with these and other works, fully deserved his sobriquet, *L'Antico* — the ancient one. A further development was that small-format copies could be used to test possible reconstructions of missing arms and legs on damaged ancient statues, as it happened, for example, with the *Laocoön* and the *Belvedere Torso*. "Portable Classic" attempts to retell this story, as well as that of reinterpretations, variants, inventions, new canonical works, the introduction of new materials (like porcelain), and small-scale reproductions of ancient Rome's most famous buildings in cork, a humble material but one suited to representing the worn nature of the ruins, or perhaps in bronze or marble to draw attention to their nobility; lastly, the recreation, using modern forms and materials, of a

studio like those used by the collectors of the sixteenth century to display small bronzes that evoked both ancient Rome and classical art.

The twin exhibitions and the book that reflects them together present a narration structured like concentric circles or a multiple *mise en abyme*. Archaeology, with its disciplinary procedures, provides the tools and reference points to reconstruct antiquity from its fragments. Archaeology, though, presupposes the collecting of antiquities, a practice sparked by the curious and restless eye of artists and collectors, and the collections from which museums were born.

Collecting antiquities, which began in the fifteenth century, was predicated on inert ruins amongst which the sculptures lay inactive for at least a thousand years before returning to a new life. The ruins were populated not by Greek originals but by copies. The famous "statues of Rome" were therefore the product of the copying activity carried out by workshops in Roman times. Copies of lost Greek originals, however, contain something of their forebear's spirit and therefore invite us to search out traces of those originals. Even if we will never see the originals, nonetheless, their enormous creative energy still emanates from the copies. This energy can be defined as the collective choral strength of the Greek *polis*, the ethical and political tension that is imbued in the figurative arts. That distant source gave rise not only to athletes and Venuses that we are still trying to re-imagine from their copies, but also to Greek civilization's self-definition as the canon we call "classical," which has been handed down to us over the centuries: from the Greeks to the Roman copies, to Renaissance houses and workshops, to the Neoclassical, public museums, the art market and research institutes.

In relation to the classical world, each of these narratives has a diverse yet convergent choral nature: that of the artists, clients and works of art in the space of the Greek *polis*; that of the people in Greece and Rome who furthered awareness of the exemplary nature of Greek art, thereby stimulating its textual narratives as well as its repetition and copying in the Roman world; that of the abandonment of sculptures in the limitless ruins of the empire; and, centuries later, that of collectors, artists who studied it, museums, the creation of a canon for "classical" art, archaeology as a discipline, excavation and reconstruction, and studies and exhibitions, including "Serial Classic" and "Portable Classic." In this *mise en abyme* lasting throughout twenty-five centuries of history, everything (from aesthetic emotion to archaeology) appears to be governed by the narrative function. If we speak of the "Renaissance of antiquity" we are not using an empty formula but a powerful metaphor. We are saying that Antiquity (like any culture) may die but that it can also be reborn. If we engage with classical art using the tools and methods of archaeology, we are saying that the narrative provided by archaeology and the narrative of Greek civilization stimulate and legitimize each other. The experimental procedures (the gestures) used in archaeological reconstruction have an implicit nature of a performance, of which, as in Sherrie Levine's photographic series *After Walker Evans*, it can be said that "it is only in the absence of the original that representation may take place."

Salvatore Settis

“Serial / Portable Classic. The Greek Canon and its Mutations”

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