# FONDAZIONE PRADA PRESENTS CATALOGUE "WILLIAM N. COPLEY", PUBLISHED IN COLLABORATION WITH THE MENIL COLLECTION

Milan, 18 February 2016 – The volume "William N. Copley", edited by Germano Celant and published by Fondazione Prada in collaboration with The Menil Collection, accompanies the retrospective exhibition devoted to the American artist which is being hosted at The Menil Collection in Houston from 19 February to 24 July 2016, and in a more extensive format at Fondazione Prada in Milan from October 2016 to January 2017.

William N. Copley (1919–96) embodies the figure of the original, eclectic self-taught artist, thanks to his work as a journalist, editor, art dealer and collector. The two exhibitions, curated by Germano Celant and Toby Kamps, as well as the related catalogue, retrace the entire career of the artist - started in Hollywood in the 1940s, developed in Paris and subsequently spanned across Europe and the United States - and recall the evolution of his style and pictorial experimentation. Inspired by Surrealism, by the cartoon imagery and by American folk culture, the artist explored recurring subjects such as pornography, patriotism, and the unexpected potential of everyday objects with humor and intelligence.

As highlighted by Miuccia Prada and Patrizio Bertelli in the introduction to the catalogue, "Copley's career was independent without being isolated, an unconventional bridge spanning two continents. In his artworks, eroticism is at once joyful, irreverent and socially engaged. The skill and irony with which Copley—or CPLY, as he usually signed his works—inserted political messages in pictures that appear at first glance to be just sexual, made him a point of encounter between artistic movements that were geographically and idealistically far from one another, from Surrealism to Pop Art and also to Conceptual Art."

The scientific publication, which comprises more than 390 pages and 600 illustrations, is a graphic design project developed by Irma Boom. In addition to the introductions by Fondazione Prada's presidents and Josef Helfenstein, the volume includes six essays by critics and art historians Germano Celant, Toby Kamps, Jonathan Griffin, Paul B. Franklin, Gwen L. Allen and Alison M. Gingeras, that analyze Copley's complex figure as an artist, gallerist, collector, writer, journalist and editor. The book is completed by an extensive chronology which relates Copley's career and biography to the artistic and cultural context of his times.

"William N. Copley" is part of the extensive editorial project that Fondazione Prada has developed over the past twenty years. The 38 publications edited by the Fondazione since 1995 comprise artist monographs and volumes (from Michael Heizer to Carsten Höller, from Francesco Vezzoli to Nathalie Djurberg), research exhibition catalogues (from "The Small Utopia - Ars Multiplicata" to "Serial Classic"), architecture books devoted to, among others, Herzog & de Meuron and OMA/AMO, as well as books related to philosophy and cinema conferences such "La Sfida" and "Tribeca Talks".

The book "Before the Beginning and After the End" is to be released shortly, concurrently with the exhibition "To the Son of Man Who Ate the Scroll" - presented at Fondazione Prada in Milan until 19 June 2016 - and retraces Goshka Macuga's career from 1993 to this day. The catalogue for group show "L'image volée", curated by Thomas Demand and hosted at the Fondazione from 18 March to 28 August 2016, will mark the upcoming opening of the exhibition. All publications are distributed both in Italy and abroad and can also be purchased from the Fondazione's online bookshop at the following link: http://bookshop.fondazioneprada.org/

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