

**MANSHIP, PAUL** (1885-1966), b. St. Paul, MN  
*Playfulness*, 1912, Bronze with Bronze Patina

### EDUCATION/INFLUENCES

- Studied at St. Paul School of Art, St. Paul, MN, the Philadelphia Academy of Fine Arts, the Arts Student's League in Rome and New York.

- While at American Academy in Rome (1909-1912) became more interested in Archaic and Classical Greek art (its style and subject matter). Also interested in the classical sculpture of India, Egyptian and Assyrian sculpture being excavated in early 20th century.

- Started out as a painter but was color blind so became a sculptor. Being color blind was an advantage because eye not distracted by color so he could concentrate on form.

### BIG IDEAS/THEMES

- Works emphasized simplified line and detail so while works are still traditionally realistic, they have a modern tone to them. Did not get radically abstract so was always popular with more conservative collectors.
- Interested in natural forms including figures and animals.
- Produced over 700 works in his career including lots of public sculpture. Did do some sculpture portraits including Theodore Roosevelt, John D. Rockefeller, and Robert Frost.
- Most famous work (and one that he never felt great about) is *Prometheus* at Rockefeller Center (large gilded bronze male located at the ice rink).
- Gravity-defying figures, stylized details, strongly rhythmic outline.
- Worked on many small pieces for his own pleasure—small bronzes that were modeled originally in wax and cast by lost-wax process. Called them his “pet creations.” Sold very few of these works during his lifetime.
- Played a large role in keeping public art as integral part in decorating public buildings. Believed sculpture should reflect deepest ideals of society rather than simply personal ideas of the artist and therefore he felt that Abstract Expressionist sculpture didn't express anything meaningful to any but an elite audience.

### **KIA Work-Playfulness, 1912, bronze with brown patina.**

- Figure of a woman who is seated with her right leg raised, the woman's hands reach out to grasp arms of a young boy who sits on the woman's knees, woman is half clothed with classicizing drapery, young boy is nude.
- Work was conceived during his stay in Rome in 1912. Inspired by the Greek and Etruscan sculpture which he was exposed to at this time, he employed archaic stylizations such as the almond shaped eyes, the tightly woven hair and flowing drapery.
- Sculpture is one of an edition of 15
- Compare and contrast with the other mother and child sculpture displayed right next to it.

