

**WILLIAM ZORACH, N.A. (1887-1966)**

William Zorach is recognized for having played a major role in rescuing American sculpture from the Neo-classical tendencies and academic modeling which dominated the market at the turn of the century. By 1930, he was already one of this country's premier 20<sup>th</sup> century sculptors, and was honored with multiple commissions and exhibitions including the Art Institute of Chicago, the Dallas Museum of Fine Art, the Whitney Museum of American Art, and numerous others.

Characterized by a solemn, calm, and meditative spirit, William Zorach's sculptures retain the spirit and freshness of their original conception, and the spontaneity of the direct carve method. His works represent a profound respect, not only for their subject matter, but most importantly, for the intrinsic properties of each medium used. His acute sensitivity to line, the expansive volume of curves, and the rhythmic relationship between his forms and space, are all qualities which make Zorach a master of his art (Wingert, 1938).

Zorach first learned the nuances of his craft when he was an apprentice at Morgan Lithograph Company in Ohio. He eventually saved enough money to travel to and study in New York City at the National Academy of Design, and also in Paris, under the mentoring of Jacques-Emile Blanche. It was in Paris, in the first decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, where Zorach's path crossed with Marguerite Thompson, his soon to be wife. Both Marguerite and William were represented in the landmark Armory Show of 1913.

William continued to paint for the next two decades, but increasingly experimented with sculpture. By the mid 1920s, he was carving significant works in marble and fossil. By the early 1930s, he abandoned painting entirely, in favor of a new art form, sculpture. It was in sculpture that Zorach found his true voice as an artist, and achieved considerable success. "Sculpture, direct carving, was an expanding universe, a liberation and a natural form of expression to me," Zorach stated.

Zorach's paintings and sculptures are part of the permanent collections of over fifty institutions and museums, including the Smithsonian American Art Museum, the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, the Portland Museum of Art, the Whitney Museum of American Art and the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.